



**SYSTEM
OBSERVER**
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SYSTEM OBSERVER

“Observing the System, Informing the World”

WEEKLY

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Transport Commr J&K
cancels OLA's aggregator
license over 'non-func-
tional' branch office

JAMMU

The Transport
Commissioner,
Jammu and Kashmir,
has cancelled the
motor vehicle aggrega-
tor license of M/s ANI
Technologies Private

Contd on Page 2

THE TRIAL OF A JOURNALIST

FROM REPORTING ALLEGED REVENUE IRREGULARITIES TO DEFENDING PRESS FREEDOM IN COURT: THE EXTRAORDINARY LEGAL BATTLE OF SYSTEM OBSERVER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AVINASH BASSAN

SYSTEM OBSERVER
AKHNOOR

In a democracy, journalism serves as the bridge between citizens and institutions. Its role is not to pronounce guilt or innocence but to bring matters of public concern into the public domain.

Sometimes, however, the messenger becomes the target.

For nearly a year, Editor-in-Chief of System Observer Avinash Bassan found himself defending not only his reporting but also the broader principle of press freedom after a criminal defamation complaint was instituted



against him before the Akhnoor. The case arose from Hon'ble Court of JMJC

Complaint Filed by Ayush Langer Through Advocate Karan Sharma, President, Bar Association Akhnoor, Along With Advocate Mansi Sharma; Self-Contested by System Observer Editor Avinash Bassan and Ultimately Dismissed by Hon'ble JMJC Akhnoor

System Observer
Exclusive

reports published by System Observer concerning allegations of serious irregularities in revenue records relating to land situated in Ward No.

6, Akhnoor.

At the heart of the controversy were allegations that a disputed Fard Intekhab, a crucial land document, had been processed in connection with land

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1,000 Drug Smugglers, Peddlers Arrested In J&K Since April 11: LG Sinha



SYSTEM OBSERVER
SRINAGAR

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday said that over 1,000 drug smugglers and peddlers have been arrested and more than 55 traffickers have

been detained under PIT-NDPS provisions since Nasha Mukh Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyaan began on April 11 to crack down on drug traffickers and narco-terror network.

As many as 923 FIRs have also been registered against drug traffickers in the last 51 days, he said, adding 668 driving licenses have been cancelled and recommendations have been made to revoke 124 passports under the anti-drug abuse campaign.

Leading the 'Drug-Free J&K Padyatra' in Kulgam district in south Kashmir, Sinha said that this is a people's movement with a shared purpose to make villages and towns drug-free.

"The road ahead is long. The fight against drugs will take sustained effort, constant alertness and unity. We must remain steadfast," he said.

Calling the campaign a strike on the financial backbone of terrorism, he said that by halting the drug trade, the lifeline that sustains terror networks has been cut off.

"This is not only a public-health struggle but also a fight for national security," he said.

"In 2021, I pledged a fear-free and drug-free Jammu Kashmir so that the shadows of drugs and terror that once loomed over our youth can be banished entirely. I can say with confidence today that the chains that once trapped our youth in the dark web of drugs are breaking apart, link by link, day by day," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that the fight against drugs is not limited to raids and arrests, but the administration

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General NS Raja Subramani Assumes Charge as India's Third Chief of Defence Staff

SYSTEM OBSERVER
DESK
NEW DELHI

The Government of India has appointed General NS Raja Subramani (Retd.) as the nation's third Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), marking a significant transition in the country's higher military leadership.

General Subramani formally assumed office on Sunday and will also serve as Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Military Affairs (DMA), Ministry of Defence. His appointment takes effect from the date he



assumes charge and will remain in force until further orders.

A highly decorated officer with more than four decades of military service, General Subramani succeeds General Anil Chauhan, who completed his tenure as CDS on May

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Parliamentary Panel to Review NEET-UG Exam System Amid Paper Leak Controversy

SYSTEM OBSERVER
NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing controversy surrounding the alleged NEET-UG 2026 paper leak, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports is scheduled to meet on Monday to deliberate on examination reforms, including the use of traditional pen-and-paper tests versus Computer-Based Testing (CBT), and issues concerning the National

Testing Agency (NTA).

The meeting will be held at 11 a.m. in the Committee Room of the Parliament House Annexe Extension building. Discussions are expected to focus on the integrity of national-level entrance examinations and measures required to prevent future irregularities.

According to official agenda details, the panel will examine views related to NEET-UG 2026, the functioning of the NTA, and the broader debate over exami-

nation formats in the wake of the paper leak controversy that led to the cancellation of this year's medical entrance test.

The committee is also scheduled to meet on Tuesday to review the use of On-Screen Marking (OSM) in CBSE Class 12 examinations and concerns raised by students regarding the evaluation process. It will further discuss the implementation of the three-language formula in Classes 9 and 10.

Contd on Page 2

Five new Judges appointed to Supreme Court, including J&K and Ladakh Chief Justice Arun Palli

SYSTEM OBSERVER
NEW DELHI

The Union Government on Monday appointed five new judges to the Supreme Court of India, including Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, strengthening the apex court's judicial capacity and leaving only one vacancy on the Bench.

The appointments were announced through separate notifications issued by the Department of Justice

**Apex Court to
Function with 37
Judges Against
Sanctioned
Strength of 38**

under the Ministry of Law and Justice.

Those elevated to the Supreme Court are Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh;

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FROM PAGE-1

From Reporting.....

belonging to a deceased owner. According to complaints submitted before authorities, the document was allegedly issued despite the death of the recorded owner, raising questions regarding verification procedures, administrative oversight, and compliance with revenue rules.

The allegations further claimed that the disputed Fard Intekhab was not an isolated occurrence but had allegedly been issued on multiple occasions, despite objections and despite the existence of inheritance proceedings in favour of the legal heirs.

These allegations eventually became the subject of complaints before authorities, requests for registration of an FIR, and legal proceedings.

The Story Few Wanted to Touch

While the controversy generated concern among those directly affected, very few were willing to publicly examine the allegations.

System Observer chose to do so.

The System Observer reported on complaints submitted before authorities, representations made by the affected family, and questions surrounding the manner in which the disputed revenue documents were allegedly processed.

The reports focused on issues of public interest.

How could a disputed land document allegedly be issued in relation to property belonging to a deceased owner?

Were verification procedures properly followed?

Were safeguards within the revenue system functioning as intended?

What role, if any, did administrative lapses play?

These were questions that demanded scrutiny.

The System Observer maintained that reporting on such matters was not merely a journalistic function but a public duty.

From Public Interest Reporting to Defamation Litigation

As the reports continued, the controversy moved beyond revenue offices and entered the courtroom.

On 19 August 2025, a complaint under Section 356 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) was instituted by Ayush Langer before the Hon'ble Court of Munsiff JMIC Akhnoor.

The complaint was pursued through Advocate Karan Sharma, President, Bar Association Akhnoor, along with Advocate Mansi Sharma.

The proceedings were titled Ayush Langer vs Neelkanth Sharma and Others.

Among those summoned was Avinash Bassan, Editor-in-Chief of System Observer.

For supporters of press freedom, the development raised concerns about whether defamation proceedings were being invoked against a journalist who had reported on allegations already raised before authorities and reflected in official complaints.

A Journalist Defends Himself

What followed was highly unusual.

Rather than engage legal representation, Avinash Bassan chose to defend himself.

Appearing as a Party-in-Person, he sought permission from the Hon'ble Court to represent himself and personally contest the proceedings.

The court granted him the opportunity.

Before deciding whether cognizance of the complaint should be taken, the Hon'ble Court afforded the journalist an opportunity to submit objections and present his defence.

Bassan prepared detailed written objections.

He researched legal provisions.

He examined the complaint and supporting material.

He personally advanced oral & written arguments before the Hon'ble Court.

For nearly a year, he stood before the court without legal representation, defending his reporting against submissions advanced by Advocate Karan Sharma, President, Bar Association Akhnoor, and Advocate Mansi Sharma.

The Defence

The defence maintained a consistent position throughout the proceedings.

System Observer had not created the controversy. The newspaper had reported a controversy that already existed.

It had not manufactured allegations.

It had reported allegations already raised before authorities and reflected in official complaints and legal proceedings.

The defence argued that journalism serves a vital democratic function by bringing matters of governance, administration, and citizens' rights before the public.

According to the submissions advanced before the court, reporting on allegations already under public and legal scrutiny cannot automatically constitute defamation merely because the reporting proves uncomfortable for those involved.

The purpose of the publication, the defence maintained, was to inform the public, good faith and highlight issues of public importance.

The Role of Judiciary and Democracy

The proceedings highlighted the importance of judicial scrutiny within a democratic system.

Before permitting the complaint to proceed further, the honble court considered objections, heard submissions, and examined the material placed before it.

The process reflected a fundamental principle of justice: allegations must be tested through law and evidence.

For many observers, the case demonstrated the importance of an independent judiciary capable of balancing reputation, liberty, accountability, and freedom of expression.

It also underscored the importance of procedural safeguards within India's modern criminal law framework.

The Court's Decision

After considering the written objections, hearing oral arguments, and examining the material available on record, the Hon'ble Court of JMIC Akhnoor dismissed the complaint.

The dismissal brought nearly a year of litigation to an end.

For advocates of independent journalism, the outcome represented more than the conclusion of a legal dispute.

It reaffirmed the principle that courts remain the ultimate forum for evaluating allegations, complaints, and competing claims through judicial scrutiny rather than public pressure.

More Than One Journalist's Battle

The significance of the case extends beyond the individuals involved.

It highlights the challenges faced by journalists who report on allegations concerning public administration and official processes.

It raises important questions about the use of litigation against journalists reporting matters of public concern.

And it demonstrates that democracy functions best when a free press, an independent judiciary, and informed citizens work within the framework of law.

For nearly a year, one journalist stood alone in court.

He drafted his own objections.

He advanced his own arguments.

He defended his own reporting.

The complaint was dismissed.

The principle endured.

The Final Word

Real journalism does not seek to defame anyone.

Its purpose is to inform everyone.

The press asks questions.

The judiciary examines them.

Democracy is strengthened when both remain free to perform their constitutional role.

Truth Wins. Journalism Wins. Judiciary Is Above All.

General NS.....

30.

As the principal military adviser to the Government, the CDS is responsible for promoting jointness among the Army, Navy and Air Force, overseeing military reforms, and advancing the government's agenda of integrated defence planning and indigenous capability development.

General Subramani brings extensive operational and strategic experience to the position, having held several key command and staff appointments during his distinguished career. His appointment comes at a crucial time as India continues efforts to strengthen military integration, modernise its armed forces and enhance national security preparedness.

The CDS also heads the Department of Military Affairs, which was created in 2020 to facilitate greater coordination among the three services and streamline defence management within the Ministry of Defence.

1,000 Drug.....

is also working on breaking the supply chain, generating public awareness and working towards the dignified rehabilitation for those suffering from addiction. (Agencies)

Five new.....

Justice Shree Chandrashekhar, Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court; Justice Sheel Nagu, Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court; Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva, Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court; and Senior Advocate Venkita Subramani Mohana.

The appointments came four days after the Supreme Court Collegium recommended the five names on May 27.

Upon taking oath, the strength of the Supreme Court will rise to 37 judges, one short of the newly enhanced sanctioned strength of 38, including the Chief Justice of India.

The increase follows the Centre's recent decision to expand the sanctioned strength of the apex court from 34 to 38 judges in an effort to improve judicial efficiency and address the growing volume of pending cases.

Justice Arun Palli's elevation marks a significant achievement for the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Born in Patiala, Punjab, on September 18, 1964, Justice Palli began his legal career in 1988 after graduating from Panjab University, Chandigarh. He practised extensively before the Punjab and Haryana High Court and served as Additional Advocate General for Punjab before being designated as a Senior Advocate in 2007.

He was appointed a Judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court in December 2013 and later took oath as the 38th Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in April 2025.

The appointment of Senior Advocate Venkita Subramani Mohana is also notable as she joins the Supreme Court directly from the Bar, adding to the representation of women in the country's highest court.

The five appointments are the first Supreme Court appointments made during the tenure of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant. With only one vacancy remaining, the apex court is set to function at near-full strength in the coming days.

Parliamentary Panel.....

The latest meeting comes days after members of the parliamentary panel reportedly stressed the need to safeguard the sanctity of the NEET-UG examination and plug loopholes in the testing system. During an earlier interaction, NTA officials briefed lawmakers on the ongoing investigation being conducted by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the paper leak case.

The CBI is currently probing the alleged leak of the NEET-UG 2026 examination, which was subsequently cancelled and rescheduled for June 21. Investigators have arrested multiple individuals in connection with the case, including a doctor from Maharashtra's Latur district and a faculty member associated with a Pune-based coaching institute, according to reports.

The controversy has also reached the Supreme Court, where petitions seeking reforms in the NTA and enhanced safeguards for national examinations are under consideration. The NTA has informed the court that it has introduced a series of security and structural reforms aimed at ensuring the integrity of the rescheduled examination.

Meanwhile, the NTA has announced that fresh examination dates will be issued for candidates affected by technical glitches during the Common University Entrance Test (CUET-UG) 2026.

The developments have intensified scrutiny of India's examination system, with lawmakers, students and education experts calling for stronger safeguards to restore confidence in high-stakes national entrance tests.

Transport Commr.....

Limited, popularly known as OLA with immediate effect.

The order, issued by Transport Commissioner Vishesh Paul Mahajan, stated that the license (No. 0001) granted to M/s ANI Technologies Private Limited (OLA) was revoked after its registered branch office in Jammu was found to be "non-functional" and "non-traceable" during an inspection.

Asset Seizures or Economic Piracy? Critics Question Western Financial Power

SYSTEM OBSERVER EXCLUSIVE

The United States recently revealed that it had seized nearly \$1 billion worth of Iranian cryptocurrency by taking control of digital wallets linked to Tehran.

The admission, made by US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, reignited criticism of what opponents describe as the growing use of financial systems as tools of geopolitical pressure.

Critics argue that the seizure reflects a broader pattern in which Western powers freeze, block or take control of foreign assets while presenting such actions as enforcement of international rules.

A Pattern Repeated Across Countries

Russia: In 2022, Western governments froze approximately \$300 billion in Russian central bank reserves held in G7 jurisdictions.

