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LG asks religious bodies to dedicate 1 hr weekly to fight drug abuse

"In the past 31 days, over 2,35,000 awareness and outreach events have been held across Jammu & Kashmir. More than 44,000 OPD patients have been treated, nearly 700 drug smugglers and peddlers arrested, and stringent action taken against the drug supply chain," Sinha said.

"Action has targeted every financial transaction of drug cartels, seizing crores in properties built from drug money by major smugglers. Across Jammu and Kashmir divisions, 300 driving licenses and over 400 vehicle registrations linked to drug smugglers have been recommended for cancellation. Enforcement agencies have ensured massive drug hauls. We have inspected more than 3,300 drug stores, and 150 licenses have been suspended for violating norms," he said.

"Nearly 3,000 CCTV cameras are now installed at drug stores across the Union Territory. Over two dozen smugglers have been nabbed under PIT-NDPS Act. I assure people that we will chase every rupee, every asset, and shell company of drug traffickers, ensuring the harshest punishment for those who are destroying the future of our youth," he said.

The LG said that fueled by public support, this people's movement was setting historic records in Jammu & Kashmir and no past social campaign had seen such a massive participation.

"We have received nearly 3,000 calls for tele-manas counselling and support in 31 days. I want our response to drugs to be rooted in science. We don't shame diabetes patients into health or cure cancer victims through stigma. Likewise, we must treat and rehabilitate drug addicts with dignity, reconnecting them to the society's mainstream through resolve and compassion. The government officials and citizens must unite for surveillance, rally against drugs, and foster drug-free villages and towns," he added.

2 OGWs held with arms, ammo

riding a motorcycle. Their search led cops to the recovery of one pistol, three magazines, 21 live rounds, two mobile phones and 10 LeT posters, officials said.

They were immediately taken into custody and a case was registered against them at the concerned police station under relevant sections of UAPA and Arms Act, the officials added.

Boy dies in 'seminary' fire

The blaze was extinguished by the fire tenders that were pressed into service. Police had taken cognizance of the incident.

Govt approves permanent advance for LA expenses

lated to land acquisition to the extent of Rs 20 lakh or 2 pc of funds deposited by the regional officer, MoRTH, Jammu, against the land acquisition in the said district, whichever is less."

CJI forms panel to assess court infra

50,000 crore for the purpose. The CJI announced the constitution of the 'Judicial Infrastructure Advisory Committee' to address infrastructural deficiencies in courts through substantial financial support from the government.

Apart from Justice Kumar, the committee will comprise Justices Debansu Basak, Ashwani Kumar Mishra, Somasekhara Sundaresan of the high courts of Calcutta, Punjab and Haryana, and Bombay, respectively.

The director general of the Central Public Works Department and the secretary general of the Supreme Court will also be members of the panel.

The committee has been tasked with submitting its detailed findings and funding requirements to Sanjeev Sanyal, a member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, by August 31 this year.

It will focus on seven key areas, including identifying systemic constraints, improving facilities for litigants and lawyers, and implementing cutting-edge technology to accelerate case disposal.

The panel will also focus on the "e-courts" initiative to bridge the digital divide and the construction of "modern court complexes" designed for the 21st century.

India stocked with 2 months of fuel supply: Puri

much as Rs 1 lakh crore in a single quarter if elevated crude prices persist and retail fuel prices remain unchanged.

He said that at some stage an assessment needs to be made on how long retailers can sustain losses from selling petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG below cost, but refused to speculate if rates would be raised anytime soon.

"We have no supply-side problems," the minister said at CII's Annual Business Summit here, adding that India began the crisis with "more than enough" crude oil and LPG inventories and had since ramped up domestic LPG production to 54,000 tonnes per day from about 36,000 tons previously.

At the same time, the minister acknowledged growing fiscal stress from keeping retail fuel prices unchanged.

