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Sinha chairs ...

other national integration programmes. He also called for intensifying the awareness campaigns under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan.

"Universities and educational institutions must discharge their responsibility towards the society and lead the fight against drug menace," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Prof. Mohammad Mobin, Vice Chancellor Cluster University Srinagar presented the progress report of the University. The Registrar of the University presented the various agenda items before the Council for report, consideration and ratification.

The meeting was attended by Prof. Mohammad Mobin, Vice Chancellor Cluster University Srinagar; Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu; Prof. K.S Chandrasekar, Vice Chancellor, Cluster University Jammu; Shailendra Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department; Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Prof Rama Shanker Dubey, former Vice Chancellor, Central University of Gujarat; Prof. P. K. Abdul Aziz, former Vice Chancellor Aligarh Muslim University; Prof. Syed Wilayat Hussain Rizvi, Registrar, Cluster University Srinagar and other members of the Council.

LG sacks ...

Article 31(2)(c) of the Constitution and are part of the ongoing drive to root out terrorists embedded in the government machinery.

While Khanday was working as Class-IV employee in education department in Ramban district, Dar was working as a Class-IV employee in Rural Development Department in Bandipora.

Officials said the action is part of a broader crackdown, under which more than 90 government employees with alleged terror links have been dismissed so far in Jammu and Kashmir.

Sinha had recently observed that he will not rest until "the last thread of the terror cancer is torn from the body of government machinery". He had also vowed that security agencies would "completely, decisively and permanently end the scourge of terrorism".

Sinha has reiterated the administration's commitment to eliminating terrorism and ensuring that no element inimical to the state operates within the government system, they added.

Meanwhile, Governor Manoj Sinha has prorogued the legislative assembly of the Union territory, formally winding up the Budget session, an official release said on Wednesday.

The Budget session commenced on February 2, with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah presenting the Budget on February 6. The House held twin sittings each day till February 20, and resumed the Budget session on March 27 after a five-week recess.

On April 4, Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather adjourned the Legislative Assembly sine die. The Budget session saw 22 sittings spread across February, March and April.

Quoting a bulletin issued by the Assembly Secretariat, the release said the lieutenant governor, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 18(2)(a) of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, prorogued the Assembly session through an order issued on April 7.

India welcomes ...

freedom of navigation and global flow of commerce would prevail through the Strait of Hormuz," he said. Jaiswal said India hopes that the "development" in West Asia will also encourage peace efforts in Ukraine.

The announcement on the ceasefire resulted in a fall in the global crude oil prices and a rally in stock markets.

Global oil and gas prices had surged after Iran virtually blocked the Strait of Hormuz. The move severely impacted energy supplies to countries around the world including India.

In a social media post, Trump said the US had agreed to "suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks" provided Iran agreed to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

"We agreed to the provisional ceasefire because we have already met and exceeded all military objectives," he said.

The announcement on the ceasefire came amid growing outrage over Trump's ultimatum to Iran that "a whole civilisation will die tonight" if Tehran does not reopen the key waterway.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the movement of ships through the Strait will be allowed under Iranian military supervision.

"If attacks against Iran are halted, our powerful armed forces will cease their defensive operations," he said.

"For a period of two weeks, safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz will be possible via coordination with Iran's Armed Forces and with due consideration of technical limitations," Araghchi said.

Both the US and Iran mentioned Pakistan's role in arriving at the conditional ceasefire.

In Islamabad, Pakistan Prime Minister Sharif said the US and Iran have agreed to come to Islamabad on April 10 to hold negotiations to settle all disputes.

"With the greatest humility, I am pleased to announce that the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America, along with their allies, have agreed to an immediate ceasefire everywhere, including Lebanon and elsewhere, effective immediately," he said.

The prime minister expressed hope that the proposed "Islamabad Talks" would help achieve sustainable peace and stability in the region.

In his remarks, Jaiswal said India has always been in favour of peace.