Afghanistan: Following the Taliban's takeover in 2021, around \$7 billion of Afghan central bank assets held abroad were frozen, despite concerns over the impact on the country's economy.

Venezuela: Venezuelan gold reserves stored at the Bank of England remain inaccessible to Caracas after years of legal and political disputes.

Libya: Billions of dollars in Libyan sovereign assets were frozen after the 2011 NATO intervention, with questions continuing over the management and fate of portions of

those funds.

Critics Challenge the "Rules-Based Order"

Opponents argue that these actions expose a contradiction in Western rhetoric on property rights and international law.

They point to:

The freezing of sovereign assets through unilateral sanctions.

Restrictions on access to central bank reserves held overseas.

The use of financial pressure to achieve political objectives.

Asset seizures that critics say lack transparent international legal oversight.

Supporters maintain that such measures are legitimate tools to enforce sanctions and counter hostile governments. Critics counter that they amount to economic coercion backed by financial dominance.

The Message to the World

For many nations, the lesson is increasingly clear:

Assets held in foreign financial systems can become vulnerable during geopolitical disputes.

Sovereign reserves may not be untouchable if political relations deteriorate.

Access to global finance can depend on strategic alignment as much as legal ownership.

As economic warfare becomes a central feature of international competition, critics continue to ask a fundamental question:

When powerful states freeze, seize or redirect another country's assets, where does sanctions policy end and asset confiscation begin?

Mossad's Influence Operations Unit Waging Covert Campaign Against Iran, Report Says

SYSTEM OBSERVER

Israel's intelligence agency Mossad has been running a dedicated influence and psychological warfare unit tasked with undermining Iran's leadership from within, according to a report published by Israel Hayom.

The unit, known as the Influence Operations Branch, was reportedly established in 2021 following the appointment of David Barnea as Mossad chief. Its activities focus on shaping public opinion, spreading targeted messaging and creating pressure on Iranian officials through covert information campaigns.

A senior official overseeing the branch told the newspaper that influence operations can often achieve strategic objectives more effectively and at a lower cost than traditional intelligence missions.

"Carrying out an influence operation that ultimately gets rid of someone is much cheaper and simpler than an assassination operation," the official was quoted as saying. He also claimed that Mossad-led campaigns had played a role in the dismissal of several senior Iranian officials.

According to the report, the unit operates extensive online networks using fictitious accounts and coordinated messaging designed to erode confidence in Iran's governing insti-

tutions.

Among the activities attributed to the branch was the alleged hacking of Iranian television channels to broadcast messages from former US President Donald Trump, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and exiled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi, urging Iranians to protest during the recent US-Israeli strikes.

The report further claimed that photographs purportedly showing Mossad operatives inside Iran were deliberately circulated to media outlets, triggering internal investigations by Iranian security agencies.

The unit is also accused of working through social media influencers and digital networks to amplify narratives intended to deepen political and social divisions within the country.

Separately, Mossad Director David Barnea signalled that Israel's campaign against Iran remains unfinished.

"Our commitment will only be complete when this radical regime is replaced. That is our mission. We will not continue to stand idly by in the face of another existential threat," Barnea said.

His remarks are likely to fuel further debate over Israel's long-term objectives toward Iran, with regime change continuing to feature prominently in statements by some Israeli officials.

China's Dominance in Critical Materials Raises Strategic Concerns for US Defense Industry



A former consultant to the US Missile Defense Agency has warned that America's dependence on Chinese rare earths and critical minerals poses a serious strategic vulnerability, arguing that any complete disruption in supply could significantly hinder the country's ability to replenish advanced weapon systems.

Speaking to commentator Mario Nawfal, David Pyne said the United States remains heavily reliant on China for a large share of the critical materials used in modern defense manufacturing. He noted that several

of these materials have no alternative source outside China, creating a potential bottleneck for future military production.

According to Pyne, between 33 and 35 critical materials used in advanced US weapon systems are sourced from China, with around 12 of

them lacking viable substitutes elsewhere. He argued that a complete export cutoff by Beijing would leave Washington struggling to sustain weapons production until domestic mining and processing capabilities could be rebuilt.

Pyne also highlighted the scale of China's military and industrial expansion, stating that the country now possesses the world's largest army, navy, air force, coast guard, and ballistic missile force. He claimed that China's defense industrial

base is several times larger than that of the United States.

Criticizing past economic policies, Pyne said Washington's decision to support China's entry into the World Trade Organization accelerated the transfer of manufacturing

capacity and wealth to China, contributing to the rapid growth of its industrial and military capabilities.

The remarks have renewed debate over supply chain security, strategic minerals, and the growing competition between the world's two largest powers.

Gulf States May Seek Limits on U.S. Military Operations From Their Territory

SYSTEM OBSERVER EXCLUSIVE

Iran's strikes on U.S. military facilities in Gulf Arab states have sparked serious debate across the region about the costs and risks of hosting American forces.

The attacks have raised a key question for Gulf governments: Is it worth allowing the United States to launch military operations against Iran from their territory if doing so makes them targets for retaliation?

As tensions continue, several Gulf states are reportedly considering a significant policy shift. Once the current conflict subsides, they may seek new arrangements with Washington that would allow U.S. bases to remain operational for defense,

intelligence, and regional security missions-but restrict their use for launching offensive strikes against Iran.

Such a move would effectively limit the Pentagon's ability to use Gulf-based facilities as staging grounds for military action, potentially reshaping the U.S. military posture in the region.

Saudi Arabia is believed to favor tighter restrictions on offensive operations, while the UAE remains interested in maintaining and expanding strategic defense cooperation with the United States. Analysts also note that Washington may reassess parts of its regional basing strategy, as repeated

attacks expose vulnerabilities and increase the financial burden of repairing and protecting military infrastructure.

From Tehran's perspective, this may represent a strategic success. Iran's objective was not necessarily to destroy U.S. bases outright, but to make America's regional partners reconsider the risks of hosting forces that could draw them into a wider conflict.

By increasing the perceived costs of serving as launchpads for U.S. military operations, Iran appears to be encouraging Gulf states to ask a difficult question: whether their security is better served by facilitating confrontation or by limiting their exposure to it.

The Automation Trap: How AI Could Help Companies Eliminate Their Own Customers

System Observer | Economics & Technology Desk

A new peer-reviewed economics paper is challenging one of the most widely celebrated assumptions of the artificial intelligence revolution: that greater automation automatically leads to greater prosperity.

Instead, the study warns that companies racing to replace workers with AI could eventually undermine the very consumer demand that sustains modern economies.

Published in March 2026, The AI Layoff Trap by Brett Hemenway Falk of the Wharton School and Gerry Tsoukalas of Boston University argues that firms may be caught in a powerful competitive dynamic that rewards automation at the individual level while damaging the economy as a whole.

The paper's conclusion is stark. If left unchecked, widespread AI-driven layoffs could create a cycle in which businesses systematically eliminate the purchasing power of their own customers.

When Rational Decisions Produce Irrational Outcomes

The study is built around a simple but powerful economic observation.

Workers are not merely employees. They are also consumers.

Every worker displaced by artificial intelligence represents a reduction in labour costs for a company. Yet that same worker also represents a customer with less income to spend on goods and services.

For any individual company, replacing employees with cheaper AI systems may appear rational. Lower costs improve margins and strengthen competitiveness.

The problem emerges when every company reaches the same conclusion.

As more firms automate, household incomes decline. Consumer spending weakens. Demand across the economy contracts. Businesses then face pressure to cut costs even further, triggering additional rounds of automation.

According to the authors, the process can become self-reinforcing.

The paper describes this outcome as a classic Prisoner's Dilemma. Every company acts in its own interest, yet the collective result is worse for workers, consumers and eventually businesses themselves.

In the paper's most extreme theoretical scenario, firms continue automating until productivity reaches unprecedented levels while consumer demand collapses.

The result is an economy capable of producing almost everything but lacking enough customers with the income to buy it.

The Logic of the AI Arms Race

One of the study's most significant findings is that awareness of the problem does not necessarily solve it.

Even executives who recognize the long-term risks may have little choice but to continue automating.

A company that slows automation while competitors accelerate it risks losing market share, profitability and investor confidence. The pressure to adopt AI therefore becomes structural rather than ideological.

The authors argue that the incentive system itself pushes firms toward greater automation regardless of broader economic consequences.

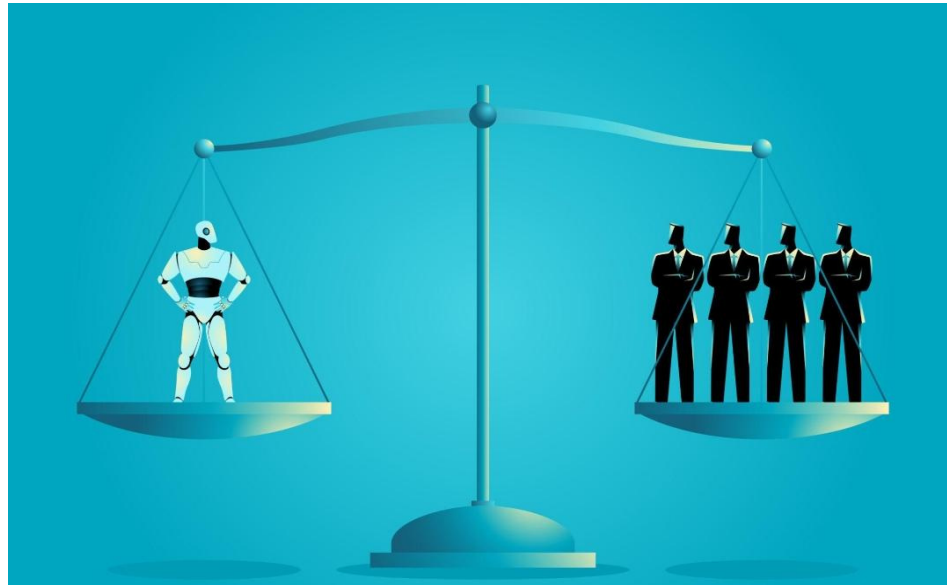
In this framework, more capable AI systems intensify the problem rather than reducing it.

As artificial intelligence becomes capable of performing a larger range of tasks, the economic incentive to replace human labour becomes stronger, expanding the scale of potential displacement.

Real-World Signals

The paper arrives amid growing debate over AI-related layoffs across the technology sector and beyond.

A number of major companies have announced workforce reductions while simultaneously increasing investments in artificial intelligence technologies. Executives



across industries have openly discussed the potential for AI to perform tasks previously handled by human workers.

While economists continue to debate the extent to which current layoffs are directly caused by AI, the study argues that the broader competitive logic is already visible.

The concern is not that individual firms are acting irresponsibly.

Rather, the concern is that every firm may be acting rationally within a system that produces harmful collective outcomes.

Testing the Solutions

The authors examined several policy responses commonly proposed to address technological displacement.

Among them were universal basic income, worker retraining programmes, employee ownership models, profit taxes and collective bargaining mechanisms.

According to the study, these measures may soften the consequences of job displacement but fail to address the incentive structure driving automation.

Universal basic income can support household consumption but does not change the economic calculation that makes AI cheaper than human labour.

Retraining programmes can help workers adapt but may struggle to keep pace with rapidly advancing technology.

Profit and capital taxes are generally imposed after automation decisions have already been made.

Worker ownership schemes redistribute gains without altering the competitive pressures encouraging firms to automate.

The authors conclude that most proposed remedies focus on managing the aftermath of displacement rather than preventing the underlying dynamic.

The One Policy That Passed

Among all the interventions examined, the paper identifies only one measure capable of correcting the distortion within the model: a Pigouvian automation tax.

Such a tax would be imposed when a company replaces human labour with artificial intelligence.

The purpose would not be to stop innovation but to force firms to account for the wider economic costs of displacement before automation decisions are made.

By internalising those costs, the researchers argue, businesses would face incentives that more accurately reflect the impact of their decisions on overall demand and economic stability.

The proposed tax could also be adjusted over time as labour markets adapt and new forms of employment emerge.

Critics Remain Unconvinced

The study has attracted considerable attention, but not universal agreement.

Critics note that technological revolutions have historically destroyed some jobs while creating entirely new industries and occupations.

Others argue that artificial intelligence may augment human labour

rather than simply replace it.

Some economists have also questioned whether many recent layoffs attributed to AI are actually the result of broader economic conditions, post-pandemic restructuring and traditional cost-cutting measures.

The authors acknowledge these limitations.

Their model does not predict an imminent economic collapse. Nor does it claim that technological progress inevitably leads to mass unemployment.

Instead, it highlights what they

view as a structural market failure that could emerge if automation advances faster than economies can create new sources of income and demand.

The Policy Vacuum

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the paper is not its warning but its conclusion.

The researchers argue that policymakers are largely focused on helping workers after displacement occurs rather than addressing the incentives that encourage displacement in the first place.

As of publication, no major economy has implemented the type of automation tax recommended by the study.

Debates continue around retraining initiatives, social safety nets and workforce adaptation programmes, but the core question raised by the paper remains largely absent from mainstream policy discussions.

If workers are also consumers, what happens when the economic system systematically reduces the number of people earning the income needed to sustain demand?

For Falk and Tsoukalas, that question sits at the centre of the AI era.

Their warning is not that artificial intelligence will destroy the economy.

It is that firms competing to maximise efficiency may unknowingly automate away the customers they depend on to survive.

Taliban Law Allows Silence of Virgin Girls to Be Treated as Consent for Marriage

Kabul, Afghanistan

SYSTEM OBSERVER

The Taliban administration has introduced a new family law regulation that recognizes certain child marriages as legally valid and permits a virgin girl's silence after reaching puberty to be interpreted as consent for marriage.

The Article 31 law, approved by Taliban supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada, grants religious courts extensive authority over family and personal status matters, including marriage annulments, adultery allegations, cases involving missing husbands, and religious conversion disputes.

Under the regulation, judges are empowered to enforce rulings through imprisonment and physical punishment. Human rights

organizations have strongly criticized the measure, arguing that it further entrenches the Taliban's restrictive interpretation of Islamic law and undermines the rights of women and girls.

The development comes amid continued international concern over the Taliban's policies in Afghanistan, where women and girls already face severe restrictions on education, employment, and participation in public life.

Rights advocates warn that the new law could further limit women's autonomy and legal protections, while deepening concerns over child marriage and gender equality in the country.

