

Good Morning

Kashmir

16th
Year Of Publication



Heartfelt greetings to all of you on the sacred occasion of Govardhan Puja. I pray that Lord Shri Krishna bestows blessings of happiness, peace, and prosperity in everyone's life.

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J&K Assembly Set For Stormy Autumn Session Today



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly is set to convene its autumn session from today, with proceedings scheduled over nine days. The initial day will include obituary references, while legislative work will be conducted on six of the scheduled days.

Lawmakers are preparing for a session marked by scrutiny of the government's actions. Opposition parties, including the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Awami Ittehad, and certain allies of the Omar Abdullah-led administration, are expected to raise questions regarding electoral commitments, the status of statehood, and rules on reservations.

The Assembly Secretariat has received a total of 450 questions from members. In addition, 13 private members' bills and 55 private members' resolutions have been submitted for discussion during the session. Thirty-three bills that were introduced in the previous session remain pending and will be prioritized on October 28, which has been designated as the day for private members' business.

The Business Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday at 3 p.m. in the Speaker's office. The committee will outline how time will be divided among legislative items, including bills and other matters brought before the House. Its recommendations are made in accordance with directions from the Speaker, in consultation with the Leader of the House.

A resolution on the restoration of statehood, submitted by Peoples Conference president and MLA Sajad Lone, was rejected by the Speaker.

The Assembly Secretariat has received a total of 450 questions from members. In addition, 13 private mem-

FILE PHOTO

Tensions Escalate In J&K Alliance

Congress skips crucial strategy meeting convened by National Conference

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: As strains deepen within Jammu & Kashmir's ruling alliance, the Congress party on Wednesday opted to stay away from a joint strategy session called by its coalition partner, the National Conference (NC), to discuss its strategy for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections and the autumn session of the Legislative Assembly.

After a three-hour long meeting chaired by President Pradesh Congress Committee Tariq Hamid Karra, the Congress party skipped the NC-convened strategy meeting to discuss RS polls and the autumn session of the Assembly.

Karra said that the meeting remained inconclusive today



FILE PHOTO

and will resume on Thursday. "The sentiments and suggestions put forth by our legislators are being shared with the high command. It was decided that, keeping in view the sensitivity of some important matters, today's meeting has been adjourned until tomorrow for further discussions and consultations," he said.

Karra said that it would be premature to assume Congress was in a dilemma over voting in the Rajya Sabha polls.

"I would request you not to jump to conclusions. I told you that every member had his opinion and suggestion and it was necessary to apprise the high command about it.

Based on our report, we have sought their guidance because central leadership's involvement and guidance is necessary for a national party. That is why the meeting remained inconclusive and will resume tomorrow," he said in response to a question on whether Congress was in fix over voting in Rajya Sabha polls.

He said there is no doubt in the fact that confidence of Congress has shaken due to certain incidents.

The NC had extended invitations to all legislators of the ruling alliance.

NC Will Win All 4 Rajya Sabha Seats: Cm Omar

OWAIS GUL

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday exuded hope that the National Conference (NC) would emerge victorious in all

four seats in the Rajya Sabha elections, slated to be held on October 24. He also urged the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Legislative Assembly, Sunil Sharma, to stop issuing baseless statements.

On the sidelines of the joint strategy meeting, the Chief Minister, told media persons that ahead of every Assembly session, a Legislature

No Talks With NC Without Directions From Delhi: Karra

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee chief Tariq Hameed Karra on Wednesday

said that they have decided not to attend the meeting called by the National Conference on Wednesday, adding it will await directions from the party's central leadership before taking any decision on alliance discussions.

Speaking to reporters, Karra said that the Congress will not participate in the meeting convened

By-Polls Ruhullah's Absence Won't Impact His Performance: Aga Mahmood



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: National Conference (NC) candidate Aga Syed Mahmood on Wednesday said that the absence of support from former minister and incumbent parliament member, Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi would not affect his performance in the ongoing Assembly by-election in Budgam.

Aga Mahmood asserted that the National Conference is larger than any individual and enjoys grassroots support across the constitu-

ency. "NC created Ruhullah, Ruhullah didn't create NC. He has supporters within his family and among well-wishers, which is fine, but ultimately NC supporters will vote for the party," he said, as per news agency KNT.

The NC candidate emphasized that the by-election is being contested in the name of the party and its legacy rather than individual influence. "An individual is not fighting this election; it is the National Conference that is in the fray. Our workers and loyal voters stand

Ladakh Leaders, MHA Resume Dialogue To Address UT's Long-Standing Demands

SAJID RAINA

NEW DELHI: After several months of a freeze in communication, dialogue between the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and representatives from Ladakh Union Territory resumed on Wednesday.

The discussions focused on four specific demands, including statehood for Ladakh, inclusion under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, implementation of reservation measures, and the removal of the National Security Act (NSA) imposed on climate activist Sonam Wangchuk.

The talks lasted close to two hours and included a nine-member delegation comprising leaders from the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), along with Ladakh's Member of Parliament Mohd Haneefa Jan.

This meeting marked a renewed effort to find common



ground after recent unrest in Leh and long-standing demands from the region's civil groups.

According to members present at the meeting, discussions were held on each point raised. On statehood and the Sixth Schedule, the delegation explained that Ladakh required greater control over its resources, land, and administrative mechanisms.

They also pointed to the need for stronger constitutional tools to protect employment and cul-

tural practices. Reservation policies for local communities formed another part of the agenda.

Official sources said that the MHA is expected to examine various options and conduct follow-up discussions to shape a policy that includes representation across different social groups in the region.

Member of the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), Sajjad Hussain Kargili, said their demand for

NEP 2020 Made Education Simpler: Dr Jitendra

YOGESH

JAMMU: Asserting that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has made education simpler, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh on Wednesday said that in PM Modi's regime there has been democratisation of opportunities.

While distributing free laptops among the top-performing female students of his constituency, Dr Singh, said that the government led by PM Modi has introduced several dedicated schemes for women, and in the wake of Diwali, laptops could be the ideal gift for meritorious girl students.

"In the last 11 years, PM Modi has encouraged the education of girl students and introduced several dedicated schemes for them. In

the Civil Services Exam, female students have consistently been the toppers. In 2014-15, 16 female students were toppers. Last year, two out of the first three toppers were females in the IAS exams. In Jammu and Kashmir, girls are becoming IAS from places like Kishtwar and Rajouri," he said, adding, "After PM Modi came to power, there has been democratisation of opportunities, democratisation of information available for preparation. Those students who are dedicated do not need any coaching, as everything is available on laptops and mobiles. The National Education Policy has made education simpler."

Dr Jitendra Singh said, "Among the



Foundation For 'Op Sindoor' Was Laid In 2016 After Uri Terror Attack: Army Chief

'I Must Concede Frankly Situation Was Nothing New To Me, I Had Seen It Before'

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Wednesday said that the foundation for 'Operation Sindoor' was laid down in 2016 soon after Pakistan sponsored terrorists attacked an Army camp near Line of Control (LoC) at Uri in North Kashmir's Baramulla District.

Speaking at the unveiling of "Civil Military Fusion as a Metric of National Power and Comprehensive Security" book and "Portraits of Valour: Timeless Military Art" coffee table book by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, the Army Chief, said, "Higher command course always talks about 'why'. Three things which I picked up from him [Lt Gen Raj Shukla (Retd)] at that point in time...The second



thing was the foundation for Operation Sindoor. At that time (in 2016) Uri had happened and he conducted a detailed discussion and various options, how should we go about this situation which comes in future."

Referring to 'Operation Sindoor' that was launched to avenge April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 civilians dead, the Army Chief

said that when the situation was discussed with him it was nothing new as when the Uri attack had happened all the options were discussed to deal with the situations that could arise in future. "So, I must concede very frankly, when this situation came to me, it was a very normal thing for me because I had already seen this earlier."

Pertinently,

Jaish Starts Online Course For Female Terrorist Recruitment

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ISLAMABAD: Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), the UN-designated terrorist organisation based in Pakistan, has launched an online course aimed at recruiting women into its newly formed female brigade, Jamat ul-Muminat.

The course, scheduled to begin on November 8, will be conducted through daily 40-minute live sessions on online platforms. Women closely related to JeM's leadership, including Masood Azhar's sisters, Sadiya and Samaira Azhar, will lead the classes, instructing participants on their roles in the organisation from the perspectives of jihad, religion, and Islamic ideology.

Lectures will last 40 minutes per day and be led by Azhar's two sisters, Sadiya Azhar and Samaira Azhar, whose classes will 'encourage' women to join the Jamat ul-Muminat.

Sadiya Azhar, his younger sister, has been given charge of the Jamat, reports said.

Sadiya's husband, Yusuf Azhar, was one of several Masood Azhar family members killed during an Operation Sindoor airstrike on the Jaish HQ in Bahawalpur in May. The airstrike was India's military response to the April terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam.

THE COURSE, scheduled to begin on November 8, will be conducted through daily 40-minute live sessions on online platforms.

Afreer Farooq, the wife of Umar Farooq, one of the Pahalgam attackers, has also been included.

Azhar, meanwhile, is ramping up his 'donations' drive. After his last public address - at the Markaz Usman O Ali in Bahawalpur last month - the Jaish is now collecting 500 PKR (156 INR) from every woman enrolling in this

Asia's Famed Wular Lake Turns Into Garbage Dumping Site

Locals Blame Authorities, General Public For Environmental Degradation



SAJID RAINA

BANDIPORA: North Kashmir's Bandipora district is witnessing a growing environmental crisis as another shore of the famous Wullar Lake, located in the Puthshay area, is rapidly transforming into a dumping site.

This follows a similar situation at Zalwan, which locals termed the failure of local authorities to enforce effective solid waste management measures.

A visit to the site revealed heaps of foul-smelling garbage dumped along the lake's

edge, causing significant inconvenience to residents and marring the beauty of the area, which is located near the proposed site for the fruit mandi.

The situation is aggravated by stray dogs scavenging through the waste, posing a safety risk to people passing by. "Many people have been bitten by these dogs in recent times," said Muhammad Amin, a local resident.

He recalled a time when the area was cleaner, with boats moored along the shore, but lamented how the place has

Observers for Bye-Assembly Elections to Budgam review election preparedness

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: General Observer, Bhor Singh Yadav; Expenditure Observer, Ravinder Kumar and Police Observer, Nachiketa Jha for 27-Assembly constituency Budgam held a joint meeting at the Conference hall here to take review of the preparedness for upcoming Bye-Assembly election 2025 to 27-AC Budgam of the District.

The observers took an extensive appraisal of Returning Officer to 27-AC Budgam and Assistant returning officers for arrangements made by them for smooth conduct of Bye-Assembly election to 27-AC Budgam.

They held a detailed discussion about enforcement of MCC, expenditure monitoring, security plan, transport and communication plan, besides functioning of VST, flying squads, training of poll staff, AMF at polling stations, and other measures undertaken for smooth and peaceful conduct of the upcoming Bye-Assembly polls in 27-Assembly constituency Budgam.

