

Good Morning

Kashmir

17th
Year Of Publication



"India's Space economy, currently valued at around USD 9 billion, is expected to reach USD 40-45 billion over the next seven to eight years. There are progressively increasing private investments seen following the "unlocking" of the Space sector by PM Sh @NarendraModi.

GMK

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₹475.41 Crore Approval For J&K ITI Clusters

CM Expresses Gratitude To PM Modi, Union Minister



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Jayant Chaudhary for approving Strategic Investment Plans (SIPs) worth ₹475.41 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SEITU) scheme for upgrading key Industrial Training Institute (ITI) clusters across Jammu and Kashmir.

Under the initiative, the

Jammu ITI Cluster, with ITI Jammu as the hub and ITIs at R.S. Pura, Nowshera, Samba and Kathua as spokes, will be upgraded with an approved investment of ₹240 crore.

Similarly, the Srinagar ITI Cluster, with ITI Srinagar as the hub and ITIs at Ganderbal, Kangan, Budgam and Charar-i-Sharief as spokes, will be modernised with an investment of ₹235.41 crore.

The initiative will follow a hub-and-spoke model to modernise training infrastructure, introduce contemporary courses and align curricula with evolving industry requirements and domestic and global

PDD Announces New Power Curtailment Schedule For Kashmir

Feeders Having Above 65% AT&C Losses To Face 8 Hours Curtailment

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: The Power Development Department (PDD) Saturday announced a new Load Curtailment Plan (LCP) for consumers in the Kashmir division, which will include extra hours of load shedding in the high AT&C losses.

An official informed that the local DISCOM, Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCCL) has announced a revised LCP for the Kashmir division.

The official said that the consumers will face a daily power curtailment of 8 hours in the areas having Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) above 65 percent.

It also said that the areas having AT&C losses between 40.5-65 percent will face power



curtailment of 6 hours daily.

Furthermore, the official also said that the areas having AT&C losses in between 15 to 40.5 per-

cent will face curtailment of 3 hours daily. "However, there will only be 0.5 hours of curtailment in the areas having AT&C

losses from 0-15 percent." The official also said that there are 1335 KV feeders under the jurisdiction of

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: With the onset of pre-winters, Kashmir is reeling under power deficiency of nearly 300 MWs—thus raising a question on the region's preparedness for upcoming peak winters.

An official informed that, "In Kashmir, the power demand nowadays remains around 1350 Megawatts (MW)." He said, "During the peak hours,

we generally nowadays have a power demand of 1300-1350 MWs in Kashmir division. However, the power availability is fluctuating between 1000-1150 MWs."

The official further said that the power supply keeps on fluctuating. "Thus, the power demand and availability also varies from time to time. During that period we enforce grid curtailment."

Pertinently, earlier this week, reported that Jammu and Kashmir

'Kashmir Faces Nearly 300 MW Power Shortfall'

AGENCIES

HYDERABAD: Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan on Saturday said the conventional internal security landscape, which the country has grappled with over decades, has changed irrevocably, while narcotics, cybercrime, illegal immigration and others have emerged as new challenges.

Addressing the Dikshant Parade of the 78th Regular Recruit (RR) batch of IPS at the Sardar Vallabhbhai National Police Academy (SVPNPA) here, he shared Union Home Minister Amit Shah's message emphasising zero-tolerance towards terrorism, time-bound action, and improved intelligence coordination.

The young officers have an important role to play in securing borders through the Centre's Smart Border Initiative, which involves modern techniques,



integrated surveillance, digital systems and better coordination among different security agencies, Shah said.

He stressed the need for effective action against drug trafficking networks, better coordination, technology-based investigation and raising awareness among people to

realise the goal of 'Nasha-Mukt Bharat' (drug-free India).

Shah said the real identity of a police officer is built on the basis of conduct, impartiality, dutifulness and people's confidence more than on their post and popularity.

That's why the young officers should stay away from publicity and focus on results. They should let their work become their identity, he said.

Mohan urged the graduating IPS officers to prepare for new internal security challenges like narcotics, cybercrime and illegal immigration.

"In the technology domain, the young officers would encounter challenges on social media, which are now emerging in an entirely different dimension."

"Fake messages, deep fake videos, all kinds of altered reality are now available on social media. It creates unnecessary

CS Lays Foundation Stone For Restoration Of Vittal Bhairav Temple



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Saturday laid the foundation stone for the revival and restoration of the historic Vittal Bhairav Temple at Motiyar, Rainawari, in Srinagar district, marking a significant step towards preserving Kashmir's rich cultural and architectural heritage.

The restoration project is being undertaken at an estimated cost of Rs 2.84 crore under the Government's heritage conservation initiative. The project aims to preserving the temple's his-

torical, religious and cultural significance.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Akshay Labroo, Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation Dr Basharat Qayoom, Director Archives, representatives of the Kashmiri Pandit community and other concerned officials were present on the occasion.