US Sees India as Key Indo-Pacific Security Partner, Pushes Deeper Defence Co-Production

SYSTEM OBSERVER

US Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth has described India as a powerful nation that is steadily modernising its armed forces, reaffirming Washington's commitment to expanding defence cooperation with New Delhi through greater co-production and industrial collaboration.

Speaking on India's strategic role in the Indo-Pacific, Hegseth said

the country is well-positioned to contribute to security in the Indian Ocean Region while also providing support to US naval forces operating across the broader theatre.

His remarks underscore the growing convergence between India and the United States on regional security, military interoperability, and defence manufacturing, as both countries seek to strengthen strategic cooperation amid evolving geopolitical challenges in the Indo-Pacific.

Zardari Claims Pakistani Drones Reached Near PM Modi's Residence During Operation Sindoor

Islamabad/New Delhi

Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari has triggered fresh controversy by claiming that Pakistani drones managed to reach areas near the residence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi during Operation Sindoor, the military confrontation that followed the Pahalgam terror attack earlier this year.

Speaking at a public event, Zardari alleged that Pakistan's armed forces demonstrated their operational capabilities during the conflict and asserted that several Indian Air Force aircraft were shot down during the escalation. He described the operation as evidence of Pakistan's military preparedness and deterrence capability.

The remarks come amid continuing tensions between India and Pakistan following the deadly terrorist attack in Pahalgam that resulted in significant casualties. India had launched Operation Sindoor targeting terrorist infrastructure across the border, leading to a brief but intense period of military confrontation between the two nuclear-armed neighbours.

Indian authorities have consistently

maintained that Operation Sindoor achieved its intended objectives by degrading terrorist infrastructure and eliminating key terror operatives. New Delhi has also rejected several claims made by Pakistani officials regarding the outcome of the military engagement.

Defence analysts note that many of the assertions made by both sides during the conflict remain subjects of competing narratives, with independent verification of several battlefield claims proving difficult. The latest statement by President Zardari is expected to draw a sharp response from New Delhi, which has repeatedly dismissed similar claims as propaganda.

The comments have once again highlighted the deep mistrust between the two countries and underscored the continuing information war that has accompanied military and diplomatic tensions in the region.

With bilateral relations remaining strained, observers believe that such statements could further complicate efforts to reduce tensions and restore normal diplomatic engagement between the neighbouring nations.

Pentagon policy does not bar creation of autonomous killing machines, defence industry leader reveals

WASHINGTON

The United States Department of Defense currently has no explicit prohibition against building weapons capable of independently identifying and attacking targets without direct human intervention, according to a senior executive at one of America's fastest-growing defence technology companies.

The disclosure has intensified concerns among military ethicists and arms control advocates who warn that advances in artificial intelligence are rapidly outpacing the policies designed to regulate them.

Christian Brose, Chief Strategy Officer of Anduril Industries, stated that Pentagon rules permit the development of systems that could function as lethal autonomous weapons. While such systems would be subject to review and approval procedures before deployment, existing policy does not prohibit their creation.

The comments draw attention to Department of Defense Directive 3000.09, the primary framework governing autonomous and semi-autonomous weapons systems. First issued in 2012 and revised in 2023, the directive requires appropriate human judgment in the use of force and mandates senior-level review of certain autonomous weapons programs. However, it stops short of imposing a legal ban on the development of weapons capable of operating independently.

The distinction has profound implications for the future of warfare.

A prohibition on development would place restrictions on research, engineering and weapons production. The current framework instead allows companies and military laboratories to continue advancing autonomous technologies while leaving deployment decisions to government oversight mechanisms.

Defence experts note that artificial intelligence is transforming military operations at a pace rarely seen in previous technological revolutions. Modern autonomous systems can analyse data, identify threats and generate targeting deci-

sions in fractions of a second, dramatically reducing the time available for human intervention.

Supporters of autonomous military technologies argue that the United States must maintain its competitive edge as strategic rivals accelerate investments in artificial intelligence and advanced weapons systems. Chinese military modernisation programmes and Russia's increasing reliance on unmanned platforms have added urgency to calls for rapid innovation within the U.S. defence establishment.

Critics, however, question whether existing safeguards are sufficient. They argue that procedural reviews and acquisition approvals may not adequately address the ethical and legal challenges posed by machines capable of making life-and-death decisions on the battlefield.

Brose maintained that military institutions do not deploy untested technologies and that extensive evaluation processes remain in place before any new capability enters operational service. Nevertheless, his remarks underscore a reality often overlooked in public debate: the Pentagon's current rules regulate how autonomous weapons may be approved and employed, not whether they may be built.

Founded in 2017 by technology entrepreneur Palmer Luckey, Anduril Industries has emerged as a major force in the U.S. defence sector. The company develops a range of advanced military systems, including autonomous surveillance platforms, maritime drones and high-speed interceptor aircraft designed to operate with significant levels of autonomy.

As governments around the world struggle to establish international norms for military artificial intelligence, the absence of a clear prohibition on autonomous lethal weapons in U.S. policy is likely to remain at the centre of an increasingly consequential global debate.

The fundamental question remains unresolved: how much authority should human beings be willing to surrender to machines in matters of war and life-or-death decision making?

Iran Halts Indirect US Contacts Over Lebanon Strikes

Tehran Demands Immediate End to Military Operations in Gaza and Lebanon; Trump Says Deal With Iran Remains Possible

Tehran/Washington

Iran has suspended the exchange of messages with the United States through mediators following recent attacks in Lebanon, according to sources quoted by Tasnim News Agency.

The sources said the Iranian negotiating team informed intermediaries that diplomatic engagement could not continue while military opera-

tions in Gaza and Lebanon persist. Iranian officials stressed that an immediate halt to the conflicts is essential for any meaningful progress in negotiations.

The move comes amid heightened regional tensions and ongoing efforts to revive dialogue between Washington and Tehran.

Meanwhile, US President Donald

Trump said he remains confident that Iran is interested in reaching an agreement with the United States. Dismissing concerns over the current situation, Trump told critics to "sit back and relax" and expressed optimism that negotiations would ultimately yield positive results.

The latest developments underscore the growing impact of the conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon on broader diplomatic efforts, with the future of US-Iran talks increasingly tied to developments on the

Stockwell's CIA allegations resurface as debate over cold war propaganda reignites

WASHINGTON

Allegations made by former CIA officer John Stockwell regarding US covert operations in Angola have resurfaced online, renewing debate over the use of propaganda and disinformation during the Cold War.

Stockwell, who served as chief of the CIA's Angola Task Force in 1975-76, became one of the agency's most prominent critics after resigning from the service. In public speeches, interviews and his 1978 book *In Search of Enemies*, he alleged that the CIA disseminated false and misleading information to influence public opinion and political decision-making during the Angolan Civil War.

Among his most widely cited claims was that intelligence officials promoted unverified stories portraying Cuban forces in Angola as perpetrators of atrocities. Stockwell maintained that many such allegations lacked factual basis and were part of a broader propaganda effort aimed at countering Cuban and Soviet influence in Africa.

India Preparing Army for Major Conventional Wars With China, Pakistan: IISS Report

NEW DELHI

India is actively preparing its armed forces for large-scale conventional military operations against potential threats from China and Pakistan, according to the latest Asia-Pacific Regional Security Assessment (APRSA) released by the London-based (IISS).

The report states that India's military modernization and force restructuring efforts continue to be shaped by its longstanding territorial disputes with its two nuclear-armed neighbours. It notes that New

Delhi remains focused on enhancing its conventional war-fighting capabilities to effectively respond to challenges along both the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China and the Line of Control (LoC) with Pakistan.

According to the assessment, India is preparing its army for large-scale conventional combat operations, reflecting the strategic reality of maintaining readiness for potential conflicts on multiple fronts. The report highlights continued investments in advanced weapon systems, infrastructure development along border regions, force

mobility, and joint operational capabilities among the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

The findings underscore the evolving security environment in the Indo-Pacific region, where geopolitical competition, border tensions, and military modernization efforts by regional powers continue to influence defence planning and strategic calculations.

Security experts believe that India's emphasis on conventional deterrence aims to strengthen its ability to respond swiftly to any escalation while maintaining strategic stability in the region.

Border Fencing Accelerates as Families Donate Land Along India-Bangladesh Frontier



NEW DELHI

The fencing project along the India-Bangladesh border is progressing rapidly, with work advancing across multiple sec-

tors. In some areas, construction had faced delays due to land acquisition issues. However, local communities have stepped forward to help ensure that the project remains

on track.

In a remarkable display of support for national security efforts, several Hindu families living near the border have voluntarily donated portions of their land to facilitate the fencing work. Their contribution is helping authorities overcome obstacles and expedite the completion of the project.

The border fencing initiative is a key part of India's strategy to strengthen border management, prevent illegal infiltration, and enhance security along the international boundary. Officials have welcomed the cooperation of local residents, describing it as an important contribution to the successful and timely completion of the project.

Government Assigns Additional Charge of DRDO Chief to Rajesh Kumar Singh



NEW DELHI

The Government of India has entrusted Rajesh Kumar Singh, IAS, with the additional charge of Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development (R&D) and Chairman, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Singh, who is currently serving as Secretary, Department of Defence, Ministry of Defence, will assume the additional responsibilities with effect from 31 May 2026.

According to the official order, he will continue to hold the dual charge until a regular appointment is made to the post or until further directions are issued by the government.

The appointment comes at a crucial time for India's defence modernization efforts, with DRDO playing a central role in the development of indigenous military technologies, strategic systems, advanced weapon platforms, and next-generation defence capabilities under the government's vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat in defence production.

The temporary arrangement is expected to ensure continuity in the functioning of DRDO and ongoing defence research and development projects while the government finalizes a permanent appointment for the organization's top leadership.

Noted poet Bashir Badr passes away at 91

BHOPAL

Bashir Badr, one of most quoted Urdu poets of his generation with famous lines like "Ujale apni yaadon ke hamare saath rehne do", died in Bhopal on Thursday after a prolonged illness.

He was 91.

The veteran poet, who was living with dementia for many years, breathed his last at his home in Bhopal, his son Syed Badr told PTI.

"For me, for my mother, and for all his loved ones, it is a very painful day. His poetry is poetry of love and life. 'Ujaale unki yaddon ke'.... This couplet is a representation of his life; it is his trademark. I would like all of you to celebrate this," Syed Badr said, adding that his father withdrew from public after his memory started failing him.

"He had dementia and had not been part of any mushaira (gathering of poets) for the past 10 years. That was his conscious decision because he was a showman... That is why he retired from mushairas when he realised that his memory was weakening, and he had not been active in writing or public life for quite some time. But the impact of his couplets and verses on the world has its own life," the son added.

During the Shimla Agreement between India and Pakistan in 1972, Badr wrote the famous couplet "Dushmani jam kar karo lekin ye gunjaish rahe, jab kabhi hum dost ho jayein to sharminda na hon".

The lines were recited by Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge during a debate in the Lok Sabha in 2018, to which Prime Minister Narendra Modi responded with another couplet from the poet: "Jee bahut chah-ta hai sach bole, kya karein haunsa nahi hota".

Badr's couplets are oft quoted by people in their everyday life, whether it is "Kuch to maj-booriyaan rahi hong, yun hi koi bewafa nahi hota" or "Ujale apni yaadon ke hamare saath rehne do, na jaane kis gali me zindagi ki shaam ho jaye", and "Log toot jaate hain ek ghar banane mein, tum taras nahi khatte bastiyan jalane mein".

Noted lyricist Javed Akhtar expressed grief over Badr's demise.

"Today, our language Urdu



has become a little poorer. Bashir Badr, an extremely melodious poet, has departed from our gathering forever. This poet and his poetry will live on in our memories forever," Akhtar posted on X.

Badr's ghazals, like those of Meer Taqi Meer, contained highly contemporary Urdu and were easily understood and appreciated by people. Some of his masterpieces served as an expression of anguished love and also spoke about the mysteries of life.

Born in Ayodhya (Uttar Pradesh) on February 15, 1935, Badr was renowned for his mastery of the Urdu language, especially in ghazals, and was also well versed in Persian, Hindi and English.

'Aas', the award-winning collection of 69 ghazals, is considered a jewel in the poetic crown of Badr and earned him the Sahitya Akademi Award in Urdu in 1999.

One of his collections, titled 'Kulliyate Bashir Badr', has been published in Pakistan.

Believed to have started writing poetry at an early age of seven, he was a pioneer in melting the soft tenderness of Urdu communication into the English diction in many of his lyrics, as per a website dedicated to Badr.

Badr wrote the famous couplet "Ujaale apni yaadon ke..." when he was in his teens.

He brought out more than seven collections of poems in Urdu and one in Hindi. He has to his credit several ghazal collections - 'Ikai', 'Image', 'Aamad', 'Aahat', 'Kulliyate Bashir Badr'.

Badr also penned two books of literary criticism - 'Azadi Ke Bad Urdu Ghazals Ka Tanqidi Mutala' and 'Biswin Sadi Mein Ghazal'.

He also brought out a collection of Urdu ghazals in the Devnagari script, titled 'Ujjale Apni Yadon ke'. His works have also been published in Gujarati and translated into English and French.

NTA details sweeping reforms before Supreme Court after NEET-UG Controversy

NEW DELHI

The National Testing Agency (NTA) has informed the Supreme Court that it has undertaken extensive structural, administrative and security reforms following the NEET-UG examination controversy that led to allegations of paper leaks and prompted a nationwide review of examination procedures.

The submission was made in response to petitions filed by the Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA) and the United Doctors Front (UDF), which have sought a comprehensive overhaul of the examination body and greater safeguards to ensure transparency and integrity in national-level entrance tests.

In an affidavit before the apex court, the NTA said a High-Powered Steering Committee (HPSC) reviewed preparations for NEET-UG 2026 during a meeting held on April 17 and recommended a series of measures covering every stage of the examination process.

The reforms introduced before the examination included mandatory verification of CCTV systems at all centres, preservation of surveillance footage for a minimum of 90 days, conduct of mock drills, weather-related contingency planning, inspection of power backup arrangements, availability of emergency medical facilities and detailed pre-examination audits of centres.

The agency stated that additional post-examination safeguards have also been introduced. These include forensic analysis of CCTV recordings to identify suspicious activity and procedural irregularities that may not be detected during the examination itself.