"My oil companies are losing Rs 1,000 crore a day," he said, adding that cumulative under-recoveries had climbed to nearly Rs 1.98 lakh crore and that a single quarter of losses of Rs 1 lakh crore could wipe out the sector's annual profits.

Since the war broke out in West Asia 10 weeks ago, state-owned oil marketing companies (OMCs) have ensured uninterrupted supplies of petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG at rates that are way below the cost, unlike

many global energy systems that imposed rationing or passed through steep price increases.

This has resulted in the three OMCs - Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) - running record-high under-recoveries (the difference between benchmark international cost and retail selling price).

Puri said the combined under-recovery on petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG is about Rs 1.98 lakh crore for the current quarter, while the actual loss is about Rs 1 lakh crore.

The losses in one quarter, he said, are enough to wipe out profits that oil companies earn in the entire year.

Without saying if widening losses could result in a price increase anytime soon, he said, "How long will the oil companies be able to take it (losses)... frankly, that's something that worries me."

Puri said there has been no increase in petrol and diesel prices in the last four years.

"Today, we are in a situation where we don't know how long the blockades or counter-blockades will continue. But I can tell you categorically that today, we are in a situation where, unlike other countries in the world which have had to either face problems in terms of availability and supply or where prices have gone rampant, we have had stable prices and supplies."

Despite a 50 per cent surge in input crude oil prices, petrol and diesel continue to be priced at a two-year-old rate of Rs 94.77 a litre and Rs 87.67 per litre, respectively.

Domestic cooking gas LPG prices were raised in March by Rs 60 per cylinder, but they are still way lower than the actual cost.

The oil companies are currently losing Rs 14 per litre on petrol, Rs 42 a litre on diesel and Rs 674 a litre on cooking gas LPG.

Puri termed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for moderation in energy consumption as a "visionary" long-term approach rather than signalling imminent restrictions.

"It's not that any lockdown is going to happen tomorrow," he said.

"But if this (disruption due to war in West Asia) continues, we have to start thinking about measures to lessen the fiscal strain."

He urged industries and households to accelerate the shift from LPG to piped natural gas where possible, saying India was rapidly expanding gas pipeline infrastructure and LNG availability.

"We have no shortage of pipe gas," he said. "It is cleaner, cheaper and helps us scale up the energy transition."

The government is also reassessing strategic energy storage policies after the current crisis exposed vulnerabilities in global supply chains, the minister said, adding that India would need to build larger reserves over time.

"The experience since February 2026 means you have to rethink everything," he pointed out.

Modi had on Sunday urged for fuel conservation and lower imports as surging global energy prices pressure India's foreign exchange reserves, while also calling for restraint in gold purchases to ease external vulnerabilities.

"The Prime Minister's statement is very visionary. It looks to the future - that if this (war) were to continue, we also have to (see) what we can do in terms of life changes," Puri said.

"There are certain activities which we can curtail."

This, he said, does not mean any drastic thing like lockdown or rationing was to happen. "There is absolutely no cause for anxiety."

The minister said India has done well in managing the situation, considering the large magnitude of dependence on Gulf supplies that it had in the pre-war era.

These had been quickly replaced with sourcing from alternate places without any disruption or dryouts.

"We have done very well, and I have no reason to believe that we will not do well in the future. But, we should (curtail) certain activities" that can help reduce consumption, he said.

Puri said India had turned the crisis "into an opportunity", ensuring uninterrupted fuel supplies even as geopolitical tensions raised concerns over the Strait of Hormuz, through which nearly 20 per cent of global energy supplies transit.

India, the world's third-largest oil consumer, is also the third-largest refiner and fourth-largest exporter of refined products, he said, pushing back against what he described as "false narratives" around shortages, import disruptions and possible lockdowns.

"There are no shortages anywhere," he said. "Every petrol pump in the country has had petrol and diesel. LPG supply is more than enough."

The minister said India had not raised fuel prices in the last four years despite global energy shocks and elevated crude prices, describing it as an unprecedented achievement among major energy-importing economies.