On the occasion, the General Observers enjoined the officers to work with added zeal and unwavering dedication to uphold the sanctity of the election process and safeguard the demo-



cratic spirit.

They also urged them to ensure strict enforcement of MCC and other guidelines of the Election Commission of India (ECI) to ensure smooth, fair, and transparent conduct of polls in the District.

They stressed on proactive approach from all the stakeholders to encourage maximum voters so that enhanced voter turnout is registered during upcoming bye-elections in 27-AC Budgam of the District. They also stressed on completion of the EPIC distribution process in 27-AC Budgam.

The Expenditure Observer emphasised

the need for coordination among various monitoring teams for effective expenditure overseeing and stressed the prompt reporting of any ECI violations concerning election expenditure booking.

He also underscored the efficient media monitoring to contain any misuse of election expenditure by the contesting candidates in the district and underscored timely reporting and uploading of any seizures or violations as per ECI norms.

The Police Observer stressed on the officers to work with utmost coordination to ensure incident-free and smooth conduct of

the polls in 27-AC Budgam.

Earlier, the DEO Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat apprised the observers regarding the preparations for the free, fair, and peaceful conduct of polls in 27-AC budgam of the District.

He said that 173 polling stations had been set at designated 111 locations across 27-assembly constituency Budgam.

The DEO said that model polling stations had also been set up at various locations in 27-AC Budgam to facilitate the voters on the polling day and welcome them to experience a festive-like environment.

He said that dedicated facilities for voters including clean drinking water and ramps for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are also meticulously arranged to enhance the voting experience.

Later, the observers visited the Control room, Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) at the DC office complex. They also inspected a strong room established at Boys Higher Secondary school Budgam.

The meeting was attended by the SSP Budgam, Nikhil Borkar; ADC Budgam, ASP Budgam, Returning Officer (RO) of 27-Assembly constituency Budgam, Dy. District Election Officer and all Nodal officers.

DM B'la chairs 21st NCORD meeting, Directs Strict Anti-Drug measures

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: District Magistrate (DM) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, Wednesday chaired the 21st meeting of the Narco Coordination Committee (NCORD) at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Baramulla to review the district's ongoing efforts to curb drug abuse and strengthen enforcement

under the NDPS Act.

During the meeting, the DM directed all law enforcement agencies to ensure strict implementation of NDPS laws and to intensify awareness programmes on the harmful effects of drug abuse, particularly among youth and students. He also emphasized taking strict action against persons found smoking in public

places, especially around educational institutions.

The DM further instructed for 100% installation of CCTV cameras in all educational institutions and identified hotspots to enhance monitoring and surveillance.

He also directed the Police, Revenue, and Excise Departments to carry out joint drives for the destruc-

tion of bhang (cannabis) cultivation, ensuring close coordination for effective results.

While reviewing overall progress under NCORD, the DM stressed the importance of community participation, urging Public representatives, religious leaders, and educational institutions to actively support the administration's anti-drug initiatives.



JAMMU AND KASHMIR PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

RESHAH GHAR COLONY, BAKSHI NAGAR, JAMMU -180001

Website: <http://jkpsc.nic.in> | Jammu: 0191-2566533

Subject: Junior Statistical Assistant Course Departmental Examination Eligibility of candidates thereof.

NOTICE

DATED: 19.10.2025

Whereas, vide Notification No. PSC/Exam/30/2022 dated 20.09.2022 and No.PSC/Exam/2024/16 dated 27.11.2024 application forms for appearing in Junior Statistical Assistant Course Departmental Examination were invited; and

Whereas, upon scrutiny of the record, the details of candidates eligible under their respective courses, viz. Old, Revised, and New, as forwarded by the Administrative Department, are shown below:-

JUNIOR STATISTICAL ASSISTANT COURSE DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATION (OLD SYLLABUS)			
S.NO.	APPLICATION NO	NAME	PARENTAGE
1.	22043000200001	SAHAIL REHMAN CHOWDHARY	ABDUL REHMAN
2.	22043000200002	SHER SINGH	SUBASH CHANDER
JUNIOR STATISTICAL ASSISTANT COURSE DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATION (NEW SYLLABUS)			
S.NO.	APPLICATIONNO	NAME	PARENTAGE
1.	24041600600001	MUHAMMAD RAFEEQ NAJAR	GHULAM RASOOL NAJAR
2.	24041600600002	VIJAY KUMAR	JK KANTROO
3.	24041600600003	SHEIKH ISHFAQ AHMAD	MOHD YAQOOB SHEIKH
4.	24041600600004	SAHIL BHAT	MUNU JI BHAT
5.	24041600600006	FAYAZ AHMAD WANI	GH HASSAN WANI
6.	24041600600007	MANZOOR AHMAD RATHER	GH HASSAN RATHER
7.	24041600600008	INDERJEET SINGH	DEEDAR SINGH
8.	24041600600009	MIR MOHAMMAD AYAZ	MOHDSHABAN MIR
9.	24041600600010	RAKSHAN JAVEED	SHEIKH TARIQ JAVEED
10.	24041600600011	MOHD YOUSUF GANAIE	GH NABI GANAIE
11.	24041600600012	TAUSEEF AHMAD	SIRAJ UD DIN
12.	24041600600013	TASIYA BASHIR	BASHIR AHMAD CHARLOO
13.	24041600600014	MOHD YAQOOB	GULAB DIN
14.	24041600600016	TABIEEN JEELANI	GHULAM JEELANI SHAH
15.	24041600600017	NAVJOT SINGH JAMWAL	PARDEEP SINGH JAMWAL
16.	24041600600018	OWAIS AMIN BHAT	MOHAMMED AMIN BHAT
17.	24041600600019	MURTZA ALI RATHER	ABDUL KARIM RATHER
18.	24041600600020	JYOTI KOUR	MOHAN SINGH
19.	24041600600021	SURJEET KUMAR	NATHA RAM
20.	24041600600022	ROSHIKA PRASHER	RAKESH CHANDERSHARMA
21.	24041600600023	BHARAT DEV SINGH	ROSHAN SINGH
22.	24041600600024	GAGANDEEP KOUR	RANJEET SINGH
23.	24041600600025	SUKHVINDER KOUR	JAGJIT SINGH
24.	24041600600026	JASWINDER KOUR	HARBANS SINGH
25.	24041600600027	SAGAR KHAJURIA	ASHWANI KHAJURIA
26.	24041600600028	SANDEEP BHAT	CHAMAN LAL BHAT
27.	24041600600029	SHAZIA FAREED	FAREED AHMAD KHAN
28.	24041600600030	ASHRAF HUSSAIN NAJAR	AB RASHID NAJAR
29.	24041600600031	SANJEEV KUMAR	MANSAR RAM
30.	24041600600032	NARINDER KUMAR	HANS RAJ GUPTA
31.	24041600600033	ADITI GUPTA	SURESH KUMAR
32.	24041600600035	SHARDA JAMWAL	CHARAN SINGH
33.	24041600600036	ANJANA DEVI	PRITAM SINGH
34.	24041600600037	SIMITIA	BANSI LAL SHARMA
35.	24041600600038	AJAY KUMAR TARGOTRA	RAM KRISHAN
36.	24041600600039	TRIPTA SHARMA	CHAMAN LAL
37.	24041600600040	SANDEEP KUMAR	RASALCHAND
38.	24041600600041	ASHA KUMARI	BARI RAM
39.	24041600600042	ANITA KATOCH	SANSAR SINGH KATOCH
40.	24041600600043	DEEPTI VERMA	BHARAT BHUSHAN VERMA
41.	24041600600044	SEEMA KUMARI	SARDARI LAL KAH
42.	24041600600045	MUBASHIR JAWAID	JAWAID IQBALL KHAN
43.	25041600600048	SATISH CHANDER KATTAL	ANANT RAM
44.	25041600600049	JUNAD AHMAD NAIKOO	GHULAM MOHI UD DIN NAIKOO
45.	25041600600050	PARMEET KOUR	AVTAR SINGH
46.	25041600600051	ARTI BHAT	CHUNI LAL BHAT
47.	25041600600052	TARUN KUMAR	SHAM LAL
48.	25041600600053	SHALLU KUMARI	CHAMAN LAL
49.	25041600600054	SANDEEP KACHROO	OMKAR NATH KACHROO
50.	25041600600055	DEEPAK SAHANI	VIJAY KUMAR
51.	25041600600056	SURENDER RAINA	CHAMAN LAL RAINA
52.	25041600600057	JUNAID BASHEER	BASHIR AHD MUNSHI
53.	25041600600058	RAJAT SHARMA	TIRATH RAM
54.	25041600600059	MOHD TANVEER UR REHMAN	MOHD IQBAL BALI
55.	25041600600060	SYED ZAHOOR AHMAD SHAH	AB KHALIL SHAH
56.	25041600600061	SAIMA	GHULAM MOHAMMAD AKHOON
57.	25041600600062	MOHD YAQOOB KHAN	MOHDYOUSUFKHAN
58.	25041600600063	AABID AMANATH RAMZAN	MOHD RAMZAN BHAT
59.	25041600600064	ANKIT NEHRU	ASHOK KUMAR NEHRU
60.	25041600600065	SHANEE AKHTAR	GH MOHMAD BHAT
61.	25041600600066	ZULFQAR ALI	GHULAM HUSSAIN
62.	25041600600067	RAHUL SHARMA	NARINDER KUMAR SHARMA
63.	25041600600068	MOHD SAFEER	MOHD RAFIQ
64.	25041600600069	NISHA DEVI	VIJAY KUMAR SHARMA
65.	25041600600070	MUMTAZ AHMED	MANEER HUSSAIN
66.	25041600600071	JYOTSNA MANHAS	BABU RAM MANHAS
67.	25041600600072	WASID IQBAL	MOHD BASHIR
68.	25041600600073	SHAPALI DEVI	BADRI DASS
69.	25041600600074	TOUSIEEF NISAR	NISAR AHMAD QAZI
70.	25041600600075	ASIF HUSSAIN ZARGAR	SHAH HUSSAIN ZARGAR
71.	25041600600076	MOHD ISHAQ	GHULAM NABI
72.	25041600600077	VINOD KUMAR	KHEM RAJ
73.	25041600600078	SADDAM HUSSAIN CHOUHAN	NISSAR HUSSAIN
74.	25041600600079	NITTIN SARDHLIA	JAGDISH RAJ
75.	25041600600080	NISHANT SHARMA	KULDEEP RAJ SHARMA
76.	25041600600081	TEHMINA SHAHNAZ	LAL MOHD
77.	25041600600082	SHEIKH IRSHAD AHMAD	SHEIKH BASHIR AHMAD
78.	25041600600083	PREETI KOHLI	SH MADAN LAL
79.	25041600600084	SHAISTA BASHIR	BASHIR AHMAD RAINA
80.	25041600600085	GOWHER AHMAD MIR	AB AHADMIR
81.	25041600600086	IRFAN UL HAQUE	ABDUL AHAD BHAT
82.	25041600600087	GURPREET KOUR	SURAJ SINGH

Now, in view of the above, if any, candidate has any objection, he/she may submit a representation to the Commission alongwith supporting documents by or before 23.10.2025 (Thursday) from the date of issuance of this notice, after which no appeal whatsoever shall be entertained.