The NTA further informed the court that the HPSC will meet again after the completion of NEET-UG 2026 to evaluate whether future examinations should continue in the traditional pen-and-paper format or transition to a computer-based testing system. The decision will be taken in consultation with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

According to the affidavit, several recommendations made by the High-Level Committee of Experts constituted after the controversy have already been implemented, while others are at an advanced stage of execution.

As part of institutional restructuring, the NTA has created 16 senior-level positions, including Director and Joint Director posts. Two Joint Secretary-rank officers have been appointed as Additional Director Generals to oversee technology operations and examination security. A Secretary-rank officer assumed charge as Director General of the agency in March 2026.

The examination body also said that experts from premier institutions including IITs, CBSE, UGC, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan and IGNOU have been brought in to strengthen examination management systems and security protocols.

To improve coordination on the ground, State-Level Coordination Committees and District-Level Coordination Committees have been established across the country. These bodies include representatives from the administration, police, intelligence agencies, the National Informatics Centre and the NTA.

The agency told the Supreme Court that by the time NEET-UG 2026 was conducted on May 3, a total of 18 State-Level Coordination Committees and 621 District-Level Coordination Committees had been operationalised to enhance surveillance, monitoring and coordination during the examination process.

The affidavit marks the NTA's most detailed account so far of the reforms introduced after the NEET controversy, as the Supreme Court continues to examine demands for greater accountability and systemic changes in the conduct of national entrance examinations.

Commercial LPG prices hiked by Rs 42 per 19-kg cylinder; no change in domestic cooking gas rates

New Delhi

Prices of commercial LPG - the one used in hotels and restaurants - were on Monday hiked by Rs 42 per 19-kg cylinder but there was no change in the rates of cooking gas used in household kitchens.

The price of commercial LPG was hiked to Rs 3,113.50 per 19-kg cylinder from Rs 3,071.50 in Delhi, industry sources said.

Rates for the 14.2-kg domestic LPG cylinder used in household kitchens remained unchanged at Rs 913.

End of an Era: General Anil Chauhan Retires After Steering India's Military Reform Agenda

**SYSTEM OBSERVER
EXCLUSIVE**



NEW DELHI

General Anil Chauhan on Friday retired as India's Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), bringing to a close a distinguished military career spanning more than four decades and a tenure marked by efforts to strengthen jointness and integration among the armed forces.

The outgoing CDS received a ceremonial Tri-Services Guard of Honour at South Block and paid homage to fallen soldiers at the National War Memorial before formally concluding his military service.

Reflecting on his tenure, General Chauhan described it as "very satisfying and excellent," calling the farewell ceremonies symbolic of his transition from military service to civilian life.

A Four-Decade Military Journey

Commissioned into the 11 Gorkha Rifles of the Indian Army in 1981, General Chauhan rose through the ranks to become one of the country's most experienced military leaders.

During his career, he held several important operational and strategic appointments, including Director General of Military Operations and Military Adviser in the National Security Council Secretariat. He later commanded the Eastern Command, one of the Indian Army's most significant operational formations, before retiring from active service in May 2021.

In September 2022, the Government of India recalled him from retirement and appointed him as the country's second Chief of Defence Staff following the death of India's first CDS, General Bipin Rawat.

His appointment was viewed as a significant decision at a time when major military reforms were underway within the armed forces.

Driving Jointness and Integration

General Chauhan assumed office during a period of transformation in India's defence structure.

As CDS and Secretary of the Department of Military Affairs, he focused on strengthening

Outgoing Chief of Defence Staff concludes over four decades of service, leaving behind a legacy centred on jointness, integration and defence transformation.

coordination among the Army, Navy and Air Force while advancing long-term reforms aimed at improving operational synergy and integrated planning.

During his tenure, the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff released the Joint Air Defence Doctrine, an initiative intended to enhance cooperation among the three services and strengthen India's air defence preparedness.

The period also witnessed the launch of the Tri-Services Tele Directory Web Application, developed to improve communication and coordination across the defence establishment.

Defence officials have frequently highlighted these initiatives as steps towards deeper integration of the armed forces.

Theatreisation and Future Force Structure

One of the key issues associated with General Chauhan's tenure was the ongoing effort to develop integrated theatre commands.

The proposed reform seeks to enhance coordination among the three services through unified operational structures suited to modern warfare requirements.

While the theatre command model remains a work in progress, General Chauhan played an important role in advancing discussions and institutional preparations related to the project.

Military observers regard the initiative as one of the most ambitious organisational reforms undertaken by India's armed forces in recent decades.

Operation Sindoor and Strategic Challenges

General Chauhan's tenure also coincided with Operation Sindoor, a major military operation undertaken during a period of heightened security challenges.

As the country's senior-most military officer, he was part of India's higher defence leadership during the operation and participated in discussions concerning national security and military preparedness.

Defence analysts have pointed to the operation as an example of the increasing emphasis on coordinated planning among the services.

The "JAI" Vision

In his final addresses to personnel of the Department of Military Affairs and Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff, General Chauhan emphasised the importance of "JAI" - Jointness, Atmanirbharta and Innovation.

According to defence officials, the framework reflects his vision for a future-ready military that is integrated, technologically capable and increasingly self-reliant in defence production and innovation.

The concept is expected to continue influencing India's defence modernisation efforts in

the coming years.

Honours and Decorations

General Chauhan's long military career earned him several of the nation's highest military decorations, including the Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Uttam Yudh Seva Medal, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal, Sena Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal.

These honours recognise his contributions across operational, strategic and institutional domains of national security.

Closing a Significant Chapter

A few days before his retirement, General Chauhan chaired his final meeting of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, bringing together the leadership of the three armed services.

His retirement marks the conclusion of an important phase in India's military reform journey.

Defence observers believe his legacy will largely be associated with efforts to strengthen jointness, advance military integration and support the long-term transformation of India's defence structure.

While several reforms initiated during his tenure remain under implementation, General Anil Chauhan leaves office after helping shape the direction of India's evolving military architecture during a period of significant strategic change.

Admiral Krishna Swaminathan Assumes Charge as Chief of Naval Staff



NEW DELHI

Admiral Krishna Swaminathan on Sunday took over as the Chief of the Naval Staff, succeeding Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi, who demitted office upon completion of his tenure.

A highly decorated officer with nearly four decades of service in the Indian Navy, Admiral Swaminathan brings extensive operational and strategic experience to the country's top naval appointment. Prior to assuming charge, he served as the Vice

Chief of the Naval Staff and held several key command and staff assignments during his distinguished career.

Commissioned into the Indian Navy in July 1987, Admiral Swaminathan is a specialist in

Communication and Electronic Warfare. He has commanded major frontline naval platforms, including aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya and guided missile destroyer INS Mysore. He has also held important leadership position

CBI Arrests Former Judge Giribala Singh in Twisha Sharma Death Probe

BHOPAL

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Thursday arrested retired district judge Giribala Singh, mother-in-law of deceased model and actress Twisha Sharma, in connection with the high-profile death case that has drawn national attention.

The arrest came a day after the Madhya Pradesh High Court set aside the anticipatory bail granted to Singh by a Bhopal sessions court. Investigators questioned her and conducted searches at her residence in Bag Mughaliya Extension before taking her into custody. She was later taken for a medical examination, a mandatory procedure before being produced before a special CBI court.

High Court Clears Way for Arrest

The Madhya Pradesh High Court, while cancelling Singh's anticipatory bail, observed that the nature of allegations and the requirements of the investigation warranted custodial interrogation.

During the hearing, the prosecution argued that investigators needed direct access to the accused to verify evidence, examine witness statements and establish the sequence of events leading to Twisha Sharma's death.

The court's order removed the legal protection that had shielded the former judge from arrest since mid-May.

Death Under Investigation

Twisha Sharma, 33, a former beauty pageant winner and actress, was found dead at her matrimonial home in Bhopal's Katara Hills area on May 12.

Her family alleged that she had been

subjected to dowry-related harassment and cruelty following her marriage to advocate Samarth Singh in December 2025. The accused have denied wrongdoing.

The exact circumstances surrounding her death remain under investigation.

A second postmortem examination was conducted by a team of doctors from AIIMS New Delhi at AIIMS Bhopal after concerns were raised by the family regarding the initial investigation.

Husband Already in Custody

Twisha's husband, Samarth Singh, had earlier been arrested and placed in CBI custody. Investigators informed the court that both accused would be questioned face-to-face as part of efforts to verify statements and reconstruct events preceding the death.

According to officials, custodial interrogation is expected to focus on witness testimonies, digital evidence, forensic findings and the timeline of events before and after the incident.

Forensic and Digital Examination

The CBI has intensified its investigation since taking over the case on May 25. Teams have conducted detailed forensic examinations at the residence where Twisha Sharma was found dead.

Investigators have also undertaken digital mapping, scene reconstruction and analysis of electronic records as part of the ongoing probe.

Officials have stated that all available evidence, including communication records and forensic material, is being examined to determine whether any criminal offence was committed and, if so, by whom.

EDITORIAL



More than 300 people were left suspended mid air when a technical fault brought the Gulmarg Gondola to a halt across steep Himalayan terrain.

Cabins hung motionless above the valley. Weather conditions began to shift. Rain intensified, wind patterns changed, and visibility dropped across the slopes. In such terrain, time is not neutral. It increases risk. What could have followed was delay, confusion, and loss of control. That did not happen.

The High Altitude Warfare School moved immediately.

Maj Gen Puneet Doval, SM, Commandant HAWS, was on the ground as the situation unfolded. A control centre was established in coordination with 19 Division and the civil administration, bringing together the Indian Army, HAWS teams, SDRF, NDRF, Jammu and

ABOVE GULMARG, 300 LIVES WERE HANGING. ON THE GROUND, HAWS TOOK CONTROL.

Maj Gen Puneet Doval Leads From the Front as HAWS Teams Move Into the Most Critical Zone and Bring Back Every Stranded Tourist Safely



Kashmir Police, district authorities, and local volunteers into a single operational framework.

But coordination alone does not define an operation. Execution does.

A two point rescue approach was implemented with clarity. Teams advanced downward from Phase 1, while others moved upward from the gondola base station. The base zone presented the highest level of difficulty, with maximum height differential between the ground and the suspended cabins. That is where HAWS teams positioned themselves.

Not away from risk.

At its most critical point.

Rescue teams were assigned spe-

cific cabins, ensuring controlled and systematic evacuation. Nearly 312 tourists across approximately 60 to 65 gondola cabins were brought down through coordinated effort.

The operation was completed before last light.

No casualties were reported.

That outcome is not routine in such conditions. It reflects preparation, discipline, and the ability to act without hesitation when the environment offers no margin for error.

HAWS had recently conducted a contingency drill with the Gulmarg Development Authority. When the real situation emerged, there was no uncertainty. The transition from preparation to execution was immediate.

Maj Gen Puneet Doval remained engaged throughout the operation, leading from the ground, maintaining control over the response, and ensuring continuity in decision making as evacuations progressed.

Among those rescued was a pregnant woman, safely brought down by HAWS personnel and handed over for medical care.

More than 300 individuals returned safely.

This was not achieved by chance. It was carried out by teams who moved into difficult terrain under pressure, maintained coordination in low visibility conditions, and executed each phase without breakdown.

There was no broadcast as it unfolded.

No visibility into the effort in real time.

Only disciplined action.

There is often a tendency to measure such events only by their outcome. But outcomes are shaped by choices made under pressure.

In Gulmarg, the choice was clear.

To move forward.

To take control.

To finish the operation without loss.

SYSTEM OBSERVER

This is not written to amplify.

It is written to record.

More than 300 lives were at risk.

More than 300 lives returned.

That is the outcome.

The hidden health cost of emotional disconnection

Addressing India's jobs crisis

*The image is AI-generated.



By Pratiksha Vats

Many illnesses are not merely diseases of the body — they are expressions of an unheard mind. A significant part of human suffering today can be prevented, not only through medicine, but through awareness, emotional expression, and genuine human connection.

There is a quiet illness entering our homes. It carries no fever, appears in no diagnostic report, and yet settles invisibly into daily life — in missed conversations, in growing emotional distance between people who once shared everything effort-

lessly. In today's world, we measure love through responsibility — through how much we provide, how hard we work, how secure a future we build.

These intentions are genuine. But somewhere along the way, we have replaced presence with provision.

This absence is felt most deeply by those who rarely demand attention — our elders. Their meals are provided, medicines managed, comfort ensured. Yet emotional care remains missing. They sit quietly, near windows, watching time pass — not seeking entertainment, but

connection. What they often hear instead are familiar words: "I am busy," "Work is too much." These are not unkind words.

They come from responsibility. But over time, they replace emotional connection with explanation. Because love is not only measured in effort — it is felt in presence.

The World Health Organisation recognises that loneliness among older adults is not merely an emotional concern, but a serious health risk linked to depression, cognitive decline, and increased medical dependency. Loneliness does not remain only in the mind — it begins to shape the body. This pattern is not limited to elders.

Within relationships too, when emotional needs go unmet, they rarely surface as direct communication. Instead, they emerge as irritation, withdrawal, or unexplained physical symptoms — fatigue, headaches, persistent discomfort.

What appears as overreaction is often an unspoken need for closeness. A simple hug, a few minutes of undivided attention, can resolve what no argument can.

There is a deeper truth rarely acknowledged. In some families,

attention increases when illness appears — people gather, conversations slow, concern becomes visible.

Unconsciously, a connection forms: *when I am unwell, I am seen.* Over time, this emotional adaptation may shape behaviour. Medical visits begin serving a dual purpose — not only for physical care, but for moments of togetherness. The root cause is not medical.

It is emotional absence. When emotional needs remain consistently unmet, a quiet cycle begins — loneliness leads to physical discomfort, which brings temporary attention, only for loneliness to return.

This cycle may gradually increase medical dependency, even when no purely physical cause exists.

What can interrupt this cycle is not complexity — it is consistency.

A few minutes of undivided attention daily, genuine listening, simple questions asked with real interest — these are not small gestures. They are emotional anchors.

Before illness becomes the only language through which someone is heard, we have the chance to listen earlier. Because no one should have to fall sick just to feel seen.

IPL 2026: Seamers brilliance, Kohli's unbeaten 75 helps RCB defend their title

AHMEDABAD

Riding on Virat Kohli's unbeaten 75 and a disciplined display from their seamers, Royal Challengers Bengaluru defended their IPL crown with a five-wicket win over Gujarat Titans in the 2026 final at a packed Narendra Modi Stadium on Sunday.