"We welcome all steps that lead to peace and stability. We hope that this development in West Asia will also encourage peace efforts in Ukraine," he said.

Jaiswal said ensuring safety, security and welfare of the large Indian community in the West Asian region remains India's "highest priority".

The spokesperson also made a mention of the fresh advisory issued by the Indian embassy in Tehran urging Indians to expeditiously exit the country.

"We are given to understand that we have around 7,500 Indian nationals who continue to remain in Iran. As of Tuesday, 1,864 Indians, including 935 students and 472 fishermen, exited through Armenia and Azerbaijan," he said.

To a question on the transit of ships through the Strait of Hormuz, he said India is closely following the developments.

"We have been in touch with Iran and several other countries and stakeholders to ensure the unimpeded transit of our ships. As a result of our efforts, we've had several of our ships which have crossed the Strait of Hormuz," he

said.

India is in touch with its partners and other stakeholders to serve its interests, he said, adding there is no discussion with Iran on paying any fee.

There were reports that Iran would collect a fee for allowing ships to transit through the Strait of Hormuz.

Meanwhile, the US has agreed to a two-week ceasefire with Iran proposed by Pakistan, President Donald Trump announced 90 minutes before his deadline to wipe out civilisation from the West Asian nation was to end.

Trump made the dramatic announcement on Truth Social on Tuesday evening (US time) even as Democrats called for his removal over unhinged threats to wipe out the Iranian civilisation.

"Based on conversations with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir, of Pakistan, and wherein they requested that I hold off the destructive force being sent tonight to Iran, subject to the Islamic Republic of Iran agreeing to the COMPLETE, IMMEDIATE, and SAFE OPENING of the Strait of Hormuz," the US President said in a social media post.

"I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks," Trump said, adding that this will be a double-sided ceasefire.

In Tehran, Iran's Supreme National Security Council said it has accepted a two-week ceasefire in the war and that it would negotiate with the US in Islamabad beginning Friday.

In Islamabad, Pakistan Prime Minister Sharif extended an invitation to the delegations of the US and Iran to Islamabad on Friday, April 10, to further negotiate for a conclusive agreement to settle all disputes.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said there are discussions about in-person talks, "but nothing is final until announced by the President or the White House".

In the social media post, Trump said the US has received a 10-point proposal from Iran, which he believed was a workable basis on which to negotiate.

He said that the two-week ceasefire period would be used to negotiate a larger agreement to potentially end the war.

"The reason for doing so is that we have already met and exceeded all Military objectives, and are very far along with a definitive agreement concerning Longterm PEACE with Iran, and PEACE in the Middle East," Trump said.

"We received a 10-point proposal from Iran, and believe it is a workable basis on which to negotiate," he said.

Almost all of the various points of past contention have been agreed to between the US and Iran, but a two-week period will allow the agreement to be finalised and consummated, the president said.

"On behalf of the United States of America, as President, and also representing the Countries of the Middle East, it is an Honour to have this long-term problem close to resolution," Trump said.

Trump also shared on his Truth Social account Iranian Foreign Minister Syed Abbas Araghchi's statement confirming the ceasefire deal with the US.

"If attacks against Iran are halted, our Powerful Armed Forces will cease their defensive operations," the Iranian foreign minister said in the statement, adding that, for the next two weeks, passage through the Strait of Hormuz "will be possible", in coordination with Iran's military.

The US launched the war on Iran on February 28 over Tehran's refusal to give up its stockpile of nuclear fuel.

Meanwhile, India on Wednesday advised its nationals in Iran to "expeditiously exit" the country using routes suggested by its mission in Tehran in light of the recent developments.

In an advisory, the Indian embassy in Tehran also reiterated that there should be "no attempt to approach any international land border without prior consultation and coordination with the Embassy."