No: PSC/Exam/JSA & SA/2024/28

Dated: 19.10.2025

DIPK-7348-25

DT: 22/10/2025

(Supinder Kour) JKAS

Under Secretary,

J&K Public Service Commission.

Civil Society delegation from Rajouri calls on Javed Rana

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A delegation of civil society members from District Rajouri Wednesday called on Minister for Jal Shakti Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana at Civil Secretariat here, to raise key issues of public importance concerning the district.

During the meeting, Javed Rana patiently heard a wide range of public grievances and assured timely redressal through appropriate government channels.

He highlighted that Omar Abdullah led government remains accessible and responsive to the needs of people and our priority is to bring governance to the doorsteps of common masses.

The civil society from Rajouri raised issues related to development,



better health care, road infrastructure and service delivery.

The members demanded the operationalization of the Maternal & Child Hospital at Gujar Mandi, Rajouri, emphasizing the need to improve healthcare services for residents. They highlighted that starting of hospital operations is necessary to ensure accessible, quality medical care for women and children to the Pir Panjal residents.

The delegation also

highlighted the deteriorated condition of the Rajouri-Thanna Road, pointing out that the black-topped surface has significantly worsened over time, causing daily hardships for commuters. They urged immediate action for its upgradation to ensure smooth and safe travel for the public.

Minister assured the delegation that the Government is fully aware of these issues and necessary directions have already

been issued to the concerned officers for their early resolution.

The Minister also spoke to the Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri, to ensure prompt attention to these matters.

The Minister further assured the residents of improved facilities and better infrastructure in the district, reiterating the Government's commitment to public welfare and development initiatives in Rajouri.

Budgam admin organises Voters' Fair at Behisht-e-Zehra park

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: A Voters' Fair (Matdata Mela) was Wednesday organised at Behisht-e-Zehra park Budgam under the directions of the District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat under the theme 'Promoting Inclusive, Ethical, and Informed Voting'.

The event was coordinated by the District Administration Budgam in collaboration with District Nodal Officer SVEEP/Chief Education Officer Budgam, Rifat Irfan Qadri, as part of the ongoing Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme.

The fair witnessed enthusiastic participation from young and first-time voters, female voters, senior citizens, and Persons with Disabilities



(PwD), reflecting the ideals of inclusive and participatory democracy. A series of engaging activities, awareness sessions, and demonstrations were conducted to educate the public about various aspects of the electoral process.

During the event, speakers emphasized the significance of every vote in shaping a strong democracy and

urged participants to cast their votes responsibly. Awareness sessions were held on ethical voting, the role of each voter in ensuring fair elections, and the functioning of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) systems, ensuring that voters are fully informed about the voting process.

The event was graced by the presence of General Observer, Bhor Singh Yadav and Police Observer, Nachiketa Jha for 27-AC budgam bye-Elections, who appreciated the efforts of the District Administration for organizing such innovative and inclusive outreach initiatives under the SVEEP programme.

The Voters' Fair was aimed to motivate maximum voter turnout in the upcoming bye-elections to the 27-Budgam Assembly Constituency, ensuring that every eligible citizen participates in the electoral process with awareness, confidence, and commitment.

The District administration reiterated that it remains fully committed in conducting free, fair, participative, and transparent elections, in line with the vision of the Election Commission of India.

CS, NITI Aayog discusses modalities for establishing Tele-ICU network across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Wednesday held a detailed discussion with Member, NITI Aayog, Dr. V.K. Paul, to deliberate on the establishment of Tele-ICU facilities across the newly established Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) in the districts of J&K.

The meeting marked a significant step towards defining the modalities for rolling out a robust, technology-driven critical care network aimed at strengthening peripheral healthcare institutions across the UT.

During the interaction, Dr. Paul shared valuable insights and highlighted successful Tele-ICU models being implemented by leading health technology providers such as Apollo TeleHealth, Medanta, Cloud-physician, and HealthNet. He emphasized the importance of studying these models to identify best-fit strategies for J&K's healthcare ecosystem, considering its unique geography and institutional diversity.

Dr. Paul advised that the specific needs and infrastructure of each hospital must be carefully assessed prior to implementation. He underlined the necessity of capacity building, continuous medical education, and hands-on staff training, noting that these are pivotal to ensuring the success and sustainability of the Tele-ICU framework in J&K.

Expressing gratitude for the guidance and technical inputs shared by Dr. Paul, the Chief Secretary reiterated the UT Administration's resolve to integrate advanced healthcare innovations into its public health system. He stated that the Government of Jammu and Kashmir is working towards establishing Tele-ICU facilities under a hub-and-spoke model, ensuring 24x7 critical care monitoring, expert consultation, and real-time clinical support for peripheral hospitals. Under this model, newly established GMCs will serve as spokes connected to a central command hub within the UT.

To ensure effective imple-



mentation, the Chief Secretary proposed deputing an expert team from J&K to leading healthcare institutions across the country to study the design and operational modalities of existing Tele-ICU hubs and

command centres. He emphasized that while J&K faces challenges arising from difficult terrain and human resource limitations, the administration is committed to developing a customized, scalable model that

addresses regional needs and strengthens healthcare delivery at the grassroots level.

Highlighting the next steps, the Chief Secretary directed the Health & Medical Education Department to work out

the technical, administrative, and financial contours of the initiative. He stressed the importance of creating a state-of-the-art Tele-ICU hub within J&K equipped with expert professionals and technology partners to provide continuous clinical guidance, training, and quality assurance. The hub would also serve as a training and mentoring centre for medical staff across the UT, eventually leading to the creation of additional regional hubs for wider Tele-ICU coverage.

Secretary, Health & Medical Education Department, Dr. Syed Abid Rashid Shah, informed that the Department has proposed the establishment of at least a 10-bedded Tele-ICU unit in each of the new GMCs. He outlined the preparatory groundwork completed so far and presented a roadmap for phased implementation, including infrastructure readiness, technology procurement, and training modules.

The participants shared insights based on the their experience in administering

the critical care medicine and suggested mechanisms for seamless integration of Tele-ICU facilities with existing hospital systems. Principals of various GMCs also shared their perspectives on operational feasibility, interconnectivity, and potential clinical benefits of the initiative.

Others who were present throughout this session includes MD, NHM; MD, JKMSCL; Principals of GMCs, Dental Colleges and other concerned officers.

The deliberations underscored the J&K Administration's focused approach towards leveraging telemedicine and digital health technologies to bridge gaps in healthcare access, particularly in remote and underserved areas. The proposed Tele-ICU network is expected to significantly enhance the Union Territory's capacity for critical care delivery, ensuring timely medical intervention, expert supervision, and improved patient outcomes across all tiers of the healthcare system.

From local market to global stage, USWAH enters world modest fashion scene

WARIS FAYAZ

SRINAGAR: Kashmir's homegrown modest fashion brand, USWAH, is set to make its mark on the global stage after receiving an invitation to the Modest Fashion and Art Trade Show in Istanbul, scheduled from November 26 to 29, 2025.

The show is set to host 300 global brands, including several Indian designers and outlets that have received official invitations to showcase their work at IFM Istanbul Expo Center.

Bilal Ahmed Khan, the brand's founder, said the journey has been personal and challenging. "I had to return home from Dubai due to my mother's health. That decision changed my life. I chose to build something of my own, rooted in our values and identity," he said.

After returning to Kashmir, Bilal, a resident of Sangrama Sopore, faced a period of uncertainty. "I struggled a lot. I found a marketing job that paid Rs 4,500 a month," he recalled. But he and his friends decided to take a leap of faith and open their first outlet at Sopore. "Initially,



we struggled a lot. We had limited resources and long working hours, but we were determined," Bilal said.

Drawing inspiration from Turkish dressing styles, the team focused on creating contemporary

modest wear with a Kashmiri touch.

In 2025, USWAH received its first major bridal order. "Without thinking anything, I agreed. I was given three months to complete it," Bilal said. Delivering the order successfully

marked a turning point, establishing USWAH as a recognized name in the Valley's fashion industry.

Co-managed by Sheikh Mudasir Qadir, USWAH now ships globally, excluding Pakistan, with clients in Qatar, Goa, Hyderabad, Maharashtra and Mumbai, alongside hundreds of deliveries across Kashmir. The brand plans to expand with 10 new outlets in the coming year.

USWAH has also emerged as a source of livelihood for many. "Our outlet provides jobs to locals and outsiders. At a time of job crisis in the Valley, we are proud to offer opportunities in design, tailoring, logistics and sales," Bilal said.

It is pertinent to mention, the Istanbul trade show will bring together designers and artists from around the world, offering USWAH a platform to showcase modest fashion trends that blend style, sustainability and cultural identity.

"This is not just about us. It is about showing that Kashmir can produce global brands while staying true to its culture," Bilal said—(KNO)

Admin tightens fire safety ahead of winter

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The Office of the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, has issued a circular instructing all Deputy Commissioners (DCs) across the valley to implement strict fire safety measures ahead of the winter season.

The move comes after repeated advisories failed to prevent recurring fire incidents, which have caused significant loss of life and property.

According to the circular, it has been observed with serious concern that, despite awareness campaigns, a substantial number of fire incidents continue to be reported across various districts of the Kashmir Division, particularly during the winter months.

The circular states that these incidents have resulted in significant loss of life and property, primarily due to electrical short circuits, improper handling of heating appliances, and unsafe storage of combustible materials.

"Accordingly, all Deputy Commissioners are hereby requested to undertake the following preventive, supervisory, and enforcement measures within their respective jurisdictions," it reads.



tions," it reads.

The circular adds that DCs should formulate and implement a comprehensive District-Level Winter Fire Safety Plan in coordination with the Fire & Emergency Services Department, Power Development Department (PDD), Public Health Engineering (PHE), Health Department, and Municipal & Panchayat authorities. The Department of Fire & Emergency Services shall designate one District-Level Nodal Officer for the purpose.

Awareness Campaigns: Launch intensive public awareness drives through electronic, print, and social media platforms to sensitize residents about the safe handling of electrical and heating appliances, LPG usage, and fire prevention measures.

Inspection of Wiring and Electrical Load: Ensure

that PDD teams conduct random inspections of residential and commercial wiring, with particular attention to high-risk areas prone to overloading, congested urban centers with wooden structures, and substandard electrical installations.

Fire Safety Audits: Direct Fire & Emergency Services to undertake fire safety audits of congested urban localities, government offices, hospitals, schools, markets, and residential clusters. Ensure that identified deficiencies are rectified within a fixed timeframe.