Washington Sundar's fighting unbeaten 37-ball fifty took GT to 155/8, though Rasikh Salam Dar's 3-27 and early strikes from Josh Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar Kumar kept them in check on a mixed soil pitch. In reply, Kohli registered his fastest half-century in the league off 25 balls and anchored the chase of 156 with trademark authority by remaining unbeaten on 75 off 42 balls – laced with nine fours and three sixes, also his highest score in the IPL playoffs.

It also continued a remarkable streak – RCB have not lost a game since 2025 whenever Kohli has scored a fifty, as he ensured the side joined Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings as the only teams to successfully defend their IPL title, while extending the streak of Qualifier 1 winners lifting the trophy to nine seasons.

The win completed with two overs to spare also means Josh Hazlewood remains unbeaten in white-ball finals while Krunal Pandya has emerged victorious in every IPL final he's played in. GT, champions in 2022 at the same venue, were undone by disciplined RCB bowling and the scheduling grind of playing their third game at a third venue in six days, having reached Ahmedabad only on Saturday night due to inclement weather.

Kohli's landmark knock then turned the final into a one-sided affair, thus reaffirming his reputation as the man for the big occasion. With this clinical triumph in



Ahmedabad, RCB have not only defended their crown but also cemented their place among the league's most successful franchises, apart from having the rare honour of holding both WPL and IPL titles at the same time.

RCB's chase began with Kohli and Venkatesh Iyer tearing into GT's new-ball attack. Kohli unfurled a flurry of wristy flicks (one of which went for a jaw-dropping six) and pulls against Kagiso Rabada and Mohammed Siraj, and race to 28 off just 10 balls in just four overs, while Iyer smashed 32 off 16 deliveries despite battling a right knee niggle.

The pair brought up RCB's fifty inside 21 balls – the fastest in an IPL final – and ensured the asking rate was never a concern from the get go. Iyer eventually lobbed a pull to mid-on off Siraj and Rabada, who had conceded 37 in his first two overs, eventually dismissed Devdutt Padikkal cheaply when he sliced to third man.

By then, the damage had already been done by RCB. Rajat Patidar joined Kohli and kept the tempo high by pulling Siraj for six, before swivel-

ling off Jason Holder for four. Kohli, meanwhile, continued to keep going despite GT trying some mind games through Sai Sudharsan's chatter. But GT struck right after first time-out when Patidar holed out to long-on off Rashid Khan, who trapped Krunal Pandya plumb lbw in the same over.

With Tim David joining the boundary hitting act, Kohli got his fifty in 25 balls after pulling Arshad Khan though short mid-wicket for a boundary, despite struggling with cramps in his right leg. Though David gave a feather edge behind off Arshad Khan after GT got the decision in their favour via review, Kohli and Jitesh Sharma hit exquisite fours to take RCB closer.

Kohli then survived a caught out decision on 63 as replays showed the ball touched the ground while Gill was trying to take the diving catch at mid-on. Fittingly, Kohli finished off the chase by pulling Arshad in the gap between mid-on and mid-wicket before smacking him over long-on for six to spark jubilant celebrations in the RCB camp and their loyal fans after clinching the IPL title

once again.

Previously, amidst the collapse triggered by RCB's seamers executing their plans with precision, Sundar stood tall for GT. He survived an early scare when a catch taken by Jordan Cox was ruled grounded, and went on to anchor the innings with a composed fifty. After being pushed into batting first by RCB, GT endured a shaky start as Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar exploited bounce and movement off the pitch.

Gill was dismissed for 10 – slicing a short-arm pull to Patidar, while Sudharsan followed soon after top-edging a bouncer to Jitesh for 12. Nishant Sindhu and Jos Buttler tried to steady the innings, but with no coming boundary after the powerplay, the former holed out to long-on for 20. Buttler, frustrated by dot balls, advanced to attack off Krunal but was undone by a wide yorker and sharp stumping from Jitesh.

Arshad briefly lifted spirits by hitting the first six of the innings in the 13th over and breaking a 40-ball boundary drought, before falling to Hazlewood for 15. Rahul Tewatia miscued a loft off Rasikh, while Holder top-edged off Bhuvneshwar, and though Washington reached his fifty off 37 balls and Rashid cleared the ropes once to take GT past 150, it was never going to be enough to stop a rampaging RCB from defending the crown at the very venue where they had lifted their maiden title in 2025.

Brief Scores: Gujarat Titans 155/8 in 20 overs (Washington Sundar 50 not out, Nishant Sindhu 20; Rasikh Salam Dar 3-27, Bhuvneshwar Kumar 2-29) lost to Royal Challengers Bengaluru 161/5 in 18 overs (Virat Kohli 75 not out, Venkatesh Iyer 32; Rashid Khan 2-25) by five wickets

Kohli urges young cricketers to 'work behind the scenes' to make an 'impact on the field'

AHMEDABAD

After helping Royal Challengers Bengaluru defend their IPL crown, veteran batter Virat Kohli reflected on the evolution of his batting, the demands of modern T20 cricket and the lessons he hopes the next generation of Indian cricketers can take from his journey as he urged the up-and-coming cricketers to read the game well and play according to the demands and situation.

Kohli, who played a pivotal role in RCB's title-winning game on Sunday against the Gujarat Titans and finished the season with another impressive run-scoring effort, said the key to longevity is continuous improvement and adapting to the changing nature of the game.

"The fact that I continue to play and compete, I want to keep improving and find areas in my game where I can make a difference and help the team score. That's always been my focus," Kohli



said in a video shared by IPL.

Kohli turned his attention to young cricketers, stressing that success is not solely about power-hitting but about understanding match situations and developing multiple ways to contribute.

"It's about understanding situations in the game. The preparation has to be such that you can play in 3-4 different ways. If the pitch gets tough, you should be able to hit boundaries and not just sixes. Even if that's not possible, you should be able to rotate, strike and stay in the game," he said.

According to Kohli, the

foundation for those solutions is laid long before match day, and the former India captain expressed his desire to pass on those lessons whenever younger players seek his guidance.

"For that, you need to do the work behind the scenes when you're not competing. That's probably the process to go about things when you want to make an impact on the field. Hopefully, whoever comes to have a chat with me, I can convey the same message with clarity. Keep the standard of Indian cricket high," he mentioned.

He believes versatility is what separates good players from great ones, as he said, "I try to prepare a well-rounded game and try to implement that as best as I can in every situation that I play. That's the only thing I urge the youngsters to understand. Play according to the situation and the demands of the game. If you stay with the situation of the game, you're always going to be able to find solutions."

The veteran batter

acknowledged that T20 cricket has undergone significant changes in recent years, forcing even established players to reassess their methods. "The game is changing pretty rapidly. Just an opportunity for me to look at areas where I can get better. The explosive side of the game was something that needs to be taken care of nowadays."

While known more for timing and placement than brute power, Kohli explained how he has adapted without straying from his strengths and also pointed to a statistic that reinforces his value to the team.

"I'm not a guy who will hit 40-50 sixes in a season, but I can hit 70-80 fours. I really worked on that aspect of my game. I'm going to hit the shots I can hit more often and take the bowlers on. That's always been my goal to be as consistent and impactful as possible. Feels good to know that when I play longer in the game, our success rate is 100% for the last two seasons. That gives

me clarity as well that if I back for long enough in the game, our chances of winning improve significantly. Of course, it's a great feeling," the 37-year-old said.

Looking back at RCB's title defence, Kohli said the champions entered the final with complete confidence in their abilities after dominating the league stage. That belief, he said, was built on months of consistent performances.

"We came to the game today, didn't feel the same as last year. We were so relaxed, so confident of our skill sets and we just knew if we play to our potential, we are the best team in the comp."

"And the league stage was a proof of that. We finished top of the league table and ended up getting to the finals before everyone else. And yeah, just very professional, very mature performance from the whole team throughout the season. And yeah, we just didn't have any doubts coming in today," Kohli expressed.

RBI Reportedly Considering Revival of Polymer Banknotes, Official Confirmation Awaited



NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is reportedly considering reviving its long-pending plan to introduce polymer banknotes, according to multiple media reports published this week. However, no official announcement has yet been made by the central bank.

Reports by Business Standard, Mint, Moneycontrol and other financial publications state that the RBI has reviewed a proposal to introduce polymer currency through a pilot project aimed at improving the durability of banknotes and reducing

long-term currency management costs.

According to these reports, the matter was discussed during recent RBI Central Board meetings, where officials reportedly revisited a proposal that was first explored more than a decade ago.

India previously conducted field trials of 10 polymer banknotes in Mysuru, Shimla, Jaipur, Kochi and Bhubaneswar during 2012 and 2013. The initiative was later shelved due to operational and technological challenges.

Media reports suggest that a fresh pilot project could evalu-

ate the durability of polymer notes, their resistance to wear and tear, and their compatibility with existing banking infrastructure such as ATMs and cash processing systems. However, no timeline, denomination details or implementation framework have been officially disclosed.

Polymer banknotes are already used in several countries, including Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom. Supporters argue that such notes generally last longer, remain cleaner in circulation and can reduce replacement costs over time.

It is important to note that, as of May 31, 2026, the RBI has not issued any press release, circular or formal policy statement confirming the launch of a polymer banknote pilot. The reported revival of the proposal is based on media reports citing sources familiar with the discussions.

Until an official announcement is made, the proposal should be viewed as a reported development under consideration rather than a confirmed policy decision.

The System Observer will continue to monitor developments and provide updates if the Reserve Bank of India issues an official statement on the matter.

'Mantri Pradhan' epitome of incompetence, should follow 'rajdharm' and resign: Cong

NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday launched a scathing attack on the Modi government over the CBSE OSM row, saying the "Pradhan Mantri" has never been known to hold himself or his colleagues to any standard of probity or morality but the "Mantri Pradhan" should follow his "rajdharm" and immediately resign.

The opposition party reiterated its demand that Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan must resign immediately, alleging that he had presided "over one of the biggest institutional failures in India's education history".

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh shared a media report on X and said that after denying the cybersecurity vulnerabilities in its On Screen Marking (OSM) system for weeks, the CBSE has finally acknowledged that the system has been compromised.

But what action is it planning to take against its contractor COEMPT, he asked, adding, "not much".

It appears that the COEMPT's benefactors in the CBSE and the Ministry of Education anticipated that COEMPT would not be fit for the task, he said. In its August 2025 RFP, the CBSE had retained the power to blacklist vendors who were unable to deliver effectively, Ramesh pointed out.

In September, the CBSE issued a corrigendum which took away its own power to blacklist these vendors, he said.

"This is an inexplicable, government-backed attempt to save COEMPT, and it began even before COEMPT got the contract officially," Ramesh said in his post on X.

How much longer will the nation have to put up with Mantri Pradhan, whose Ministry has overseen and enabled such unfathomable irregularities in its tenders and which has cost lakhs of students their mental well-being, Ramesh asked taking a swipe at Pradhan.

"Mantri Pradhan is the very epitome of arrogance and incompetence, insistent on putting his political agenda above and beyond any responsibility to the nation," he alleged.

"The Pradhan Mantri (PM Narendra Modi) has never been known to hold himself or his colleagues to any standard of probity or morality. But the Mantri Pradhan should follow his rajdharm and resign," Ramesh said.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday attacked the Modi government over the CBSE's re-evaluation process and cost, saying that when education is treated not as a service but as a business, errors are not corrected but multiplied.

Several CBSE Class 12 students had flagged mix-up cases after accessing scanned copies uploaded on the portal and finding that the answer sheets did not belong to them.

Security agencies flag shift in Pro-Khalistan online recruitment tactics

SYSTEM OBSERVER
NATIONAL SECURITY DESK
NEW DELHI

Indian security agencies have identified a significant shift in the online outreach methods employed by pro-Khalistan elements operating from abroad, with social media platforms increasingly being used to attract young audiences through displays of weapons, luxury lifestyles and symbols of influence, according to intelligence assessments reviewed by System Observer.

Officials monitoring extremist activity say several accounts associated with pro-Khalistan narratives have moved beyond traditional political messaging and now frequently circulate images and videos featuring firearms, high-end vehicles, branded clothing and other aspirational content aimed at younger users.

Security experts believe the strategy is designed to generate attention and engagement among individuals who may be less responsive to conventional ideological propaganda.

Social Media as a Recruitment Tool

According to officials familiar with ongoing monitoring efforts, the content is often carefully curated to portray individuals linked to extremist causes as powerful, influential and socially admired.

Analysts note that the approach reflects a broader trend observed globally, where extremist organisations increasingly rely on visual content and social media algorithms to

expand their reach and cultivate support networks.

Concerns Over Radicalisation

Security agencies are particularly concerned about the potential impact of such content on vulnerable and impressionable audiences. Officials say online propaganda has evolved beyond speeches and slogans, incorporating lifestyle imagery designed to normalise or glamorise extremist narratives.

Counter-terrorism experts warn that sustained exposure to such content can contribute to gradual radicalisation and may assist recruitment efforts.

Increased Monitoring Underway

Punjab Police, central intelligence agencies and specialised counter-terrorism units have intensified monitoring of digital platforms suspected of hosting extremist propaganda.

Authorities are also examining links between overseas-based operators and online accounts targeting audiences in India.

Officials say efforts are underway to identify individuals responsible for managing such networks and to strengthen cooperation with international partners where required.

Emerging Security Challenge

Security experts describe the development as part of a larger evolution in extremist recruitment tactics, where influence operations increasingly begin in the digital space before moving into physical networks.

For investigators, the challenge lies in detecting and disrupting online radicalisation pathways before they translate

into real-world security threats.

This report is based on intelligence assessments, security briefings and ongoing monitoring by agencies. Certain operational details have been withheld in the interest of national security.

West Bengal cabinet undergoes expansion, 35 MLAs take oath as ministers

KOLKATA

West Bengal Governor RN Ravi on Monday administered oath to 35 MLAs as ministers in the state's first BJP-helmed cabinet, taking the total strength of Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari's council of ministers to 41.

While 13 BJP MLAs were sworn in as cabinet ministers, three were administered oath as ministers of state (Independent Charge) and 19 others were inducted in the council as ministers of state.

The ceremony took place at the Lok Bhavan here in the presence of Adhikari, the existing ministers of his cabinet and senior bureaucrats of the state administration.