"Tell me one country where prices have remained the same, and there has been no shortage anywhere," he said.

The remarks come as global crude prices surged amid uncertainty over shipping disruptions and escalating regional conflict.

The minister said around 60 per cent of India's LPG imports had previously moved through the Strait of Hormuz, while 88 per cent of the country's crude oil requirement is imported.

He said the government and state-owned oil companies had been conducting continuous "war-room" reviews of supply and refining operations, with officials monitoring the situation "hour by hour".

India currently holds around 60 days of crude oil supplies, 60 days of LNG inventories and 45 days of LPG re-

serves, he said, adding that there was "absolutely no cause for anxiety".

Fuel demand has remained resilient during the crisis, with petrol consumption rising around 6 per cent, while LPG demand has moderated to about 75,000 tonnes per day from nearly 90,000 tonnes earlier, partly because of seasonal factors.

The minister said refiners had increased LPG output while supplementing supplies through kerosene and bio-fuels, helping India reduce dependence on imported cooking gas.

"We are no longer import-dependent on our refineries, and that is where our strength has come from," he said.

India plans to expand refining capacity to 320 million metric tonnes annually by 2030 from around 260 million currently, positioning the country as one of the world's major refining hubs, the minister said.

He also signalled a more aggressive push toward domestic oil and gas exploration, saying the government has amended exploration rules, increased outreach to global oil majors and expanded acreage offered under exploration licensing rounds.

Terrorist killed as Army foils infiltration bid along LoC

awaited. It was also yet to be verified if the remaining terrorists were still hiding inside the Indian territory or had managed to cross back to Pakistan occupied J&K.

Officials said the infiltrating group of terrorists was heavily armed.

Officials said a tight vigil was being maintained all along the LoC and the IB to foil any infiltration bid by terrorists amid reports that the neighbouring would be pushing terrorists to keep the Kashmir 'pot' boiling.

Locals in the border areas of Kathua & Samba in Jammu region have reported suspicious movements in the past.

Prez confers Florence Nightingale Awards

emply the highest standards of service and play a crucial role in delivering quality healthcare, often in the most challenging circumstances. I commend all the awardees for their inspiring devotion to duty and their tireless efforts in upholding the highest standards of patient care," the president said on the occasion.

A total of 15 nurses from diverse regions and healthcare settings were honoured for their unwavering dedication to strengthening public health delivery and outstanding commitment to the welfare of the community.

The awards were presented at a ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan in the presence of Union Health Minister J P Nadda.

In her message, the President said that the occasion is a fitting tribute to the invaluable contribution of nursing personnel and healthcare professionals who serve the nation with compassion and unwavering dedication.

Instituted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the National Florence Nightingale Award honours the dedication, compassion and resilience of nursing professionals, including registered nurses, midwives, auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs) and lady health visitors serving in central and state governments, Union Territories and voluntary organisations.

The award carries a Certificate of Merit, a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh and a medal. Among the awardees were six ANMs and nine nurses from different parts of the country, including Ladakh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Delhi, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Lakshadweep.

The health ministry statement said nurses play a pivotal role in addressing multiple health challenges and are central to evidence-based and accessible healthcare delivery.

It also highlighted initiatives undertaken to strengthen the nursing workforce, including the National Nursing and Midwifery Commission Act and the establishment of 157 nursing colleges co-located with medical colleges in the country.

Govt launches e-auction for 12 limestone blocks in J&K

categorised under G3 and G4 stages of the United Nations Framework Classification (UNFC) and are expected to attract strong industry interest, particularly from the cement and infrastructure sectors.

During the event, Joint Secretary and Designated Officer, Farida M Naik, urged the bidders to explore the region's mining potential, highlighting its role in boosting economic growth, employment and socio-economic development. The sale of tender documents will commence on May 18 and the pre-bid conference is scheduled for June 5 this year.