Combustible Storage Regulation: Take strict action against the improper storage of combustible materials, such as dry grass, firewood, and LPG cylinders, in congested localities or residential premises.

Hamam and Gas Heater Safety: Conduct awareness and inspection drives for hamams and LPG/gas heaters, particularly emphasizing the removal of LPG cylinders from bedrooms during night hours.

Coordination with Local Bodies: Direct Municipal Committees, Panchayats, and Urban Local Bodies to ensure unobstructed fire lanes, accessible water points, and readiness of local fire hydrants throughout the winter months.

Emergency Preparedness: Review district disaster management preparedness, including the availability of fire tenders, emergency water sources, and quick response teams, especially in snow-bound areas.

Periodic Review: Convene monthly reviews at the district level and submit reports to the Divisional Commissioner's office regarding fire incidents (if any), preventive measures taken, and the status of public awareness initiatives.

The circular stressed that all Deputy Commissioners must ensure strict compliance with these directions and maintain zero tolerance for negligence in fire safety enforcement—(KNO)

Rohmoo, Chakoora hamlets in Pulwama demand fire service stations

JAHANGEER GANAIE

PULWAMA: The residents of Rohmoo and Chakoora hamlets in South Kashmir's Pulwama district have expressed deep concern over the absence of Fire and emergency Service stations in their respective localities, saying the lack of this vital facility has resulted in repeated losses of life and property over the years.

Locals from both areas said that despite repeated pleas and official assurances, the government has failed to set up fire service stations to cater to the large population spread across dozens of villages. The residents of Rohmoo, which falls under the Rajpora belt, said that around 20-25 villages with thousands of residents depend on the Pulwama fire station, which is nearly 10 kilometers away.

They said that in case of any fire incident; the response time is extremely delayed, leading to devastating losses.

"By the time fire tenders reach Rohmoo and

adjoining villages, property worth lakhs is already reduced to ashes," said Qayoom Khan, a local social activist.

"We have approached successive governments for setting up a station here, but nothing has been done."

Another local resident, Zaroof Ahmad, said that fire incidents have been on the rise in recent years and that the Pulwama fire station cannot effectively cater to hundreds of villages across the district. "During the last few years, several families have suffered huge financial losses. A local fire station could have saved both property and lives," he added.

The residents of Chakoora village said that all official formalities for establishing a Fire and Emergency Service station in their area were completed in 2021, yet the government has not issued the final approval.

"We have been following up the matter since 2020. Every file, every approval is complete. The project

is ready on paper, but no physical work has started," said Abdul Rashid, a resident of Chakoora.

Locals said the nearest fire stations are about 20 kilometers away, leaving the entire belt including Chakoora, Panzgam, Litter and other adjoining villages highly vulnerable.

"In case of a fire, we can do nothing but watch our homes burn while waiting for help from distant stations," said Mohammad Yousuf, another local. "We have raised the demand before every visiting official, but our pleas fall on deaf ears."

Residents from both Rohmoo and Chakoora expressed disappointment over what they described as the government's "mute spectator attitude" toward an essential public safety issue.

They appealed to the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and the Directorate of Fire and Emergency Services to act swiftly and approve new fire service stations in both the areas—(KNO)

Secy ITD reviews progress of projects under Capex Budget 2025-26



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Secretary, Information Technology Department (ITD), Dr. Piyush Singla Wednesday chaired a meeting of senior officers to discuss and review the physical and financial progress of different projects of the department under Capex Budget 2025-26 at Civil Secretariat here.

Chief Executive Officer, JKEGA; Special Secretary, ITD; Director Finance, ITD; Additional Secretary, ITD, Deputy Director (Planning), ITD; Head SeMT J&K; Incharge IT Cell; besides, other officers and officials attended the meeting through virtual mode.

During the meeting, threadbare discussions were held on various issues

regarding the present status of current year projects under Capex Budget 2025-26 and shelf of projects for next year budget.

The meeting also discussed other issues pertaining to different projects like establishment of Centre of Excellence, upgradation of IT skills, new e-governance initiatives in UT of J&K, digitalization of office Records development of IT Hub/ Park at Jammu & Srinagar and others.

Secretary IT emphasized upon the concerned officers to clear all bottlenecks for early completion of all ongoing projects of IT department. He also directed the officers to take proper workout on under process DPRs and other issues so that the works

on the different projects could be completed in time-bound manner.

During the meeting, Director Finance and other concerned officers briefed the Secretary and gave a power point presentation about the status of various projects, besides action taken on physical and financial status of Capex Budget 2025-26.

The meeting was also informed about present status of physical and financial progress of total number of ongoing and new projects including upgradation of State Data Centre, setting up of wired LAN for Civil Secretariat Jammu, setting up of dedicated 2Gbps internet Lease Line for both Secretariats at Jammu & Srinagar and setting up of MPLS for e-office.

Dir Info condole demise of Editor, Glimpses of Future Daily

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Director Information & Public Relations, Nitish Rajara, has expressed deep sorrow over the demise of Prem Nath Sharma, Editor of the Glimpses of Future, an English Daily. In a heartfelt condolence message, the Director extended sympathies to the bereaved family and paid rich tributes to the late editor's invaluable contributions to the field of journalism.

Describing Sharma as a dedicated professional and a voice of integrity, the Director noted that his journal-

istic work reflected a deep understanding of public concerns and a steadfast commitment to truth.

He further stated that the late editor's legacy would continue to inspire generations of media professionals. "His passing leaves an irreplaceable void in the journalistic fraternity," the Director remarked.

Meanwhile, the Joint Director Information, Jammu, Deepak Dubey also expressed his condolences on the sad demise of Sh. Prem Nath Sharma and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul.

اطلاع عام

غلٹی سے اسکول ریکارڈ میں میری بیٹی بنام سنت جان کی تاریخ پیدائش 08-05-2021 کا اندراج ہوا ہے جبکہ اصلی تاریخ پیدائش 18-05-2014 ہے جس کی درستی کرانی مطلوب ہے۔ اس ضمن میں اگر کسی شخص کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دنوں کے اندر اندر اپنے اعتراضات پرنسپل گورنمنٹ مڈل اسکول رنہو کے دفتر میں پیش کریں۔ بعد معیاد کوئی بھی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

جاوید احمد ڈار

سائنکر ہیمو پیو اومہ

■ Buried Treasures

The Lost Art Of An Open Heart



MUDASIR KOULL

An old man named Raheem Kak lived in a quiet village below the hills. He was once a legend in our neighbourhood. He spent his days herding animals in open fields and orchards. He told us stories about his past, about myths, and sometimes about ghosts. We, as children, waited for holidays to meet him. Sundays were never dull around him. His storytelling was full of energy and humor. He was also sharp in his talk and quick with calculations. One of his favorite sayings was “Ungji tull kam trakh.”

Raheem Kaks nature was peaceful, gentle, and caring. Once, my friends and I sat around him listening to his tales. Suddenly, a snake crawled out near him along the bund of the Zain-gair canal. He shouted, “The Jinn has become a snake!” and lay down pretending to die. We panicked and ran away crying. Later, he stood up laughing, saying he had eaten the snake alive.

I was terrified and rushed home shouting for my mother. I told her everything. She locked me inside the compound and forbade me from going out again. It felt like a bad dream. Besides rearing cows, Raheem Kumar also sold fried potatoes, which he called Till Munj. He did this after returning from the fields. His business worked on barter. People gave him paddy, rice, or eggs in exchange for his fried potatoes. Those days were full of love, respect, and brotherhood. No one can forget them. They shine in memory like the sun among stars.

Raheem Kak was a truly entertaining man. The simplicity and kindness I saw in elders like him are missing in today's world.

Currently, everything appears to be a sham: love, pledges, relationships, even friendship. The sincerity and closeness of the old-nature has gone. Back then we enjoyed real tranquility, faith when the sun would rise and prayers and the beautiful voice of Durood Sharif would



emerge from mosque loudspeakers. The atmosphere felt like paradise, calm, and assured faith. The soft beginning of the day perfumed in faithfulness and love for God was sickly stuff, strength and peace for the entire day. Life then moved slowly and gracefully, each day stretching with meaning, each month feeling as long as a year, and each year carrying the weight of timeless contentment. But when I look at the present times, I see a different world fast, restless, and far removed from the peace and tranquility that once defined our lives.

The month of Ramadan was truly the healing therapy of the year. Elderly people like Raheem Kak carried golden wisdom, narrating hadiths and guiding us to recite verses from the Holy Quran throughout the sacred month. The evenings stood out as incredible times for us, particularly in close proximity to

breaking the fast. We kids would sit on the little bridge in Lone Mohalla, watching massive flocks of crows and different birds go home, which was all part of our day to day experience. At the time of iftar, we would sit down together, eat, share our food, and laugh without a care in the world. We exchanged topics, khazar, and our favorite sweet dish of mixed sugar and rice, known as khand tumul. Those moments remain etched in memory—the time when we lived with open hearts, sharing and caring for one another without limits or boundaries.

Time has passed but the warmth of those days lives within me still. The voices, the laughter and the simple togetherness of people like Raheem Kak feel like treasures now buried in the noise of modern life. We were not wealthy, yet we were satisfied. We had less, yet we cared more. Faith

was less a practice than a manner of being. It has been almost ten years since I last met him, though he still lives nearby. One day, while returning from duty, I saw him in the market, walking with a stick. I was surprised to encounter him after a long time. I said hello to him very warmly. He answered with “Gobra theek chuka ch kohund govak.” His comments opened the floodgates to many memories from my childhood. I smiled and responded with his old expression, “Ungji tull trakh kotah go.” He laughed and replied, “You made me smile for the first time in a long time, you have to be one of my friends.”

We talked for a while. I reminded him of his ghost stories and his fried potatoes. He was excited and grateful to hear it all. Before we left, I assured him that I would write a piece about his experiences and his life. He smiled

at me, bless him, and it was a smile of healing and contentment. This is where I have come to realize that the beauty of life is in the simplicity of the moment, the heart-felt connections with others, and the cherished moments together without any expectation. The peace that many of us are looking for now was once easily evidenced through open hearts and genuine prayers. Time, and the memory of it, teaches me how wealth and technology cannot replace that calm leap on compassion and faith – loving one another stitch the fabric of humanity. Added back, even a fraction of that back into our daily lives can cultivate the same healing that may have been lost through time.

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The Smoky Truth: J&K's Deepening Tobacco Crisis

MOHAMMAD HANIEF

Tobacco use has quietly become one of the most serious public health challenges facing Jammu and Kashmir. Despite awareness campaigns, government regulations, and warnings printed on every packet, tobacco consumption continues to rise across the region. From bustling city streets to quiet villages, smoking and other forms of tobacco use have become deeply embedded in daily life — cutting across class, gender, and age.