Newly-elected BJP MLAs Swapn Dasgupta, Shankar Ghosh, Arjun Singh, Tapas Roy, Saradwat Mukherjee and Jagannath Chattopadhyay were among those who took oath as cabinet ministers.

Party MLAs Dudh Kumar Mondal, Deepak Burman, Manoj Oraon and Gouri Shankar Ghosh were also sworn in as cabinet ministers.

BJP legislators Rajesh Mahata, Indranil Khan and Malati Rava Roy were sworn in as ministers of state (Independent Charge) in the Suwendu Adhikari government.

Among the ministers of state who were administered the oath were Joyel Murmu, Ashok Dinda, Anandamoy

Burman, Kaushik Chowdhury, Gargi Das Ghosh, Bhaskar Bhattacharya, Dibakar Gharami and Sumana Sarkar.

BJP MLAs Santanu Pramanik, Purnima Chakraborty and Umesh Rai were also sworn in as ministers of state.

The current strength of ministers is now 41, three short of the maximum count that a government can have in the 294-member assembly.

The oath-taking ceremony was held three weeks after Adhikari was sworn in as the chief minister on May 9 in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the BJP's central leadership and CMs of NDA-ruled states.

Along with Adhikari, BJP legislators Dilip Ghosh, Agnimitra Paul, Nisith Pramanik, Ashok Kirtania and Kshudiram Tudu also took oath as ministers on that day.

The cabinet expansion was expected this week as Adhikari and state BJP chief Samik Bhattacharya held meetings in New Delhi with the party's central leadership last week about the induction of members in the council of ministers.

The May 9 swearing-in ceremony was held at the iconic Brigade Parade Grounds after the BJP secured 208 seats in the 294-member assembly in the recently concluded elections, ending the Trinamool Congress' 15-year rule and scripting its most significant electoral breakthrough in eastern India.

Rashami Desai says she's guilty of not spending enough time with her mother

Television actress Rashami Desai recently appeared in an emotional segment on the reality show "Tum Ho Naa - Ghar Ki Superstar", where she opened up about her relationship with her mother, Rasila Desai. The heartfelt conversation brought out deeply personal reflections about family bonds, emotional distance, and the silent sacrifices that often come with a demanding professional life in the entertainment industry.

During the episode, host Rajeev Khandelwal engaged in a candid conversation with Rasila Desai, asking her lightheartedly about Rashami's behaviour at home, particularly whether she "throws tantrums" like many assume actors do. With a warm smile, Rasila responded that while her daughter is generally not someone who creates drama at home, she does have her occasional moments like anyone else.

However, the tone of the discussion soon turned more emotional when Rasila spoke about how rarely she gets to spend time with her daughter due to Rashami's hectic work schedule. She revealed that both she and Rashami were previously busy with their respective



commitments, which left them with very little time for meaningful conversations. Now that she has retired, Rasila expressed a simple yet heartfelt desire-to spend more time with her daughter, sit together, and talk freely, something that has become rare in their current routine.

This led Rashami Desai to openly acknowledge her feelings of guilt over not being able to dedicate enough time to her mother. She admitted that despite her love and emotional connection, her professional commitments have often kept her away. The actress emotionally shared, "Hume actually time nahi milta hai... I realised, and I actually feel guilty today ki main bilkul time nahi deti," reflecting her inner conflict between career responsibilities and family obligations.

Rashami further reflected on how her mother's disciplined and hardworking lifestyle has significantly influenced her own personality. She spoke about growing up witnessing her mother's dedication to work, often managing on very little sleep and maintaining a strict routine. According to her, these early experiences shaped her mindset, making her accustomed to staying busy and

constantly engaged in work rather than remaining idle.

She shared that she began working at a very young age, around 16, which further reinforced this habit of constant activity. Rashami explained that this conditioning made her feel uncomfortable with inactivity, saying she always prefers to learn something or stay occupied whenever she gets time off from work. Even during short breaks, she avoids staying idle at home, reflecting the deeply ingrained work ethic she inherited from her upbringing. The emotional exchange between mother and daughter highlighted the often unseen personal struggles behind public life. While Rashami Desai continues to remain active in the entertainment industry with various television and reality show appearances, moments like these reveal the human side of celebrities-where success, dedication, and family emotions often intersect in complex ways.

The episode ultimately resonated with viewers for its honesty, as it showcased not just the bond between a mother and daughter, but also the universal theme of balancing ambition with personal relationships.

Divya Seth Shah says 'I'll look for signs every day' as she remembers late daughter Mihika

Actress Divya Seth Shah shared an emotional post on her social media account as she remembered her late daughter Mihika.

Through a compilation of beautiful moments from her daily life in a poignant video montage featuring birds, animals, food, nature and cherished memories, the actress stated on how she continues to feel her daughter's presence in the little signs she encounters around her every day.

The video shared by Divya opened with pigeons perched outside a window, followed by visuals of a wholesome meal, followed by a bird resting on a terrace wall, and pets playing together along with cats with their kittens, and many beautiful pictures of Mihika.

Alongside the visuals, Divya penned a heartfelt note that read, "I'll look for Signs everyday. I'll see you somehow every day. I have absolutely NO Doubt You send All this for Me. Surrounding Me With love and Happiness and Beauty. Everywhere I look I see only You."* The montage also featured a message that read, "I miss you so much. Every time I see something beautiful, I'm sure it's a sign from you."

Another frame carried an emotional quote, "Let me hold you as everything fades, and for a moment you're mine once more. And I won't miss you until I wake up."

Through the video, Divya appeared to highlight that the birds, animals and beautiful moments she witnesses each day, serve as reminders of her daughter who passed away at a very young age.

The actress, in the past top has



often used her social media to express her grief and love for Mihika.

For the uninitiated, Divya's daughter Mihika Shah passed away in August 2024 at the age of 23. According to reports, Mihika suffered a high fever and passed away shortly afterwards, leaving her family, friends devastated. Since then, Divya has continued to honour her daughter's memory through heartfelt and emotional social media posts.

On the professional front, Divya Seth Shah is known for her work in several popular television shows, including 'Hum Log', 'Banegi Apni Baat', 'Dekh Bhai Dekh' and 'Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi'. She is also the daughter of veteran actress Sushma Seth.

Tusshar Kapoor recalls his first meeting with his debut co-star Kareena Kapoor

Actor Tusshar Kapoor, who recently completed 25 years in the film industry recalled his first meeting with the leading lady in his debut movie, "Mujhe Kuch Kehna Hai", Kareena Kapoor.

Speaking exclusively to IANS, Tusshar revealed that he met Bebo in Kashmir while she accompanied his uncle Rishi Kapoor during the

shoot of the movie, "Sheshnaag", which also starred Tusshar's father Jeetendra.

When asked how well he knew Kareena before working together, the 'Golmaal' actor said, "We did not meet much as kids, maybe once or twice. We become close during my first and second film."

Recalling his first meeting with

"DISSOLVING IN YOU"

I looked for myself, but I found only you
In every speck of dust, in every ray of light, only YOU !
Everywhere I look, your face
Every atom I touch, your trace
Every breath is your name
Every step is your trail
I have dissolved like salt in the sea
There is no more 'me' left in me
Now, the 'I' has hollowed out
The vessel is empty of me
So it can be overflowing with you

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Crypto-Hawala Emerges as Key Financial Artery for Narco-Terror Networks

NEW DELHI

India's security agencies are increasingly concerned over the rise of "crypto-hawala", a sophisticated underground financial system that is rapidly replacing traditional hawala channels used by narcotics traffickers, arms smugglers, money launderers and terrorist groups.

Investigators say cryptocurrency-based transactions are being designed to resemble routine financial activity, making them significantly harder to detect and trace. The shift has created fresh challenges for law enforcement agencies tasked with tracking illicit cross-border financial flows.

According to intelligence inputs, a substantial portion of these transactions originates from narcotics trafficking. The proceeds are often routed through multiple cryptocurrency wallets and intermediary accounts before being diverted towards arms procurement, organised crime operations and

terror financing.

Security agencies have also flagged the involvement of transnational criminal syndicates, including networks linked to underworld figures such as Dawood Ibrahim and several Myanmar-based groups operating across South and Southeast Asia.

Particular concern has been raised over the growing use of crypto-hawala channels to finance violence, insurgency and destabilisation efforts in India's Northeast. Officials believe the same networks are being exploited to revive terror and separatist ecosystems in Jammu and Kashmir through covert financial support.

Investigations have revealed extensive use of "mule accounts", where individuals allow their bank accounts or digital wallets to be used for transferring illicit funds. These accounts serve as intermediaries, enabling handlers to move money through multiple layers and obscure its origin.

Intelligence agencies have identified handlers operating from China, Malaysia, Myanmar and Cambodia who allegedly directed individuals in Jammu and Kashmir to create anonymous cryptocurrency wallets using VPN services and non-KYC platforms. Such methods significantly reduce the visibility of transactions and complicate efforts to identify beneficiaries.

The threat has prompted heightened scrutiny from Indian enforcement and intelligence agencies. Authorities are increasingly relying on blockchain analytics, cyber-forensics and international cooperation to dismantle digital financial networks supporting organised crime and terrorism.

With cryptocurrency becoming a preferred tool for covert fund transfers, officials warn that crypto-hawala is rapidly emerging as one of the most significant challenges in the fight against narco-terrorism and terror financing.

Maruti Suzuki India posts highest-ever monthly sales at 2,42,688 units in May

NEW DELHI

Maruti Suzuki India on Monday reported its highest-ever monthly sales, with total dispatches rising 34.76 per cent year-on-year to a record 242,688 units in May.

The company had sold a total of 180,077 units in the same month last year, Maruti Suzuki India said.

Domestic sales also reached an all-time high of 193,535 units in May 2026 compared to 138,690 units in the year-ago month.

Sales to other OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturer) stood at 7,239 units in May.

Sales of min cars, comprising Alto and S-Presso, stood at 16,275 units last month compared to 6,776 units in May 2025. Sales of mini cars, comprising the Alto and S-Presso, rose to 16,275 units last month from 6,776

units in May 2025.

Compact cars, including Baleno, Celerio, Dzire, Ignis, Swift, and WagonR, sales rose to 81,555 units last month against 61,960 units in May 2025.

Sales of utility vehicles, comprising the Brezza, Ertiga, e Vitara, Fronx, Grand Vitara, Invicto, Jimny, Vitara and XL6, rose to 79,267 units in the month under review from 54,899 units in the corresponding month last year.

Similarly, sales of vans (Eeco) stood at 13,240 units in May 2026, compared with 12,327 units in the same month last year.

Sales of light commercial vehicle (LCV) Super Carry stood at 3,198 units compared to 2,728 units in the same month last year, Maruti Suzuki India said.

Exports stood at 41,914 units last month against 31,219 units in May 2025, the company added.

Trump facing new inflation warning from bond market, adding to his mid-term challenges

WASHINGTON,

The world is getting more uptight about lending money to President Donald Trump's government – causing interest rates to climb in ways that are worsening affordability pressures, hampering economic growth and creating a new risk for Republicans in November's mid-term elections.

The energy price spike triggered by the Iran war has seeped into the price of bonds that help fund the US government. Interest rates on a 10-year US Treasury note are topping 4.44%, up from 3.95% before the war started at the end of February.

Average mortgage rates have climbed to their highest levels in nine months, while auto sales are slumping.

The challenge is global in scale, as interest rates have risen for multiple countries as the world has been adjusting to the prospect of higher inflation, mounting questions about the sustainability of government debt and a dramatic surge in investment in artificial intelligence.

Trump has tried to assure Americans that he has a plan to trim the roughly USD 1.8 trillion annual budget deficit. In the past, he has pointed to revenue from tariffs, payments from foreigners for his "Gold Card" visa, spending cuts made by the Department of Government Efficiency, and faster economic growth.

Last week, he said the fraud task force led by Vice President JD Vance would be the key to unlocking massive savings.

"If he does really great, we'll have a balanced budget without having to do anything," Trump said.

Economists say Trump's strategies to meaningfully curb the deficit are unlikely to deliver the promised results.

The cost of servicing the national debt has tripled since 2021 to more than USD 1 trillion annually, said Jessica Riedl, a budget and tax fellow at the Brookings Institution.

"President Trump signed a tax cut bill that will likely add

USD 5 trillion to 10-year deficits – and tariffs are offsetting only a small fraction of those costs," she said. "Budget deficits are still projected to soar past \$4 trillion annually within a decade under current policies."

Deficits are expected to grow over the next decade as the costs of Social Security and Medicare outstrip tax revenues.

The 10-year US Treasury rate climbed as high as 4.67% in the middle of May and has since eased as negotiations over the Iran ceasefire continued – just as rates initially climbed in 2025 because of Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs and then began to decline once Trump backed off the most extreme increases.

When Kent Smetters, faculty director of the Penn Wharton Budget Model, broke down the math tied to rising 30-year Treasury yields, he estimated that 60% of the increase had come from the expectation that America will continue its outsized borrowing and the other 40% was tied to the inflation driven by the Iran war and Trump's tariffs.

Glenn Hubbard, a former chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers during the George W Bush administration, worries that the US may no longer have the same borrowing capacity as before to effectively combat an economic crisis, such as the 2008 crash or the coronavirus pandemic.

"I don't think we have the space that we had in 2008 or 2020 to deal with it," said Hubbard, now a professor at Columbia University's Business School. "Washington doesn't seem to be full of ideas – good or bad – to solve it."

Higher interest rates are giving Democratic candidates in the races to determine control of the House and Senate another line of attack at a time when voters are concerned about high costs for food and gasoline.

In Colorado's fifth congressional district, Democrat Jessica Killin is leaning into the message that the persistent deficits and higher interest rates make it harder to buy or

renovate a home, afford a new car or manage credit card debt.

"Things are already expensive," said Killin, an Army veteran who was a top aide to Doug Emhoff, the former second gentleman. "We can already talk about gas, but the cost of borrowing only makes that worse."

Joe Reagan, an Army veteran also seeking the Democratic nomination, said in an email that he is talking "a lot about fiscal stewardship" in his campaign. "Every dollar spent paying interest is a dollar that isn't being invested in infrastructure, education, veterans' services, or economic growth," he said.

They are challenging Republican Rep Jeff Crank in a district that their party views as a potential pickup. Killin said the deficit is an example of how "Trump says one thing and does the opposite."