"In continuation of the advisory of 07 April 2026, and in light of recent developments, Indian nationals still in Iran are strongly advised to expeditiously exit Iran, in coordination with the Embassy and using the routes suggested by the Embassy," the Indian mission said in a post on X.

The embassy also provided emergency contact numbers (+989128109115; +989128109102; +989128109109, and +989932179359) and email (cons.tehran@mea.gov.in) for those in need.

The advisory came hours after the US and Iran agreed on a conditional two-week ceasefire that included the opening of the Strait of Hormuz for shipping.

According to official data, around 9,000 Indians, including students, were in Iran when the conflict began on February 28. Nearly 1,800 Indians have returned to India so far.

The US and Israel jointly attacked Iran on February 28, killing Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and several top commanders. The retaliation by the Islamic Republic extended the war to the entire Gulf region.

Over 600 ...

he said, stressing the need to strengthen institutional mechanisms and develop heritage-based tourism circuits to posit Jammu and Kashmir as a premier cultural tourism destination.

He underscored the importance of learning from national and international agencies that have successfully undertaken conservation and adaptive reuse of heritage properties.

Abdullah called for structured consultations with such stakeholders to draw upon technical expertise and professional inputs for transforming heritage sites into viable tourism assets.

The meeting also discussed in detail the proposed constitution of the Jammu and Kashmir Heritage Conservation and Preservation Authority, with emphasis on strengthening its institutional capacity and ensuring effective implementation of conservation policies, the spokesman said.

He said a detailed presentation by concerned officials highlighting the immense heritage potential of Jammu and Kashmir, encompassing both tangible and intangible assets such as monuments, forts, shrines and performing arts traditions.

It was noted that despite this diversity, many heritage sites remain underutilised and are facing gradual deterioration due to limited technical expertise, fragmented institutional mechanisms and inadequate financial and policy support, the spokesman said.

He said a key focus of the presentation was the adoption of adaptive reuse models, particularly through public-private partnership (PPP) frameworks.

Drawing from successful examples in states such as neighbouring state Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, it illustrated how neglected heritage structures can be transformed into vibrant cultural and tourism destinations, the spokesman said.

He said projects such as Qila Mubarak (Patiala), Neemrana Fort and Orchha Fort were cited as examples where heritage hotels, museums and experiential spaces have generated revenue while preserving historical integrity.

The presentation also reviewed the existing legal and institutional framework under the Jammu and Kashmir Heritage Conservation and Preservation Act, 2010, identifying critical gaps including the inactive status of the Heritage Conservation Authority, lack of inter-departmental coordination and outdated institutional structures, which have hindered effective conservation and promotion efforts, the spokesman said.

To address these challenges, he said a reform proposal was presented, including reconstitution and strengthening of the Jammu and Kashmir Heritage Conservation and Preservation Authority with expanded powers, revised composition and active leadership.

The proposal also emphasised integrated planning, development of heritage tourism circuits, promotion of heritage hotels through PPP mode, and strategic branding of Jammu and Kashmir as a premier cultural and wedding destination, the spokesman said.

The meeting was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Additional Chief Secretary Tourism and Public Works (R&B), Commissioner Secretary Information, Secretary Culture and other senior officials.

NH shut ...

service to clear the debris, but intermittent rains are disrupting the restoration efforts.

Authorities have advised commuters not to travel on NH-44 until the road is fully restored.

"People are advised not to pay heed to rumours and check the status of roads through the traffic police's official social media handles and traffic control units," the spokesperson added.

IED defused ...

along the Zainapora-Chitargam road in the south Kashmir district early this morning during routine sanitisation operations, the official said.

He said the object was found to be a powerful IED during examination. A bomb disposal squad was called to the site and the IED was neutralised.

Following the recovery, security forces launched a search operation in the surrounding areas to track down those responsible for planting the explosive. Officials said additional checkpoints have been established and patrolling intensified to prevent any similar attempts. Traffic movement on the stretch was temporarily halted and later restored after the area was declared safe.