Recent national health surveys place Jammu and Kashmir among the states and union territories with the highest rates of tobacco consumption in India. The latest data from the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS-2) and the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) show that 23.7 percent of adults in the region use some form of tobacco. Of these, 20.8 percent are active smokers, while 4.3 percent consume smokeless forms such as gutkha or snuff. These figures point to a worrying trend that shows little sign of slowing down.

The gender gap in tobacco use is substantial but telling. Nearly 35 percent of men in Jammu and Kashmir are smokers, compared with just 5 percent of women. While female smoking remains relatively uncommon, changing lifestyles and urban influences could shift this pattern in the future.

Equally striking are the district-level disparities. In some areas, tobacco use has reached alarming levels. Kupwara, at more than 56 percent, tops the list, followed by Shopian (52 percent), Bandipora (49 percent), and Anantnag (48 percent). In contrast, Jammu district reports significantly lower rates, suggesting that while intensity varies, tobacco use has spread across nearly every corner of the Union Territory.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of this crisis is the growing prevalence of smoking among adolescents and young adults. A recent survey conducted in Srinagar revealed that nearly one

in four school-going students — about 23 percent — are active smokers. The findings expose how early experimentation with tobacco often evolves into addiction, locking young people into a habit that may last a lifetime.

Despite the ban under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), students continue to report easy access to cigarettes and other tobacco products, often sold by local vendors near schools. The sale of single cigarettes allows minors to purchase discreetly, while the increasing popularity of hookah lounges — offering flavored tobacco marketed as a social pastime — has normalized smoking among the youth.

The long-term implications are profound. Early exposure to tobacco drastically increases the likelihood of chronic addiction and related health problems. In a region already burdened by unemployment and psychosocial stress, tobacco often becomes a coping mechanism — an illusion of relief that leads to greater physical and mental harm.

Tobacco's deep cultural roots in Kashmir further complicate the problem. For generations, the hookah has been a familiar presence in rural households, symbolizing hospitality and communal bonding. While modern cigarettes have replaced traditional hookahs, the underlying acceptance of smoking has endured. This social tolerance makes it difficult to stigmatize tobacco use or enforce restrictions, especially within close-knit communities where smoking is seen as a harmless social habit.

The health consequences are devastating. Tobacco is a leading cause of preventable deaths and a major contributor to cancers, heart disease, and respiratory illnesses. Hospitals across Jammu and Kashmir are witnessing a steady increase in cases linked to tobacco use, particularly among middle-aged men. The economic cost is equally staggering. It is estimated that residents spend hundreds of crores of rupees



each year on tobacco products — a sum that does not include the medical bills, lost income, and long-term care that follow.

Although officials claim a slight decline in tobacco consumption — around two to three percent over recent years — the reality is far more complex. While urban centers show some improvement due to enforcement and awareness, rural and semi-urban areas remain deeply affected. Moreover, a drop among older smokers is often offset by rising use among younger people, threatening to undo any progress made.

The government has launched several initiatives under the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP). Cessation centers have been established, awareness campaigns intensified, and fines introduced for smoking in public places. Educational institutions regularly host anti-tobacco events, and advertisements warn about the health risks. Yet, enforcement remains inconsistent. Smoking in public spaces is still widespread, and sales near schools continue largely unchecked.

One major obstacle is easy availabil-

ity. Cigarettes and bidis can be found in almost every neighborhood shop, often sold without regard for age or distance from schools. Their affordability also keeps demand high, particularly among lower-income groups. Many users underestimate the dangers of “occasional smoking,” while cultural acceptance discourages people from quitting.

The problem extends beyond smokers themselves. Second hand smoke exposes countless non-smokers — including children and women — to harmful toxins at home and in public. Surveys indicate that more than half of adolescents in Jammu and Kashmir are exposed to second-hand smoke in public places, increasing their vulnerability to respiratory diseases and heart conditions.

Addressing this growing crisis requires sustained, multi-dimensional action. Stricter enforcement of existing laws must become a priority. Public smoking should be penalized more consistently, and sales of tobacco near educational institutions must be completely banned. Increasing taxes on tobacco products can make them less affordable, especially for young consumers.

Equally vital are education and awareness efforts that go beyond slogans. Schools, colleges, and community organizations must play a central role in teaching young people about the dangers of tobacco. Campaigns should highlight not only health risks but also the social and economic costs of addiction.

There is also an urgent need for accessible cessation support. Many smokers express a willingness to quit but lack guidance or counselling. Expanding cessation centers, integrating tobacco control into primary healthcare, and using digital tools for follow-up support can greatly improve outcomes. Community and religious leaders, too, can help by promoting a culture that discourages smoking and emphasizes self-discipline and health.

Accurate data and regular monitoring are essential for informed policymaking. Without updated statistics and local-level studies, interventions risk being sporadic and ineffective. Coordination between government departments, educational institutions, and health professionals can ensure that tobacco control efforts remain focused and evidence-based.

Tobacco addiction is not merely a personal habit; it is a social and economic epidemic. The rising rates of tobacco use in Jammu and Kashmir threaten to undermine years of progress in public health and place an enormous strain on the region's healthcare infrastructure. Every cigarette smoked and every hookah lit carries a cost — one paid not only in money, but in years of life and the health of future generations.

The fight against tobacco will not be won overnight, but it can be won through persistent effort and collective resolve. Jammu and Kashmir stands at a critical crossroads: either allow this silent epidemic to tighten its grip, or act decisively to protect the health and well-being of its people. The choice, and the responsibility, belongs to all.

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Industry Bodies Welcome CDSCO's Draft Guidance On Medical Device Software

IANSS

NEW DELHI: Industry bodies on Wednesday welcomed the draft guidance on medical device software issued by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO).

Medical device software is software that is either integrated into a hardware medical device (Software in a Medical Device or SiMD) or operates independently as a standalone application for medical purposes (Software as a Medical Device or SaMD).

The CDSCO, in an official notice on Tuesday, shared the draft of the guidance document to bring more clarity on regulatory aspects of medical device software and to align the requirements with best global practices.

“This guidance document provides scope, definition, classification, standards, requirements of technical documents, and Quality Management system applicable for Medical Device Software. The applicants may refer to the documents during submission of application for grant of licence to manufacture or import Medical Device Software for sale and distribution in the country,” Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi, the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI), the head of CDSCO, in the notice.

Medical device software is used for diagnostics, treatment, and patient monitoring, and is subject to strict regulatory standards to ensure patient safety and effectiveness.

“We welcome the updated revised Government’s draft guidance note on Software as a Medical Device (SaMD) as a timely and progressive step towards strengthening India’s regulatory ecosystem. With digital health solutions playing an increasingly critical role in patient care, it is essential that our regulatory framework ensures both patient safety and innovation,” Rajiv Nath, Forum Coordinator, Association of Indian Medical Device Industry (AiMed)

Nath also proposed hosting a webinar to educate stakeholders and invite feedback, to align India’s framework with the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF) and other global best practices.

“This will ensure patient safety while enabling Indian innovations to thrive internationally,” he added.

The Medical Technology Association of India (MTAi) also welcomed the draft guidance document and commended CDSCO for its proactive step in framing a comprehensive regulatory framework for SiMD and SaMD, including artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and cloud-based medical applications.

“This draft guidance reflects CDSCO’s commitment to keeping pace with the fast-evolving landscape of digital health technologies. By providing clarity on definitions, classification, and quality management requirements, it creates a foundation for safe, innovative, and globally competitive MedTech software solutions from India,” said Pavan Choudary, Chairman, MTAi.

MTAi also suggested streamlining compliance requirements for low-risk SaMDs to ensure regulatory proportionality and ease of implementation; aligning technical and quality standards with global best practices; and providing greater clarity on clinical evaluation protocols and algorithm change management, particularly for AI/ML-based medical devices.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

J&K Assembly Set

Abdul Rahim Rather. The Speaker stated that the issue is currently under judicial consideration and therefore cannot be tabled for a vote.

The session will provide members with opportunities to raise concerns and seek responses from the government on policy implementation and pending issues. Lawmakers are expected to focus on accountability measures and the status of previously announced initiatives.

The Legislative Assembly will also follow a structured timetable for discussions, including a separate allocation for private members’ proposals. Pending bills from the previous session are expected to be addressed before new proposals are taken up, ensuring continuity in legislative proceedings.

The upcoming session comes at a time when political debates around governance, electoral commitments, and administrative decisions are prominent. Lawmakers from different parties have indicated that they will actively participate in discussions, highlighting the need for detailed scrutiny of government performance.

The Business Advisory Committee’s decisions on time management and scheduling will influence the pace and order of debate during the session. Members will also follow the Speaker’s directives regarding matters that cannot be discussed due to ongoing legal proceedings.(KNS)

Congress skips

including six Congress MLAs, five independents, and CPI (M) MLA Muhammad Yousuf Tarigami, for the meeting scheduled at Hotel Radisson Collection.

The rift between the NC and Congress has been widening over the past two weeks, particularly after the NC denied Congress a safe seat in the Rajya Sabha elections. Instead, the NC offered a riskier seat, which Congress declined to contest. The NC also proposed the Nagrota Assembly seat to Congress, which was similarly rejected—(KNO)

NC Will Win All

Party Meeting is conducted, and today, NC and other independents held a meeting to devise a strategy.

“This session is different from others as elections for the Rajya Sabha are being held, and a strategy was being prepared to secure victory in all the seats,” he said, terming today’s meeting as significant.

“I am thankful to Tarigami and other independents for attending the meeting. With the enthusiasm that can be seen among the NC MLAs and other independents, I am hopeful that NC will secure all four Rajya Sabha seats,” he said.

Furthermore, the Chief Minister, while replying to a query about Congress’s non-participation in the meeting, said that they did not join as they had their own meeting. “Congress has always maintained that they will not allow the BJP to emerge victorious. Congress has its own system. There is a difference between their party and ours. They have to wait for the party high command’s decision, whereas we take decisions here,” he said.

“The Congress high command cannot be in favour of the BJP,” he said, referring to Congress’s participation in the Rajya Sabha elections. He added that although, at the local level, Congress was ready to contest the bypolls, the high command decided to leave the seat for NC, and therefore, the candidate was announced.

Regarding PDP’s support, the Chief Minister said, “Our leader, Shami Oberoi, met PDP Chief Mehbooba Mufti today and requested, on behalf of the party, to support the NC candidate in the Rajya Sabha elections. Earlier, Dr. Farooq Abdullah also spoke with her. Although no decision has been made public by the party yet, they have promised us that a decision will be taken after internal discussions,” he said.

On the LoP’s statement, the Chief Minister said that he must clarify who made the offer to form a government with the BJP. “We have not made any such offer. We don’t hide anything. The LoP must stop issuing these baseless statements,” he added—(KNO)

No Talks With

by NC president Dr. Farooq Abdullah.

“Unless there is a clear signal from our central leadership in Delhi, we will not attend any meeting called by the National Conference,” Karra said.