In his March 2025 address to Congress, Trump declared that "in the near future, I want to do what has not been done in 24 years: balance the federal budget. We're going to balance it."

Crank, the Republican incumbent, did not reply to requests for comment.

The administration maintains that it is going to steadily reduce budget deficits. As a share of the overall economy, the deficit last year was lower than it was in 2024, though that drop depended in part on tariff revenues that are subject to refunds after the Supreme Court ruled them to be illegal.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent last week cited a report showing that there was as much as USD 500 billion annually in fraudulent government spending that could be eliminated, "so that would reduce the deficit substantially."

Bessent appeared to draw that conclusion from a 2024 report by the Government Accountability Office that estimated there had been between USD 233 billion to USD 521 billion each year in fraudulent spending. But those numbers were drawn in part from the pandemic era when the government borrowed heavily to stabilise the economy.

MCX launches 'Silver 100' futures to open silver market to small investors

NEW DELHI

Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) on Monday launched 'Silver 100' futures contracts, enabling retail investors and small jewellers to gain exposure to silver in quantities as low as 100 grams, expanding access to a market previously dominated by larger institutional players.

The new contract adds to MCX's existing silver futures lineup of 30 kg, 5 kg and 1 kg contracts, and monthly options in 30 kg and 5 kg denominations. Clearing and settlement will be handled by the Multi Commodity Exchange Clearing Corporation Limited (MCXCCL).

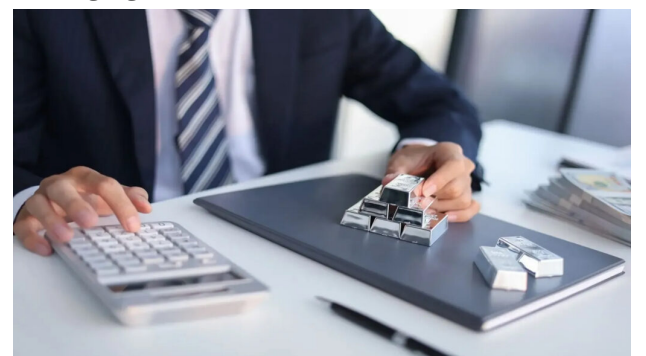
"The Silver 100 futures contract helps businesses in India's silver industry protect themselves against price volatility," said Praveena Rai, Managing Director and

CEO of MCX in a regulatory filing.

"Local jewellery businesses can now hedge or take delivery in quantities that are better aligned with their inventory needs."

The smaller denomination is designed to reduce capital requirements for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and retail participants, while offering quality-assured physical delivery with transparent making charges at contract expiry.

MCX said the contract was developed in response to market feedback from industry participants. The exchange has also issued a separate circular revising its good delivery norms for silver, inviting domestic refiners to be empanelled, a move aimed at reducing India's dependence on silver imports and boosting domestic recycling.



Floral Tributes Paid to Prof. Bhim Singh on 4th Death Anniversary



**SYSTEM OBSERVER
REASI**

On the solemn occasion of the fourth death anniversary of Prof. Bhim Singh, the legendary founder of the J&K National Panthers Party (JKNPP), rich floral tributes were paid in his honour at the Migrant Camp in Talwara, Reasi. Leaders, activists, members of JKNPP (Bhim) and Jammu migrants gathered in large numbers to commemorate his unparalleled contributions to society and his unwavering commitment to justice and equality.

While addressing the gathering, Vilakshan Singh, President of JKNPP (Bhim), highlighted the monumental role played by Prof. Bhim Singh in the historic fight for rights and justice, particularly for the long-suffering Jammu migrants. Singh firmly declared that JKNPP (Bhim) shall faithfully carry forward the glorious legacy of Prof. Bhim Singh and will not rest until the issues plaguing the Jammu migrants are fully resolved.

Taking a strong political stand, Vilakshan Singh asserted that the ultimate and only viable solution for ending the decades-long systemic discrimi-

nation against the region lies in the creation of a separate state of Jammu. He urged the public to rally behind the party to ensure justice and fair opportunities for the Dogra community.

Describing Prof. Bhim Singh as a politician par excellence, Vilakshan Singh emphasized that the late leader never compromised on his principles, no matter how adverse the circumstances. His dedication to the cause of the poor and downtrodden was unwavering, and his passing has left a massive void in the political landscape that remains difficult to fill.

Prof. Bhim Singh was a staunch advocate for justice, fearlessly opposing discriminatory policies such as the draconian Resettlement Act and the deprivation of women's state subject status after marriage. He fought against all forms of discrimination, regardless of caste, colour, or creed, and was widely regarded as one of the most secular leaders in the country. Once convinced that an injustice had been committed, he fought tooth and nail to rectify it, without concern for religious or political affiliations.

In addition to his battles for social justice, Prof. Bhim Singh

JKNPP (Bhim) reiterates demand for Separate Statehood for Jammu.

was a tireless crusader for the rights of the Dogra community, fighting against the Kashmiri leadership that continues to treat Dogras as second-class citizens. He strongly opposed this systematic marginalization and worked relentlessly to ensure fair representation and equal rights for the Dogras. Vilakshan Singh noted that this discrimination continues unabated today, and JKNPP (Bhim) shall persist in its struggle to secure the rightful place of the Dogras in Jammu & Kashmir's political and social fabric.

Beyond his political career, Prof. Bhim Singh was a multifaceted personality, excelling as a lawyer, writer, and activist. He was renowned for his legal battles in defence of human rights, often taking complex cases to the Supreme Court of India to challenge structural injustices. His contributions also extended beyond national borders through his active engagement in international advocacy for peace and justice.

Reaffirming its commitment to the core struggle for "Haq-Insaf" (Right and Justice), the J&K National Panthers Party (Bhim) vowed to strengthen its grassroots presence, emphasizing that it remains the only political force in J&K truly capable of fulfilling the aspirations of the people of Jammu.

Other prominent leaders who spoke on the occasion included Naresh Chib, Balwan Singh, Sanju Bhagat, Rajan Jamwal, Ravinder Singh, Sanjeev Verma, Sumitara Devi and several others, all of whom echoed the sentiments of Prof. Bhim Singh's enduring impact on the socio-political fabric of the region.

MLA Mohan Lal Bhagat listens to PM Modi's 134th Episode of 'Mann Ki Baat', Interacts with Local Residents

**SYSTEM OBSERVER
AKHNOOR**

MLA Akhnoor Mohan Lal Bhagat on Sunday listened to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 134th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat' along with BJP leaders, party workers and local residents at Polling Booth Nos. 12 and 13 in Ghai Khadwani village of Sohal Sungal Mandal.

The programme was attended by BJP District Prabhari Vinay Gupta, Mandal President Shamsheer Dass, former Councillor Rakesh Malhotra, former Sarpanch Ashwini Sharma, Pal Sharma, Yuva Morcha President Bindu Singh, Mandal General Secretary Shyam Lal, Jagdish Singh, Sardari Lal, Darshan Chib, Babu Ram, Vijay Thapa, Raj Kumar and several other party workers and residents.

During the broadcast, Prime Minister Modi highlighted the

importance of environmental conservation, water preservation, sports development and community-driven initiatives. He lauded efforts to revive the Manorama River in Uttar Pradesh, conservation measures for Gangetic dolphins, and various grassroots initiatives across the country that are bringing positive social change through public participation. The Prime Minister also encouraged youth to contribute towards nation-building through innovation, sports and social service.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Mohan Lal Bhagat said that Mann Ki Baat has emerged as a powerful platform that showcases inspiring stories of ordinary citizens and motivates people to actively participate in social and national causes. He emphasized that environmental protection and water conservation are collective responsibilities

and called upon citizens to contribute towards a cleaner and greener India.

BJP District Prabhari Vinay Gupta said that the Prime Minister's message inspires people to adopt positive practices and become active partners in the nation's development journey. Mandal President Shamsheer Dass remarked that Mann Ki Baat continues to motivate youth towards innovation, social responsibility and constructive community engagement.

Following the programme, MLA Mohan Lal Bhagat interacted with local residents and listened to their grievances. He assured them of prompt redressal of their issues and also spoke to concerned officials over the phone, issuing necessary directions for the resolution of several public matters on priority.

DC Kishtwar reviews arrangements for upcoming Shri Mindhal Mata Yatra 2026

KISHTWAR

Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma today convened a review meeting to finalize preparations for the upcoming Shri Mindhal Mata Yatra 2026. The review meeting focused on ensuring the smooth conduct of the Yatra and the provision of essential services for the pilgrims.

The Deputy Commissioner issued key directions for adequate arrangements at the Gauri Shankar Temple, Sarkoot and en route to the holy shrine of Shri Mindhal Mata. He directed the concerned departments to ensure the availability of essential commodities including uninterrupted water and power supply, maintenance of roads, especially at landslide-prone areas en route to Mindhal Mata, proper boarding and lodging facilities for the yatri at the stay venues, security arrangements and proper sanitation facilities for the devotees.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the JPDCL and Jal Shakti Department to provide 24x7 uninterrupted power and water supply, respectively, at Langar venues and stay venues for the yatri.

The Health Department was directed to ensure the deployment of medical staff at the stay venues of the yatri, viz. Sarkoot Mandir Kishtwar, Gulabgarh Padder, Maha Kali Mandir Sohal and at Langar venues to provide first-aid facilities. Further, it was also directed to ensure the availability of ambulance services at these locations for any emergency.

The Municipal Council was directed to ensure cleanliness at the Gauri Shankar Mandir premises. The Police Department was instructed to coordinate with the Himachal Pradesh Police to ensure proper security arrangements en route to Mindhal Mata up to the jurisdiction of district Kishtwar, besides the deployment of security personnel at Langar venues.

For effective crowd and vehicle movement, the ARTO and Traffic Police have been tasked with comprehensive traffic management along the Yatra route.

Additionally, the PMGSY, GREF and BRO have been directed to carry out timely road maintenance to ensure the safe and uninterrupted travel of pilgrims.

It is noteworthy that the Holy Mace of Shri Mindhal Mata Yatra is scheduled to arrive at the Gauri Shankar Temple Kishtwar on June 10, 2026.

The meeting was attended by ADC Pawan Kotwal CEO KDA Kaiser Bhawani, ACR Idrees lone, Tehsildar Nirbhay Sharma besides other officers and concerned staff.

DC Samba interacts with patients at ATF Centre under 100 Days Nasha Mukh Bharat Campaign

SAMBA

Under the ongoing 100 Days Nasha Mukh Bharat Campaign in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, an interaction session was held today at the Conference Hall of District Hospital Samba with substance abuse patients registered at the Addiction Treatment Facility, DH Samba.

Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan presided over the programme and held a healthy discussion with the registered patients. During the interaction, the Deputy Commissioner patiently listened to the experiences and treatment history of the patients. A proposal regarding rehabilitation was also put forth by the participants.

The Deputy Commissioner issued directions to the Incharge Mission YUVA and Incharge Industries to explore avenues for rehabilitating these patients through suitable employment generation schemes. The Deputy Commissioner also interacted with the parents of substance abuse patients and discussed various aspects related to their recovery and rehabilitation.

The Chief Medical Officer Dr. Vidhhi Bhatiyal appealed to the patients to take regular medicines from the ATF Centre established at DH Samba. She also urged them to motivate and refer more substance abuse affected individuals to the Centre so that they can receive treatment and care in a timely and effective manner.

Director Agriculture Jammu inspects Seed Multiplication Farm Chinore



JAMMU

Director Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Jammu Anil Gupta today visited Seed Multiplication Farm (SMF) Chinore and reviewed the functioning and ongoing agricultural activities at the farm.

During the visit, the Director reviewed the completion of Rabi harvesting operations and assessed the crop produce harvested at the farm. He also took stock of preparedness for the upcoming Kharif season and reviewed the arrangements being made for sowing activities. The status of foundation and breeder seed production of elite

and high-yielding varieties of paddy and other Kharif crops was also reviewed during the inspection.

The Director examined the latest farm machinery being utilised for agricultural operations and inspected the availability of essential agricultural inputs and operational machinery required for the ensuing Kharif season. He directed the officers and field staff to ensure timely availability of machinery and inputs for smooth conduct of farm operations.

He emphasised that efficient use of modern machinery, scientific farming methods and advanced production technolo-

gies should be adopted to further enhance productivity and farm efficiency. The Director further stated that there remains considerable scope for boosting agricultural production through improved farm management practices and effective implementation of modern techniques.

The Director also inspected irrigation infrastructure and other facilities available at the farm and issued necessary directions for further strengthening irrigation arrangements and maintenance of farm assets to support timely agricultural operations.

During the inspection, Director Agriculture inspected the harvested Rabi produce of different crops including wheat, mustard and oats. He stressed upon proper storage, handling and safety measures for maintaining seed quality standards and directed the concerned staff to ensure that the quality of seed does not deteriorate during storage till the produce is shifted to the seed processing plant.

While reviewing preparations for the Kharif season, the Director took stock of the insowing plan and instructed the farm staff to take all necessary measures for timely sowing of Kharif crops strictly as per the approved action plan.

Among others, Joint Director Agriculture (Farms/SLUB) Aman Jyoti Sharma, Farm Manager SM Farm Chinore Verinder Dogra, besides other officers and officials accompanied the Director during the visit.

Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner reviews arrangements for Mela Kheer Bhawani Yatra 2026



JAMMU

A meeting was held under the chairmanship of Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (M) J&K Dr. Arvind Karwani to review the necessary arrangements for Jyeshtha Ashtami, Mela Kheer Bhawani Yatra-2026 falling on 22 June, 2026.

Deputy Commissioner Relief, Assistant Commissioners Relief, Chief Accounts Officer, Zonal Officers/Camp Commandants, Camp Incharges of Kashmir Valley and representatives of various social and religious organisations associated traditionally with the conduct of the Yatra for Mata Kheer Bhawani Tulmulla (Ganderbal), Mata Kheer Bhawani Ashthapan

Tikker (Kupwara), Khanabari Devsar (Kulgam), Kheer Bhawani Asthan Manzgam (Kulgam) and Mata Ragnya Bagwati Asthan Trust Logripora (Pahalgam) participated.

The representatives of various organisations raised issues for the successful conduct of the Yatra such as requirement of transportation, boarding and lodging arrangements, water supply and power supply, sanitation, installation of tents, essential commodities, availability of blankets, medical facility, availability of fire tenders, repair of roads and lanes, cultural events and security arrangements.