The auction is conducted under the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015. Building upon the momentum of the first tranche, this initiative reflects a calibrated approach to ensure optimal utilisation of mineral resources, while enhancing investor participation and confidence.

The technical session featured detailed presentations by MECL, SBICAPs, and MSTC.

Srikant Sharma, MECL, presented the geological and mineral potential of the 12 limestone blocks. Pratin Sharma, Assistant Vice President, SBICAPs, explained the mineral auction process and tender framework while Keshav Arora, Manager, MSTC, demonstrated the e-auction portal and online bidding process, according to the PIB handout.

Govt orders CBI probe into paper leak allegations

tral Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for a comprehensive inquiry into the allegations linked to the examination.

"NTA will extend full cooperation to the Bureau and will provide all materials, records, and assistance the inquiry requires," it added.

"This decision has been taken in the interest of students and in recognition of the trust on which the national examination system rests," NTA said.

The agency acknowledged that the re-conduct of the examination would cause "real and significant inconvenience" to candidates and their families, but said the decision was necessary to prevent "greater and more lasting damage" to trust in the examination system.

According to the NTA, the registration data, candidature and examination centres opted for in the May 2026 cycle will be carried forward for the re-conducted examination.

"No fresh registration will be required, and no additional examination fee will be levied," the statement said, adding that fees already paid by students will be refunded and the examination will be re-conducted using NTA's internal resources. The agency said fresh examination dates and the revised admit-card schedule will be communicated through official channels in the coming days and advised candidates and parents to rely only on verified information released by the agency.

The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) was conducted by the NTA on May 3 for students seeking admission to medical education courses at the undergraduate level. In a post on X on Sunday, the NTA had said question papers were transported in GPS-tracked vehicles carrying unique, traceable watermark identifiers, while examina-

tion centres were monitored through AI-assisted CCTV surveillance from a central control room.

"The National Testing Agency is aware of reports concerning the action initiated by the Rajasthan Special Operations Group in connection with alleged irregularities around NEET (UG) 2026. The examination on May 3, 2026 was conducted as scheduled and under a full security protocol," the NTA had said.

According to the agency, inputs regarding alleged malpractice activity were received on the evening of May 7, four days after the examination, and were escalated to central agencies on the morning of May 8 for "independent verification and necessary action".

India in talks with Russia to sign agreement on critical minerals

drew from the Mali lithium project because of security concerns.

New Delhi has signed a series of agreements this year with countries including Germany, Brazil and Canada to strengthen access to technology and partnerships. In 2023, the government identified more than 20 minerals, including lithium, as critical for its energy transition and rising industrial and infrastructure demand.

Himanta takes oath as Assam CM

Prasad Acharya administered the oath of office to Sarma and the four legislators at a grand ceremony held at the Veterinary Ground in Khanapara area in Guwahati.

The 57-year-old is the first non-Congress leader in the state to assume charge as the CM for a second successive term.

The four legislators who will take oath along with Sarma are BJP's Ajanta Neog and Rameshwar Teli, and one each from its allies - Atul Bora of the AGP and BPF's Charan Boro.

Neog, Bora and Boro were members of Sarma's first cabinet, while Teli, a former Union minister, returned to state politics.

This will be the third NDA government in the state, with the alliance first coming to power in 2016 under the leadership of now Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal.

Neog was the finance minister, while Bora took care of the agriculture department, and Boro held the transport portfolio in the outgoing government. Officials said over one lakh people, including the BJP's panchayat presidents and members, are expected to attend the swearing-in ceremony.

Security has been tightened across Guwahati with central and state police monitoring the situation, while arrangements at the venue are being coordinated by various departments under the directives of Chief Secretary Ravi Kota.

The NDA swept to power in the state with a record 102 of the 126-member assembly, with the BJP alone securing 82 constituencies while its alliance partners, the AGP and the BPF, bagged 10 seats each.