Earlier in the day, the Congress Legislative Party met in Srinagar to discuss political, administrative, and economic issues ahead of the autumn session of the J&K Assembly scheduled to begin on Thursday. Karra said the meeting remained incomplete and would continue on Thursday.

“The members of the Legislative Party expressed their views and opinions, which have been formally sent to our central leadership in Delhi for guidance,” he said, adding that the party would take its next step only after consulting the high command.

Karra said that the Congress, being a national party, must act in accordance with the directions of its central leadership. “The suggestions and sentiments expressed by our legislators have been shared with the high command. We will move forward only after their guidance,” he said.

The JKPC chief added that recent political developments in the Union Territory had prompted the party to review its position carefully. “Some important events over the past week have compelled us to consult the central leadership once again before taking part in any alliance discussions,” he added.

Karra also said the Congress Legislative Party was united in its commitment to uphold democratic values and to effectively represent the people’s concerns in the Assembly. “Our confidence in the process remains strong, and we are determined to use the Assembly platform responsibly and with respect,” he said.

Meanwhile, NC leaders Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah had reached the Radisson Hotel in Rajbagh to preside over the meeting of alliance legislators aimed at chalking out a joint strategy for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections and the Assembly session. However, Congress’s absence highlighted growing uncertainty within the alliance over seat-sharing and legislative coordination.

The Congress meeting will resume on Thursday after the leadership in Delhi provides further instructions, Karra said. (KNS)

Chris Gayle Set To

The “Gayle fever” had gripped the valley, with chants of “Gayaloo, Gayloo” echoing through the stands as he took the field for the first time in Srinagar.

During that time, nearly 30,000 fans turned out for the matches, making it one of the biggest sporting spectacles in recent years. The overwhelming response highlighted Kashmir’s growing enthusiasm for professional cricket.

Meanwhile, with the IHPL set to bring more international names and star players to the valley, Gayle’s video has reignited the excitement among local fans who still remember the electrifying atmosphere from his last appearance—(KNO)

Ruhullah’s Absence

firmly with the party,” he said.

Expressing optimism about his chances, Aga Mahmood acknowledged that the electoral battle in Budgam remains challenging. “I am hopeful of victory, though every election is a tough process that tests one’s resolve,” he said.

Responding to a query about protests staged against the Deputy Chief Minister by some locals, Aga Mahmood downplayed the incident. “Only a few well-wishers from Magam and Nowgam had expressed their grievances. Such small protests are natural during election time,” he stated.

He reiterated that the credibility and performance of the National Conference would ultimately determine the outcome of the Budgam by-election. “Our strength lies in the party’s history, its leadership, and the trust of the people,” he added.

Ladakh Leaders, MHA

the past six years has been the restoration of democracy in Ladakh, with statehood being the best solution.

He added that the issue could not be resolved in one or two meetings as it required a process, which was already underway.

“The discussions also covered the implementation of a reservation policy in

Ladakh, the release of those detained in connection with the September 24 incident, including Sonam Wangchuk, and compensation for those who were killed or injured in the incident,” Kargili said.

Member of Parliament (MP) Hanifa Jaan said the meeting between Ladakh’s leadership and senior officials of the Union Home Ministry reflected a serious and sincere approach towards resolving the region’s long-pending issues.

“The discussions focused on demands related to statehood, inclusion under the Sixth Schedule, and constitutional safeguards, with all key points presented strongly before the Ministry,” he said.

Jan noted that while a final decision could not be reached in a single sitting, the meeting marked an important step forward. He expressed hope that the ongoing process would lead to meaningful progress on the issues facing Ladakh.

The meeting follows an announcement by the MHA on October 17 that a judicial inquiry would be held into the September 24 violence in Leh. That incident, which broke out during a protest called by LAB, resulted in four deaths and several injuries. It also led to dozens being taken into custody, including Wangchuk—(KNO)

Foundation For ‘Op

earlier this month the Army Chief had issued a fierce warning to Pakistan. “If the neighbouring country continues to support terrorism it will lose its geographical presence. If Pakistan wants to retain its place on the map, it must stop state-sponsored terrorism,” the Army Chief had said speaking at an Army post in Rajasthan’s Anupgarh.

He had maintained that the Indian forces won’t show any restraint this time, hinting that a second version of ‘Operation Sindoor’ wouldn’t be far away if Islamabad refuses to med its ways.

“This time we will not maintain the restraint that we had in Operation Sindoor 1.0. This time we will do something that will make Pakistan think whether it wants to retain its place in geography or not,” General Dwivedi had said

He had also asked the soldiers to stay prepared. “If God wills, you’ll get an opportunity soon. All the best.”

It may be recalled that ‘Operation Sindoor’ the mega military operation was undertaken by India to give a fitting reply in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack. Nine terror camps were hit in Pakistan and PoK (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir) by Indian forces using long-range precision weapons on May 7, 2025.

The attack on terror camps led to skirmishes between the two countries for four days. A ceasefire followed on May 10 after the Pakistani commanders pleaded with their Indian counterparts to stop the offensive—(KNO)

Jaish Starts Online

course’ and making them fill an online information form.

In order or raise funds, Masood Azhar, in his address at Markaz Usman O Ali in Bahawalpur on September 27, had appealed for funds.

They are also collecting a donation of 500 PKR from every woman enrolling in this JeM course, and is also making them fill out an online information form.

Earlier this month, on October 8, Masood Azhar announced the formation of Jamat

ul-Muminat. A follow-up event, Dukhtaran-e-Islam, was held in Rawalkot in Pakistan-Occupied-Kashmir, on October 19 to attract women into the group.

According to reports, JeM is now exploiting online platforms to recruit women into terror brigades modelled after ISIS, Hamas, and LTTE, potentially including suicide or fedayeen operations. (With inputs from Agencies)

Asia’s Famed Wular

deteriorated over the years. “The garbage has spread everywhere, and while the authorities are responsible, people’s careless behaviour is also to blame,” he added.

He also noted that the location’s proximity to the Bandipora-Sopore road worsens the problem.

Adding to the environmental degradation, locals said that dead animals are frequently dumped here, further contaminating the area.

Saleem Dar, another resident, expressed concern over the government’s inaction despite multiple complaints. “The administration is spending large sums of money trying to clean the lake, but people keep polluting it,” he said.

He warned that toxic substances from the waste could dissolve into the water, posing a severe threat to the lake’s ecosystem. Dar urged that proper scientific methods be adopted to manage and treat the waste effectively.

Locals also blamed the general public for contributing to the pollution. “If the people who live here don’t protect Wullar Lake, who else will?” questioned a group of residents.

They called on the administration to impose strict penalties on those responsible for dumping waste, stressing that such action is crucial to prevent further damage to the lake.

Residents said the Rural Development Department (RDD) has been involved in cleanup efforts for several weeks, but without public cooperation and stricter enforcement, these efforts are unlikely to bring lasting relief.

An official said that he will look into the matter—(KNO)

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FM Sitharaman highlights surge in Diwali sales to all-time high of Rs 6.05 lakh crore



IAN S

NEW DELHI: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday highlighted the surge in Diwali sales this year which touched a record Rs 6.05 lakh crore, driven by GST rate cuts and strong demand for 'swadeshi' products.

The Finance Minister cited the statement of the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) which estimated this year's Diwali sales comprising Rs 5.4 lakh crore in goods and Rs 65,000 crore in services.

This marks a 25 per cent jump over the 2024 festive sales of Rs 4.25 lakh crore from the Navratri to Diwali period and is the highest-ever sales in India's trading history, according to Research and Trade Development Society, the research wing of CAIT.

Mainline retail accounted for nearly 85 per cent of total sales, indicating a strong revival of the brick-and-mortar market, the survey showed.

The reduction in GST rates across key consumer and retail categories such as confectionery, home decor, footwear, and ready-made garments, consumer durables and daily use items significantly improved price competitiveness and increased purchase momentum.

About 72 per cent of surveyed traders reported higher sales volumes directly attributable to reduced GST, according to the survey.

Consumers expressed greater satisfaction with stable prices amid festive demand, aiding consumption continuity post-Diwali.

The non-corporate and non-agricultural sector has emerged as a central pillar of India's growth, driven by 9 crore small businesses, crores of small manufacturing units and the largest base of consumers.

"The Diwali trade surge is estimated to have generated temporary employment for nearly 50 lakh people across logistics, transport, retail assistance, packaging, and delivery," the data showed.

Enhanced rural and semi-urban purchasing power contributed nearly 28 per cent of overall sales, highlighting deep economic penetration beyond metros.

"Diwali 2025 has set a new benchmark in India's retail and trading economy - symbolising the fusion of tradition, technology, and trust in Indian enterprise," said CAIT, adding that this year's Diwali stands as a major milestone in building an 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Over 6.06 lakh citizens imparted training on lifesaving CPR technique: Govt



IAN S

NEW DELHI: A total of 6,06,374 citizens have been imparted with training on the lifesaving Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) technique during the pan-India CPR Awareness Week, said the government on Wednesday.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) is a lifesaving and vital emergency procedure that improves the survival chances in critical cardiac cases.

The CPR Awareness Week was organised by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare from October 13 to 17 to sensitise citizens about the importance of early bystander intervention during cardiac arrest and other medical emergencies.

"Overall, through multifaceted activities, over 7,47,000 citizens were engaged during the CPR Awareness Week, and physical training was imparted to more than 6,06,374 participants across the country," the Ministry said.

Despite CPR's proven life-saving potential, India's bystander CPR rates remain lower than global standards. Through this week-long initiative, the Ministry sought to bridge this gap by promoting widespread CPR training, awareness, and behavioural readiness across diverse population groups.

A series of activities was organised throughout the

week to ensure widespread participation and awareness generation.

"A total of 14,701 participants joined the inaugural live pledge and CPR demonstration event through the ECHO platform and YouTube Live. Citizens were also encouraged to take a digital pledge through the MyGov platform, with 79,870 individuals pledging their commitment to CPR awareness," the Ministry said.

"Extensive physical training sessions on Compression-only CPR were organised across India by State and UT health departments, central government hospitals, AIIMS, INIs, the Indian Red Cross Society, and professional bodies."

Various CPR training sessions were also held for central government employees, CISF personnel, housekeeping staff, and officials from various Ministries.

CPR involves a combination of chest compressions at a speed of 100 compressions per minute, and rescue breathing (mouth-to-mouth) to maintain blood flow and oxygen to the brain and vital organs until professional medical help arrives.

"The simple act of performing hands-only CPR can sustain blood flow and oxygen to vital organs until professional help arrives, increasing survival chances manifold," said Union Health Secretary Punya Salila Srivastava, while inaugurating CPR Awareness Week.

President Murmu offers prayers at Sabarimala temple

IAN S

PAMBA: President Droupadi Murmu, on her first visit to the famed Sabarimala temple in Kerala, prayed before the deity on Wednesday after arriving by road at the foothills of the temple town in Pamba and then driving up the hill.