CAG flags ...

accounts since 2010-11, followed by Jammu and Kashmir Minerals Limited and two inactive companies — Jammu and Kashmir International Trade Centre Corporation Ltd and Jammu and Kashmir Road Development Corporation Ltd — each with nine years of arrears.

Jammu and Kashmir Cable Car Corporation Ltd has eight pending accounts since 2014-15, while Jammu and Kashmir Medical Supplies Corporation Ltd has seven accounts pending since 2015-16, it added.

Jammu and Kashmir Police Housing Corporation Ltd has six years of arrears, and Jammu and Kashmir Asset Reconstruction Ltd also has six accounts pending since 2017-18.

Among other major defaulters, Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Corporation Ltd has five accounts pending since 2017-18, while the Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) has five pending accounts with no accounts submitted since 2018-19, it said.

Several infrastructure and transport-related entities also reported delays.

Jammu and Srinagar Mass Rapid Transit Corporations have four accounts pending each since 2019-20, while Jammu and Kashmir Power Transmission Corporation Ltd, Jammu and Kashmir Power Corporation Ltd and Srinagar Smart City Ltd have four pending accounts each.

Jammu Smart City Ltd has three accounts pending, while Jammu and Kashmir Forest Development Corporation Ltd has three pending accounts.

The report further noted that multiple corporations, including Jammu and Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation Ltd and Jammu and Kashmir Handicrafts (Sales and Export) Development Corporation Ltd, have four pending accounts each.

Among eight autonomous bodies, the CAG said that the Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority (CAMPAA) accounts for the highest pendency with 14 accounts pending from 2009-10 to 2022-23.

Similarly, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST), Srinagar and Jammu have three pending accounts each for the period 2020-21 to 2022-23. Jammu and Kashmir Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has not submitted four accounts from 2015-16 to 2018-19, it added.

Other bodies with arrears include Jammu and Kashmir Housing Board (four accounts), Khadi and Village Industries Board (three), Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (four), and State Legal Services Authority (five), it added.

Similarly, accounts of the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs departments in Kashmir and Jammu have remained pending for decades, with some periods dating back to the 1970s, it said.

Public's role ...

part of their civic responsibility," he said. Highlighting civic responsibility, Abdullah expressed concern over the tendency to shift blame entirely onto the government, particularly in matters like cleanliness, and urged citizens to adopt responsible behaviour in their daily lives.

He said a cleaner and better society can only be achieved through collective efforts and noted that with active public participation, Jammu and Kashmir can match global standards.

"If you act on the pledges taken today, we can compete not just within the country but with the world," he said, calling upon the younger generation to help build a more responsible society.

Touching upon mental health, Abdullah said the issue continues to be stigmatised and urged people to show empathy towards those facing psychological challenges. "Even a few words of sympathy can make a difference and give someone the courage to overcome difficult times," he said.

Regarding drug abuse, the chief minister stressed that the fight against the menace cannot be won by the government alone and called upon civil society, educational institutions, religious leaders and citizens to contribute towards making the Union Territory drug-free.

"If we leave it to the government alone, we will not succeed. Everyone has to play their part," he asserted.

Highlighting environmental responsibility, Abdullah advocated for plantation drives and suggested a shift from ceremonial gestures to meaningful contributions.

"Instead of shawls, plant trees in our name. Even if a few survive, it will be a lasting contribution," he said, adding that environmental protection is a shared duty.

The chief minister also advised students to reduce excessive screen time and focus on holistic development, expressing confidence that the younger generation can drive meaningful change if guided properly.

Addressing the gathering, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo said that the enthusiastic participation of students reflects their commitment towards societal development. She described the awareness campaign as a unique opportunity to address pressing issues such as mental health, drug addiction, environmental protection, traffic awareness and career guidance.