Census 2027 adds QR code verification for door-to-door visits

fraud. Officials reported that under the ongoing self-enumeration exercise, 93,521 self-enumerations were recorded on Monday, including 77,372 completed cases and 16,149 initiated cases, resulting in an overall completion rate of 82.73 per cent.

Officials said most entries were registered by residents of the North East, South West, and North West Delhi districts.

According to officials, if a household cannot geo-tag its location with exact precision, it may tag a nearby location instead. In such cases, the enumerator will download the map of the concerned HLB (House listing and Housing Phase) and all self-enumeration IDs linked to that block for verification during field visits.

During door-to-door House Listing Operations (HLO), enumerators will ask households to provide their self-enumeration IDs and match them with the tagged households in the HLB.

If the self-enumeration ID does not correspond to any listed house or building in the block, the enumerator will collect the household details afresh.

To strengthen oversight, one supervisor will monitor the HLO for every six HLBs.

According to officials, the layered verification system is expected to make the census process smoother and more reliable, while helping households navigate the exercise with greater confidence when concerns over digital fraud remain high.

Officials said the QR-based verification system has been designed to reassure households and build public confidence in the enumeration process.

Blast kills 10 in northwest Pakistan

a police post in the nearby Bannu district on Saturday that killed 15 police officers.

Pakistan blamed Afghanistan-based militants for the weekend attack and delivered a strong protest to Kabul. The Afghan Taliban government said on Tuesday that the allegations were "baseless".

"The Islamic Emirate once again clarifies its position that Afghan soil will not be used against any country, and no one will be allowed to carry out activities that would harm the security and stability of the region," Taliban government spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement.

In February, Islamabad launched airstrikes on Kabul, saying it was targeting militant strongholds used to orchestrate attacks on Pakistan, sparking the worst fighting between the two countries in years. The Taliban has denied harbouring militants and said that militancy in Pakistan is an internal problem there.

Police official Sajjad Khan said that 10 people were killed in today's explosion at the market, including eight civilians and two police officers. Police said an improvised explosive device (IED) had been used.

The emergency response agency Rescue 1122 said around 30 people were wounded at the market, which is part of the town square.

Those with serious injuries had been rushed to hospitals in Bannu, it added in the statement.

Pak parked Iranian planes on its airbases to escape US airstrikes

to Mahan Air landed in Kabul shortly before the war started and remained parked after the closure of the Iranian airspace. The same aircraft was moved to an airport in Herat near the Iranian border after Pakistan launched attacks on Afghanistan, the Afghan officials said, adding that the Mahan Air plane was the only Iranian aircraft in the country.

Pakistan's reliance on China for military assistance has risen dramatically over the past decade. A Stockholm International Peace Research Institute study showed China supplied about 80 per cent of Pakistan's major arms between 2020 and 2024, and Islamabad also had close economic ties with Beijing, the report said.

Islamabad has attempted to navigate both sides of the crisis - presenting itself to Washington as a stabilizing intermediary while avoiding steps that could alienate Tehran or China, Iran's most powerful international backer, the report said.

Sahai chairs session on Global Capability Centres ecosystem ICC

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS JAMMU, MAY 12

Sahai chairs a session on Global Capability Centres ecosystem The Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) successfully organised the ICC World Technology Convention 2026 at the prestigious Jio World Convention Centre, Mumbai, under the theme "Technology for Make in India." Rahul Sahai, Chairman, Jammu Chapter, Indian Chamber of Commerce, chaired key sessions on "Global Capability Centres (GCC) Ecosystem: Reimagining Global Capability centres - Vision 2040 and Beyond" and "Next Gen Tech



Mobility & Infra". In his addresses, he highlighted that India's mobility and infrastructure sector is witnessing unprecedented expansion driven by investments in logistics, railways, and electric mobility. Speaking on the GCC ecosystem, he emphasized that India has emerged as a global hub for Global Capability centers, supported by a strong talent base, digital infrastructure, innovation-driven growth, and progressive government policies, with GCCs playing a critical role in engineeri

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