After reaching Pamba, she took part in the rituals associated with preparing the sacred offering bundle (irumudikettu) at the Pamba Ganapathi Temple.

A while later, she, dressed in a black saree with a gold border, carried the irumudikettu on her head.

She then got into the special Gurkha jeep, bypassing the regular procedure when pilgrims walk up the hill, which normally takes an hour.

Her convoy consisted of five other vehicles, which went up the hill on the Swami Ayyappan concrete road and reached the summit.

The President was received at the Kodimaram Chuvadu (flag post area) by the chief priest,



Tantri Kantar Mahesh Mohanar, who welcomed her with a poornakumbham ritual.

Then, President Murmu climbed the sacred 18 steps carrying the irumudikettu. Midway, she stopped for a few seconds on one of the steps.

She was seen immersed in prayers, standing before the deity with one hand on the irumudikettu on her head and the other on her chest.

Then the chief priest asked her to keep the bundle offering on the steps to the sanctum sanctorum. Those who

accompanied her also did the same with their offerings. The chief priest prayed inside the temple, came out and gave her the sacred 'prasadam'. Then she applied the sacred sandalwood paste on her forehead.

The President stood before the deity, prayed for a while and then walked around the temple. After the darshan, she reached the guest house at Sannidhanam to rest. She will return to Thiruvananthapuram by evening.

President Murmu thus became the second president to have prayed at the

temple, after V.V. Giri visited the temple five decades ago.

Earlier in the day, President Murmu's travel plans got changed following inclement weather, and after taking a helicopter from the state capital city, she landed at a stadium in Pramadam, Konni.

The earlier planned destination was that the helicopter would land at Nilackal, but following the inclement weather, it landed at Pramadam.

Also, contrary to the earlier plans, Kerala Governor Rajendra V. Arlekar was not on the helicopter; instead, it was State Devasom Minister V.N. Vasavan who was accompanying President Murmu.

At Pramadam, she was received by the local MP, Anto Antony, the legislators and high-ranking officials. From Pramadam, her cavalcade moved to Pamba.

Incidentally, the temple will be closed for all other pilgrims during the President's visit and will be opened after she departs from Sabarimala.

IAF chopper carrying Prez Murmu gets stuck in wet helipad in Kerala; police deny 'security lapse'

IAN S

PATHANAMTHITTA (KERALA): An alleged security lapse surfaced on Wednesday after an Indian Air Force (IAF) helicopter carrying President Droupadi Murmu to Sabarimala got its wheels stuck in wet concrete at a swiftly built temporary helipad inside an indoor stadium complex near here, prompting officials to push the chopper out.

The incident in Pramadam, Pathanamthitta, occurred shortly after the President alighted, even as the state's top police official denied any compromise to the security protocol.

According to reports, the helicopter landed at the temporary helipad constructed inside the indoor stadium complex at Pramadam, where the concrete surface had not completely dried.

The wheels reportedly sank into the wet concrete soon after President Murmu alighted from the aircraft.

Kerala Director General of Police (DGP) Ravada A.



Chandrasekhar clarified there was no security lapse and stated that the helicopter landed approximately five feet from the designated landing spot, which was still wet, according to a local media report.

"The helicopter landed at the wet place, about 5 feet from the previously decided landing place in the temporary helipad. So it could not proceed further as the wheels were stuck in the concrete. It was then pushed to the safe area for take-off," the report said, quoting the DGP.

Pathanamthitta District Collector Prem Krishnan S. also stated

that there was no breach in security.

A video footage, which brought the matter to public attention, showed about 30 police personnel deployed for the President's security pushing the helicopter out of the wet portion of the helipad, raising questions about possible lapses in protocol.

The President proceeded with her scheduled visit to the hill shrine following the incident. Reports suggest the temporary concrete helipad was built just 12 hours before the scheduled landing. State intelligence agencies had

reportedly flagged concerns that the wheels could get stuck due to the wet surface and had suggested landing at about five feet from the wet surface, but the chopper landed on the wet concrete, said the reports.

As per official sources, two landing venues had been prepared for the President's visit -- one at Nilakkal near Sabarimala and another at the Pramadam indoor stadium. The helicopter could not land at Nilakkal due to poor weather and fog, and was diverted to Pramadam, about 50 km away.

Media reports also indicated confusion regarding the President's itinerary. Initially, she was expected to travel by road from Thiruvananthapuram to Pampa, a distance of about 170 km, but the plan was changed early Wednesday morning to the aerial route.

Authorities are expected to review the incident, and action may be taken against officials found responsible for the poor preparation of the helipad, said the reports.

Cyberattack on Jaguar Land Rover costs UK economy \$2.55 billion, disrupts over 5,000 businesses

IAN S

NEW DELHI: A major cyberattack on Jaguar Land Rover, the British car manufacturer owned by India's Tata Motors, has cost the UK economy an estimated \$2.55 billion (£1.9 billion), according to a report released on Wednesday by the Cyber Monitoring Centre (CMC).

The attack forced a six-week shutdown of JLR's production, impacting thousands of suppliers and dealerships nationwide, marking it as the most expensive cyber event ever recorded in the UK.

More than 5,000 companies across the UK were affected by the incident, the report said.

The CMC is an independent group made up of experts in cybersecurity, including a former head of Britain's National Cyber Security Centre.

They said the financial damage could have been even worse if JLR had faced longer delays in restarting production after the hack.

The report described this attack as the most costly cyber event ever to hit the UK. Most of the



losses came from JLR having to stop making cars, which also affected its many suppliers.

JLR has three factories in Britain that together produce about 1,000 cars every day. Due to the hack, production was shut down for almost six weeks.

JLR finally began to start production again earlier this month. Before the shutdown, the company was losing about 50 million pounds every week.

To help JLR and its suppliers during this difficult time, the British government provided a loan guarantee of 1.5 billion pounds at the end of September.

This cyberattack on JLR was one of several big hacks that hit important

British companies this year.

For example, the retailer Marks & Spencer lost around 300 million pounds when its online services were shut down for two months after a breach in April.

The CMC has a system to rate the financial impact of such cybersecurity incidents on British businesses.

They ranked the JLR hack as a Category 3 systemic event, which is on a scale of one to five.

The report said the attack caused a major disruption not only to JLR's manufacturing but also to its supply chain and to car dealerships across the country.

'Bihar is land of Buddha': BJP blasts INDIA Bloc on govt jobs poll promise

IAN S

NEW DELHI: The BJP launched a blistering attack at the INDIA Bloc (RJD-Cong-Left alliance) on Wednesday, over its "impractical" and "unrealistic" poll promises and sops in the run-up to the Bihar elections and also termed its "parivaarvad" culture as a hindrance to the state's progress.

BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi, in a press briefing, taunted the grand alliance over its failure to strike a poll deal and reach a consensus on its Chief Ministerial face.

"Those who raised false alarm over vote chori in Bihar electoral rolls are unable to finalise their seat-sharing formula. They haven't been able to reach a consensus on -- nominating candidates, finalising their CM face, holding joint press conferences, releasing a common poll manifesto," the BJP spokesperson pointed out.

Trivedi also took potshots at Tejashwi Yadav's over-the-top poll promises for the people of the state, including government jobs to every family and explained the state's financial condition to call out his bluff.

"Tejashwi Yadav's poll promises amount to making a mockery of the electoral process. He promised 1 government job to every family. Bihar's current population is a little above 13 crore, and about 23 lakh people are government employees. Going by his measure, about 3 crore permanent government jobs will need to be created, and this would entail an expense of about Rs 10 lakh crore," he told the press.

"Bihar's budget is just Rs 3.17 lakh crore, how can one expect to get this fulfilled?" he asked, while warning the mahagathabandhan of not taking people for granted.

"This is a land of Lord Buddha, don't try to fool the people of Bihar. This is my appeal to Tejashwi and the INDI bloc," said the BJP leader.

Highlighting the emancipation of women under the NDA dispensation, Trivedi said when the Nitish government was formed, the women's literacy rate in the state stood barely at 33 per cent, and this has now risen to 77 per cent.

He further said, "Lakhpati Didi, Drone Didi, Sukanya Samridhi scheme are empowering women for a decade now. A methodical, consistent and pragmatic approach under



the double-engine government is yielding results for people of all categories; however, the Opposition is trying to damage these achievements by making false and highly inflated promises."

When questioned on the new entrant, Jan Suraj, in the electoral battle, he said that the time was not right for supporting any experimental politics and also cited the example of Delhi, where people got 'befooled and betrayed' by a party which emerged from the womb of the anti-corruption movement.

"Any new experimental politics can be detrimental. Bihar voters do understand this. Only a tried and tested leadership under Nitish Kumar can ensure that Bihar's developmental journey continues," he remarked.

Sudhanshu Trivedi also lashed out at RJD over 'promoting its family' at the cost of the electorate and also falsely 'positioning' itself as the champion of backward caste and classes.

"Parivaarvad runs deep into the RJD ranks. Lalu is the RJD president. Tejashwi is the leader of the Opposition, while Rabri Devi is the leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council. This itself shows how much they care for the backward community," he pointed out.

He also invoked Lalu's old poll slogan -- "Don't cast your vote, vote your caste," questioning the party's tall claims of clean and progressive politics.

"Any sensible person can understand that they are hurling crude jokes at the electorate," he added.

Accusing the RJD of shielding crime as well as criminals, he said that when Lalu Prasad Yadav came to power in the 1990s, it was on the back of an anti-graft crusade, but today the same yardstick has gone against him, making him ineligible to contest in the current elections.

India and Japan underscore shared resolve to uphold maritime order in Indo-Pacific

IAN S

TOKYO: In a significant demonstration of growing maritime cooperation between India and Japan, Indian Naval Ship (INS) Sahyadri, an indigenously built Shivalik-class guided missile stealth frigate, participated in the sea phase of the Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JAIMEX-25).

The crucial maritime exercise conducted between October 16-18, was followed by a port call at Yokosuka for the Harbour Phase on October 21.

During the Sea Phase, INS Sahyadri operated alongside Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF) ships Asahi, Oumi, and submarine Jinryu, engaging in a series of complex maritime drills.

The exercise featured advanced Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) maneuvers, missile defence simulations, underway replenishment, and flying operations, reflecting a high degree of coordination and interoperability between the two navies.

On Tuesday, R Madhu Sudan, Charge d' Affaires and Rear Admiral Yamaguchi Nobohisa, JMSDF's



Chief of Staff, Yokosuka District received INS Sahyadri in a solemn ceremony at Yokosuka.

The joint exercise is a key manifestation of the 'Special Strategic and Global Partnership' established between India and Japan in 2014, aimed at ensuring peace, stability, and security in the Indo-Pacific region.