She called upon all stakeholders to actively participate in the campaign and emphasized the importance of collective action. "If every student, ICDS worker and healthcare professional plants a tree, it can bring significant change in environmental protection and sustainability," she said.

The Minister also stressed the need for united efforts to combat drug abuse, urging the youth to come forward to safeguard their future and that of Jammu & Kashmir.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, in his address, emphasized the importance of adhering to laws and instilling awareness among younger generations from an early age. He also highlighted the need for continuous awareness campaigns to combat drug abuse.

MLA Jammu West Arvind Gupta called for active involvement of civil society in eradicating the drug menace and appreciated the leadership of the Chief Minister, expressing optimism about the region's progress and prosperity.

The event was attended by Director School Education Jammu Naseem Javid Choudhary, Director Social Welfare Department Jammu, other senior officers, and a large number of students. Participants from all ten districts of Jammu division also joined the programme through online mode.

51et ...

identified as Mohammad Naqeeb Bhat, Adil Rashid Bhat, and Ghulam Mohammad Mir alias Mama, was arrested on Tuesday.

The five were produced in a local court in Srinagar which remanded them in police custody for 10 days, the official said.

They said a number of suspected persons were picked up for questioning as the probe is underway to identify additional associates, financiers, facilitators, safe houses and inter-state linkages.

The busting of the LeT network in a major operation comes six months after the dismantling of a "white-collar" terror cell centred at Fardabad's Al Falah University that was linked to the Red Fort blast on November 10, 2025.

The operation, which began on March 31 and was monitored by Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat who camped in Srinagar, has unveiled the funding and financial pattern of the LeT, officials said.

The terrorists used forged documents and identities to create a network not just in Jammu and Kashmir, but in several other states, they added.

Over the last few days, Srinagar police along with police forces of other states and central agencies carried out searches at 19 locations across Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan and Haryana.

The raids led to the recovery of a large cache of weapons, including four AK assault rifles, pistols, hand grenades and electronic gadgets.

The two Pakistani terrorists are categorised as 'A+' grade militants and the officials said they infiltrated India approximately 16 years ago and remained active across various districts of the Kashmir Valley, commanding around 40 foreign terrorists over the years, most of whom have since been neutralised, the officials said.

Forged documents with addresses from other states were recovered from Abdullah and Usman, indicating the use of false identities to facilitate movement outside the valley, they said.

Probe findings also suggest that one foreign terrorist managed to travel outside the country on a valid passport made from forged documents.

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

During his questioning, he said that he was part of the LeT and procured the arms and ammunition from another associate, Adil Rashid of Zakoora. He also provided support to foreign terrorists, the officials said. From Bhat, police were led to Mir and Rashid Bhat, both active associates in Srinagar.

The officials said the probe indicates that a foreign terrorist managed to travel outside the country on the basis of forged documents and identity with the help of the Lashkar-e-Taiba network in other states.

During the investigation, following disclosures from those arrested, various hideouts were also busted in forested areas in and around Srinagar.

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

One of the accused was the Al Falah University's Dr Umer-un Nabi, who was driving the explosives-laden car that detonated outside the Red Fort on November 10, 2025, killing more than a dozen people.

He had earlier made unsuccessful attempts to join terror groups in 2016 and 2018, the officials said.

J&K Bank ...

bouquet of financial solutions, ensuring that our customers have seamless access to protection products alongside banking services."

He further added, "Strengthening our cross-selling ecosystem is one of the key priorities for the Bank.

This renewed engagement will help us scale up insurance outreach, particularly across Jammu & Kashmir and other emerging markets, while contributing to the broader agenda of financial inclusion and social security."

The partnership between the Bank and Bajaj Life Insurance Company has witnessed steady growth since its inception, driven by robust distribution capabilities and a focused approach towards meeting evolving customer needs.

The renewal of the agreement is expected to further enhance customer engagement and deepen the reach of life insurance solutions, thereby enabling greater financial protection for individuals and families across the Bank's operational geographies.