The chair highlighted the importance of Mela Kheer

Bhawani Festival, particularly for the Kashmiri Pandit community and assured that every effort shall be made in coordination with the concerned district and divisional administration to put in place necessary arrangements for Mela Kheer Bhawani Yatra well in time and make it better than last year.

The senior officers of Relief Organisation were directed to visit the various sites of Yatra in Ganderbal, Anantnag, Kulgam and Kupwara districts to assess the requirements on ground and coordinate with the concerned officers and social and religious organisations to ensure the necessary arrangements are in place well in time before the commencement of the Yatra.

MoU signed for strengthening healthcare services in Samba under CSR Initiative

SAMBA

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed today between Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Chandigarh Central Rotary Club Trust and the Office of the Chief Medical Officer Samba, in the august presence of the Deputy Commissioner Ayushi Sudan for strengthening healthcare services in the district through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) support.

Under this initiative, IOCL will provide one Colour Doppler Ultrasound Machine and one Critical Life Support Ambulance to the Office of the Chief Medical Officer Samba for Government Hospital Ghagwal. The MoU signing ceremony was held today at Samba.

The initiative aims to enhance diagnostic and emergency healthcare facilities for the people of the area and reflects the shared commitment of all stakeholders towards improving public healthcare infrastructure and patient care services.

The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the collaborative effort and emphasized that the addition of advanced medical equipment and a life support ambulance would significantly benefit the residents of the region, particularly in emergency and critical care situations.

Representatives from IOCL, Chandigarh Central Rotary Club Trust, the Health Department and district administration were present during the signing ceremony.

DC Reasi reviews functioning of District Telecom Committee

REASI

Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek chaired a meeting to review the functioning and progress of the District Telecom Committee in the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed telecom connectivity, installation of mobile towers, network coverage in rural and remote areas and issues related to strengthening communication infrastructure across the district. Officers from the concerned departments and representatives of telecom service providers briefed the chair on the status of ongoing projects and the challenges faced in ensuring seamless telecom services.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the status of land allotment for installation of mobile towers and directed the Tehsildars to identify suitable state land within their respective jurisdictions for the purpose. He stressed the need for timely resolution of pending issues to facilitate the early commencement of telecom infrastructure projects.

He directed telecom companies to obtain necessary permissions from the concerned departments before undertaking any digging work. He instructed officers to identify shadow areas and take appropriate measures to strengthen network coverage in such locations.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments and telecom operators to work in close coordination to ensure timely execution of projects and expansion of telecom facilities in uncovered and underserved areas of the district.

Among others, Additional Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Kumar, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Nitin Verma, Assistant Commissioner Development Mukesh Sharma, Divisional Forest Officer, Tehsildars and other concerned officers were present in the meeting.

ADC conducts market checking drive in Bhaderwah town

BHADERWAH

In view of the ensuing Eid-ul-Adha festival, a comprehensive market checking drive was conducted today in Bhaderwah town under the supervision of Additional Deputy Commissioner Sunil Kumar Bhutyal to ensure strict adherence to market regulations and maintain discipline among shopkeepers.

The drive witnessed active participation from Assistant Superintendent of Police Vinod Sharma, Sub-Division Police Officer Naveed Shoket, Executive Officer Municipality Committee Ravi Saini, Naib Tehsildar Athkar Mohd Ameen, Veterinary Department, TSO Miyan Mehmood, Traffic Police and concerned departments.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah meets delegations at Raabita

Discussions held on banking, youth development, heritage conservation



**SYSTEM OBSERVER
SRINAGAR**

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

Managing Director and CEO

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

Director General of the

National Cadet Corps (NCC), Lt. Gen. Virendra Vats, accompanied by Additional Director General, NCC Directorate J&K and Ladakh, Maj. Gen. Anupinder Bevli, also met the Chief Minister. The delegation discussed matters relating to NCC activities, youth engagement and the expansion of cadet initiatives across Jammu and Kashmir.

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

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

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

DC Ramban chairs NCORD meeting, reviews anti-drug measures under Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan

RAMBAN

A meeting of the District-Level Narco Coordination Committee (NCORD) was held today at Ramban under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan to review ongoing anti-narcotics measures and strengthen coordinated efforts to curb drug abuse across the district under the Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan.

SSP Arun Gupta, ADC Varunjeet Singh Charak, Chief Medical Officer Kamal Zadur, CHO, Tehsildar, DSWO, BDO, Drug Control Officer and officers from various enforcement and line departments attended the meeting. Sub-Divisional Magistrates, Tehsildars and other concerned officers participated through virtual mode.

Reviewing the implementation of directions issued in the previous meeting, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Drug Inspector to take strict action in close coordination with the concerned Tehsildars and Police Department, besides intensifying enforcement drives.

He directed the SDMs, Tehsildars and Excise Department to maintain strict vigil on illegal poppy and cannabis cultivation and take immediate action wherever such cultivation is detected. He called for innovative interventions and focused analysis to understand the root causes leading youth towards substance abuse and ensure strict surveillance in vulnerable areas.

Reviewing the functioning of the Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) at District Hospital Ramban, the DC directed the Chief Medical Officer to ensure proper functioning of the IPD facility and provide quality medical care, counselling and follow-up support for effective rehabilitation and prevention of relapse.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the progress achieved by various departments under the ongoing 100-day Nasha Mukht Jammu and Kashmir campaign and directed officers to implement all scheduled activities in a time-bound manner. He directed the ACD to strengthen the functioning of Panchayat Level Monitoring Committees and Panchayat-level Mahila Samitis across the district.

The DC directed the DSWO to submit details of events conducted by the Nodal Officers in their allotted Panchayats under the campaign.

All concerned officers were instructed to intensify awareness under the 'Nasha Mukht Abhiyan' through IEC activities in both government and private institutions. The Excise Department was directed to prepare a comprehensive awareness plan to educate the public about the ill effects of drug abuse.

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

RAJOURI

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

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

He directed the concerned officers to formulate proper Bills of Materials (BOMs) and ensure that tenders are floated and allotted within the stipulated timelines so that developmental works are initiated without unnecessary delay. He further stressed that all works should be started promptly and completed within the prescribed timelines to ensure timely public benefit and effective utilization of resources.

The Deputy Commissioner also instructed the officers to maintain close monitoring of all ongoing works and ensure that quality standards are strictly maintained during execution. While interacting with the officers and officials, the Deputy Commissioner reiterated the importance of efficient project management, timely completion of works and transparent implementation for strengthening public trust and improving service delivery at the grassroots level.

CS Reviews progress of digitization & modernization of land records in J&K

Stresses on futuristic AgriStack, ULI integration with digitized records for greater farmer welfare

**SYSTEM OBSERVER
SRINAGAR**

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

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

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

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

The Chief Secretary directed the concerned Tehsildars to certify that no backlog mutations

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

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

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

The Chief Secretary also stressed upon transitioning fully towards digital crop surveys during the upcoming agricultural seasons for effective implementation of AgriStack. He further directed the Financial Commissioner (Revenue) to

evolve a mechanism for tracing the chain of custody of missing Mussavis and revenue records and initiate strict action against officials found responsible for any tampering or disappearance of records.

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

Speaking during the meeting, Financial Commissioner (Revenue), Shaleen Kabra, emphasized upon the Deputy Commissioners to undertake rectification of records strictly in accordance with the prevailing legal provisions, particularly Section 32 of the Land Revenue Act, which empowers them to carry out such corrections. He observed that timely rectification at the district level would substantially reduce the burden of grievances reaching higher offices and help in making the land records largely error-free.

The Financial Commissioner also stressed upon tracing the complete custody trail of missing records so that the actual culprits are identified and proceeded against under the law.

Earlier, Secretary Revenue gave a detailed presentation on the progress achieved under various components of the digitization programme. <

Serve Parents with Devotion; Human Life is Meant for Spiritual Awakening: Sadguru Shri Madhu Paramhans Ji Maharaj

SYSTEM OBSERVER
AKHNOOR

Sadguru Shri Madhu Paramhans Ji Maharaj of Sahib Bandgi, while showering the congregation with the nectar of his discourses today at Ranjri, Jammu, stated that one must first learn *how* to live life. Nowadays, children do not serve their parents. When parents grow old, some children even physically abuse them. This is a sin. A child remains indebted to their parents for their entire lifetime. Sahib has accorded immense reverence to parents; therefore, obey your parents.

Parents raise their children with painstaking effort and care, yet those very children end up mistreating them. Regardless of how your parents behave once they have aged, it is your duty to look after them. Continue to perform your own duties diligently; this is your responsibility. Only then do you receive the blessings of your parents. Never cause them any dis-



treass. Even if they scold or verbally abuse you, simply listen; do not offer any retort. Never harbor arrogance regarding the physical body. This body is inherently lowly; even its beauty is transient. It is filled with filth and waste. Consider it a bargain if you attain the Guru even at the cost of your very head. If you fail to bathe for even a single day, the body begins to emit a foul odor. A body that is devoid of

the *Naam* (the Divine Name) is akin to a cremation ground.

Observe the great trees: their density eventually diminishes, their leaves begin to shed, and eventually, the massive tree comes crashing down to the earth. In precisely this manner, this physical body is destined to perish. It is composed of fragile, elemental constituents. It is perhaps fortunate that this body is made



of mere flesh and bone; had it been made of iron, how much greater would our arrogance have been! There is absolutely no certainty regarding this body. No matter how much protection you provide it, the absolute truth remains that, in the end, this body will inevitably turn to dust.

Regarding the *Naam*, Sahib declares that *Kaal* (the Lord of Time/Death) will not dare to approach you;

Maya (the Illusion) itself will recoil in fear upon seeing you. Once you have received the *Naam*, a wondrous power will remain constantly by your side—a power that will continuously refine you and sustain you. You are, in fact, already acquainted with this power. Therefore, make time to engage in *Sumiran* (remembrance of the Divine Name); through this practice, you will become spiritually strong and steadfast.

Div Com, IGP review arrangements at Bhagwati Nagar, Tawi River Front & Railway Station



SYSTEM OBSERVER
JAMMU

Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar and Inspector General of Police Bhim Sen Tuti today chaired a meeting with HODs and nodal officers at Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas to review arrangements and preparations for annual Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2026.

MD JPDCL, DIG JSK Range, DIG Traffic Jammu Zone, Commissioner JMC Jammu, Deputy Commissioner Jammu, ADC Jammu, MD JKRTC, Director Tourism, SSP Jammu, SSP Security, SSP Traffic, Director Health, Chief Engineers of executive Agencies, Joint Director Information, RTO Jammu and other officers attended the meeting.

The Divisional Commissioner took stock of the ongoing preparations and works undertaken by different departments to provide a convenient and hassle-free stay to the pilgrims at the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas before they depart to Baltal and Pahalgam base camps.

The Divisional

Commissioner reviewed repair and renovation works targeted to be completed by June 15. He directed stakeholder departments to install additional water coolers, backup generator sets, German hangars and water taps in langar areas. He further called for augmentation of Cloak room facility, sanitation and illumination within the premises, besides ensuring availability of doctors, ambulances and sufficient stock of medicines at the base camp. The accommodation for security personnel was also reviewed.

He also called for preparing a duty roster for officials of line departments who shall remain available at the Yatri Niwas Control Room for providing immediate services, whenever needed.

It was informed that this year the Token Centre for on-spot registration and RFID shall be established at Tawi River Front, relieving the traffic and crowd issues at Railway Station. To facilitate smooth registration, the Divisional Commissioner directed for making adequate arrangements of drinking water, German

hangars, barricading for queue management and Toilet facilities at the Tawi River front. He also directed for providing vehicles to ferry the pilgrims between Tawi Riverfront and the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas.

Further directions were issued for installing Display Boards and Signages to guide pilgrims about the direction and distance to the tourist attraction places within and around Jammu City. Provision of hourly Bus service on the identified routes is also being made to facilitate pilgrims wishing to visit tourist spots and go for sightseeing.

The IGP Jammu directed the concerned officers for making proper arrangements for paramilitary companies. He called for seamless coordination between the security forces and administration for timely completion of all the necessary preparations for smooth conduct of SANJY 2026.

Later, the Divisional Commissioner and IGP visited Tawi River Front and Railway Station. The Div Com asked Director Health Services to set up a 5-bed medical facility at Tawi riverfront. He further called for formulating a plan for parking of vehicles bringing the pilgrims. A separate Nodal Officer shall be designated for Tawi River Front Token Centre, he informed.

Directions were also issued for formulating a meticulous traffic regulation plan and beautification of the entire Jammu city to give it a vibrant and festive look during the period of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2026.

84 Bn CRPF celebrates 41st Raising Day at Chanderkote-Ramban

SYSTEM OBSERVER
RAMBAN

Central Reserve Police Force's 84 Battalion celebrated its 41st Raising Day with great enthusiasm and pride at Tactical Headquarters Chanderkote, Ramban, today.

Raised on June 1, 1985, at Group Centre CRPF, New Delhi, the Battalion has rendered distinguished and selfless service to the Nation across various operational theatres, including Jammu & Kashmir, the North Eastern States and Punjab, where it played a significant role in counter-insurgency and anti-militancy operations.

Since 2010, the Battalion has been deployed in Jammu & Kashmir and is entrusted with the crucial responsibility of securing National Highway-44, the lifeline of the Kashmir Valley, over a stretch of nearly 47 kilometres in District Ramban.

The Raising Day celebrations commenced at the Sarv Dharm Prarthana Sthal, where officers and personnel prayed for peace, prosperity, and success in the year ahead. The

Battalion also paid homage to its brave martyrs who made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the Nation. A ceremonial flag hoisting was conducted at the Quarter Guard, followed by a Guard of Honour presented to Commandant 84 Bn CRPF, N Ranbir Singh.

Addressing the troops during a Sainik Sammelan, the Commandant extended greetings and best wishes to all ranks and their families. He highlighted the glorious history and achievements of the Force and the Battalion, and urged personnel to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, dedication, discipline, and patriotism.

As part of the celebrations and in support of environmental conservation, Battalion personnel planted 100 saplings in and around the campus, reaffirming their commitment towards a greener and sustainable future.

A colourful mela was also organised during the day, featuring food stalls established by various Companies of the Battalion.