Both nations continue to emphasise collaborative maritime engagements as a cornerstone of their strategic vision for a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

During the Harbour Phase at Yokosuka, crews from INS Sahyadri and JMSDF units will engage in a range of professional and cultural exchanges, including cross-deck visits, joint operational planning, and a combined Yoga session to strengthen camaraderie.

The visit is part of INS Sahyadri's ongoing Long Range Deployment across the Indo-Pacific, highlighting India's active naval outreach and operational readiness.

Commissioned in 2012, INS Sahyadri embodies India's indigenous defence capabilities under the vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India).

The multi-role stealth frigate has participated in numerous international maritime operations and exercises, reinforcing India's commitment to regional security cooperation.

The continued synergy between the Indian Navy and JMSDF underscores a shared resolve to uphold maritime order, freedom of navigation, and stability across critical sea lanes in the Indo-Pacific.

IHP League commencing from October 25th: Div Com reviews arrangements

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The first edition of T20 Indian Heaven Premier League shall commence from 25th October at Bakhshi Stadium featuring International, National and local players. The high octane league will see the participation of eight teams for a fortnight while the stadium is expected to remain brimmed with the crowd coming from all across the J&K.

To ensure the smooth conduct of the mega sports event, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg today chaired a comprehensive meeting of officers from various departments to take first hand appraisal of the preparations to set the stage ready for IHPL.

While reviewing the arrangements for the itinerary of the players, Div Com directed organisers to keep security agencies informed about the arrival, accommodation and movement of all players.

The meeting was informed that around 25 thousand to 30 thousand spectators are expected to watch the matches directly



in the stadium.

On the occasion, Div Com directed organisers to confine booking of maximum tickets through online mechanism only to facilitate smooth crowd management.

He also directed police and security officers to deploy adequate personnel to assist crowd control in an organized manner.

Div Com also instructed organisers to strictly adhere to the timelines for entry of spectators and conclusion of daily matches while DC Srinagar was directed to depute magistrates to facilitate coordination among stakeholders.

Regarding drone coverage, Div Com instructed concerned agencies to

approach to the district administration for proper permission.

Meanwhile, Div Com directed concerned officers of Jal Shakti and PDD for ensuring uninterrupted supply of drinking water & electricity at the venue.

Garg urged SMC, Sports Council and event organizers to conduct continuous cleanliness and sanitation drive to avoid littering around the venue.

He instructed IHPL Organisers to strictly mention food items that shall be allowed into the stadium for match viewers.

To take care of any medical exigency, Div Com directed Health Department to deploy ambulances fully equipped with

features and medicine besides asked officer to prepare a roster for medical & paramedical staff for the deployment at the venue.

He also instructed for identification of parking places to avoid inconvenience to the public and ensure proper traffic management.

He also directed for stationing of fire tenders near the stadium to combat any eventuality of fire incident.

Besides DC Srinagar, the meeting was attended by officers from various departments including Sports Council, SMC, Information, Jal Shakti, PDD, Traffic, Police, Airport Authority, Tourism, Health, Fire Services and other concerned departments.

J&K Gears Up for National Youth Festival 2026

Directorate of YSS to Lead UT-Wide Mobilisation

AZHAR HAJINI

JAMMU: The Directorate of Youth Services & Sports (YSS), J&K, has been designated as the nodal agency for registering participants from the UT for the prestigious National Youth Festival (NYT)- Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2026.

The festival will feature competitive tracks in Cultural and Innovation, encompassing a wide array of events including Painting, Folk Song, Story Writing, Folk Dance, Poetry Writing, Innovation, and Declaration. This initiative aims to identify, celebrate, and empower the young talent of the nation, providing them with a national platform to showcase their abilities.

The selection process in Jammu & Kashmir will

be a rigorous two-tiered system, commencing with district-level competitions, followed by a UT-level selection round, both to be conducted by the Directorate of YSS J&K.

To ensure the seamless and widespread participation of youth across all 20 districts, the Director General of the Department of Youth Services & Sports, J&K, Anuradha Gupta, chaired a comprehensive virtual meeting with all District Youth Services & Sports Officers (DYSSOs) from her office chamber in Jammu.

The meeting was also attended by JD YSS Jammu, Deputy Director Activities, Accounts Officer, Assistant Director Kashmir, and other sectional heads of the Directorate, underscoring the Department's collective

commitment to the event's success.

Addressing the officers, DG YSS, Anuradha Gupta, emphasized the critical role of the DYSSOs in ensuring wide publicity for the registration process. She stressed the importance of reaching every corner of the UT to maximize registrations and participation.

"We must act as facilitators to empower our youth," stated DG YSS. "Our primary objective is to ensure that the maximum number of talented participants from Jammu & Kashmir get the opportunity to be a part of this grand national event. All DYSSOs are directed to proactively create and manage the registration events on the designated My Bharat portal (<https://mybharat.gov.in>) to streamline the process

for our young aspirants."

The Directorate of YSS J&K has called upon all eligible and enthusiastic youth across the Union Territory to actively prepare for the competitions and stay updated for further announcements regarding district-level registration dates and procedures.

The Directorate of Youth Services & Sports, Jammu & Kashmir, is the apex body responsible for promoting and coordinating youth-centric activities and sports development across the Union Territory under the aegis of Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. It aims to channelize the energy of the youth in a positive direction and provide them with platforms for national and international exposure.

Teenager dies while extracting sand in Baramulla

AGENCIES

BARAMULLA: A 17-year-old boy died on Wednesday morning after being critically injured while extracting sand in the Singpora area of Pattan in Baramulla district, officials said.

An official said that the boy had suffered severe head injuries late last night while extracting sand.

He was rushed to JVC hospital, Bemina in critical condition, where doctors declared him dead early this morning.

He has been identified as Amjaad (17) of Singpora. Police have taken cognisance of the incident—(KNO)

CHess TOURNAMENT

Minha Wani wins 'Best Female Player' award at 5th AICF

NAVEED UL HAQ

SRINAGAR: Demonstrating her consistency on the chessboard, Minha Ayaz Wani once again brought recognition to Kashmir by winning the 'Best Female Player' award at the 5th AICF Chess for Everyone Open FIDE Rating Chess Tournament 2025. This event took place at the Indoor Sports Complex, Polo Ground, Srinagar.

The national-level tournament, organised by the All India Chess Federation (AICF) and supported by the Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council, featured about 200 players from across the country, including seniors, juniors, men, and women. This made the competition both tough and exciting.

Minha, showed remarkable composure and skill



all performance earned her a cash prize and a trophy.

The 18-year-old's success reflects the increasing presence of Kashmiri talent in the national chess scene. Minha's achievements have not only raised her profile but also inspired many young players, especially girls, to pursue chess with passion and confidence.

Previously, Minha had established herself as one of Kashmir's most successful young chess players. She won two gold medals at the national level, earned three gold medals in state championships, and consistently secured gold medals across inter-district, district, and zonal tournaments, a record that highlights her dedication and skill in the sport from a young age—(KNO)

BJP to hold legislature party meeting today: Sunil Sharma

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The J&K unit of Bharatiya Janata Party has called a meeting of its legislatures on Thursday morning in Srinagar to chalk out a strategy for the autumn session of the Legislative Assembly.

Leader of the Opposition and firebrand BJP leader Sunil Kumar Sharma will chair a meeting of all BJP legislators to formulate a strategy to corner the government on a range of issues.

"We are holding a meeting tomorrow at 8:30 AM



to discuss the issues to be raised during the session," Sunil Sharma said while speaking to Kashmir News Service (KNS).

Sharma had earlier stated that the BJP would demand accountability

from the National Conference-led government for what he described as a "betrayal of electoral promises."

"The government has failed to deliver on its commitments made during the

elections, whether it is the promise of 200 free units of electricity, 12 LPG cylinders per household, or other assurances given to the people," Sharma said.

He further added that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would question the government on its inability to create employment opportunities for the youth. "In the election, the government promised to create one lakh jobs for the youth, but they have done nothing. We will ask them what they have done for the youth in the past year," he said.(KNS)

SWD Organizes Sensitization Programme on Various Welfare Schemes

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Social Welfare Department (SWD) Srinagar Wednesday organized a Training-cum-Sensitization Programme on various Welfare Schemes for Women, Senior Citizens, and Persons with Disabilities at the Conference Hall, ADR Centre, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar.

The programme was held with the Supervisors of Mission Poshan to enhance their understanding and capacity to disseminate information about different welfare initiatives among local communities.

The programme aimed to equip participants with detailed knowledge of various welfare schemes so they can effectively inform and assist commu-

nity members in availing benefits, improving livelihoods, and accessing their rights.

Speaking on the occasion, District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Srinagar, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, highlighted the importance of organizing such programmes with frontline workers of Mission Poshan. He emphasized their pivotal role in reaching out to the community and ensuring the successful implementation of welfare schemes at the local level.

During the programme, District Mission Coordinator, Ruqaya Ashraf, delivered a detailed presentation on various welfare schemes being implemented by the Department of Social Welfare for different sections of society, including Women, Senior

Citizens, and Persons with Disabilities.

Additionally, the District Mission Coordinator of SANKALP – Hub for Empowerment of Women, Srinagar, gave a comprehensive overview of welfare and livelihood schemes from various departments, including Social Welfare, Mission Vatsalya, Labour, Mission Yuva, Mission Youth, JKEDI, J&K Women's Development Corporation, Agriculture, Sheep Husbandry, and Animal Husbandry.

The significance of organizing such Programmes is to improve access and awareness, to develop skills for self-sufficiency, to promote entrepreneurship, to handle administrative procedures, to address specific needs, to ensure quality and outcomes.

Medical Establishments Sealed in Zainapura for Regulatory Violations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: In a decisive move to enforce regulatory compliance and safeguard public interest, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Zainapura, Bilal Ahmed Wednesday led a joint operation in collaboration with the Drug Control Authorities Shopian, resulting in the closure of four medical establishments, including a wholesale dealer.

The enforcement drive was undertaken to ensure

adherence to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (NDPS Act), and the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, with specific focus on the maintenance of NRx Scheduled H1 records, implementation of new GST labelling, and compliance with GST rates.

The inspections revealed instances of non-compliance, including inadequate record-keeping, absence of computerized billing, and non-functional CCTV cameras, prompting immediate action.

The SDM and Drug offi-

cer have underscored their commitment to upholding the highest standards of regulatory compliance within the healthcare sector, emphasizing that such enforcement actions will continue unabated.

All medical establishments are advised to adhere strictly to the prescribed rules and regulations to avoid similar action, ensuring the protection of patients' interests and the integrity of the pharmaceutical supply chain.

INOX
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SRINAGAR



THAMMA (UA16+)
HINDI - 10:45 AM, 12:10 PM, 01:50 PM, 05:40 PM

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Movies schedule
Thursday, 23rd October



EK DEEWANE KI DEEWANIYAT (A)
HINDI - 11:30 AM, 02:35 PM, 03:30 PM, 05:00 PM, 06:30 PM

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FOR ASSISTANCE WITH TICKETS