During his visit, the Chief Secretary reviewed various components of the proposed restoration project and directed the concerned officers to expedite the work while ensuring

CIPET Centre In J&K Stuck Over Land Allotment

Proposal To Set Up Centre At Cost Of Rs 51 Crore Cleared In 2016

AGENCIES

JAMMU: The proposal to establish a Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET) total project cost of Rs 51.32 crore on a 50:50 sharing basis with the J&K State Government in 2016, the documents state.

According to the records, the Government of J&K decided to accord in-principle approval for setting up the CIPET Centre at ITI Zainakote,

"The Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals approved the setting up of a learning centre at J&K in the Expenditure Finance Committee meeting with a

total project cost of Rs 51.32 crore on a 50:50 sharing basis with the J&K State Government in 2016," the documents state.

According to the records, the Government of J&K decided to accord in-principle approval for setting up the CIPET Centre at ITI Zainakote,

DELAYED

No School Can Compel Parents To Buy Items From Specific Shop: Sakina Itoo

Warns Of Action Against Violators; Committee To Monitor Complaints, Involve CEOs, ZEOs

JAHANGEER GANAIE

BANIHAL: Jammu and Kashmir Education Minister Sakina Itoo on Saturday warned private schools against compelling parents to purchase books, uniforms and other educational materials from specific vendors or shops, asserting that strict action would be taken against institutions found violating the rules.

Speaking to reporters during her visit to Banihal, the minister, said that no private school has the authority to force parents to buy books or other school-related items from a particular shop or vendor.

The practice, she said,



places an unnecessary financial burden on parents, and any school found engaging in such activities would face action under the applicable rules.

"If any private school is

forcing parents to purchase books or other items from a particular vendor or shop, it will not be tolerated. No school can compel parents to buy these items from a specific shop, and action will be

taken against those found doing so," Itoo said.

The minister urged parents to come forward and report any instances of schools allegedly pressuring them to purchase educational materials from designated vendors. She said complaints should be brought to the notice of the concerned Directors, the Secretary of the Education Department and the minister herself to ensure that appropriate action is initiated.

Itoo further said that a committee had been constituted to monitor such practices and keep a close watch on complaints concerning private schools. The committee would work to ensure that schools

Operation Underway Infiltration Bid Foiled Along LoC In Keran Sector



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Security forces on Saturday foiled an infiltration attempt along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Jungum area of Keran sector in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, sources said.

Sources said that suspicious movement was detected along the LoC in the area in the morning, following which security forces launched an operation to thwart the infiltration attempt.

The operation was underway when this report was filed, while further details were awaited—(KNO)

India Rejects UN Expert's Claims Of Retaliation Against Youth

AGENCIES

UNITED NATIONS: India has rejected as "hearsay" a report by a UN human rights expert that has taken note of the "satirical political movement" created by the country's youth, with New Delhi calling on the expert to "verify" before vilifying issues using unverified claims.

First Secretary in the Permanent Mission of India to the UN Anuj Swarup delivered the national statement at the 81st Session of the UNGA Third Committee at the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association.

Swarup voiced objection to the report of the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association Gina Romero, calling out her assertion that young



people in India face retaliation or stigmatisation for discussing mental health or gender justice.

Swarup said Romero merely cites "unnamed submissions" in the footnote.

"A sweeping charge against the world's largest youth population, resting on anonymous and unverified claims, is not evidence. It is hearsay dressed up as a UN report, and my delegation rejects it outright," Swarup said.

IGP directs police stations to adopt SMART, digital beat policing

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, Sujit Kumar Singh, on Saturday directed all police stations across Kashmir Zone to adopt SMART Policing and Digital Beat Policing as part of their daily functioning, with a focus on technology-driven services, accountability and public outreach.

The directions were issued during a conference on SMART Policing and Digital Beat Policing attended by Range DIGs, district SSPs, Additional SSPs, Zonal SSPs, DySPs and Station House Officers (SHOs) from across Kashmir Zone.

In line with the vision of the Director General of Police, Jammu and Kashmir, the IGP stressed that police stations must transform into modern, efficient and citizen-centric institutions to ensure faster and more accessible public services.

He emphasised the five principles of SMART Policing: Strict and Sensitive, Modern and Mobile, Alert and Accountable, Reliable



and Responsive, and Techno-savvy and Trained.

The IGP said the concept must be reflected in the working culture, conduct and public service delivery of every police station rather than remaining confined to policy documents.

On Digital Beat Policing, he directed all SHOs to ensure regular field visits by beat officers, meaningful interaction with local residents and timely redressal of public grievances.

He also stressed the need to maintain updated digital beat records, clearly define responsibilities of beat officers and strengthen supervisory monitoring to ensure transparency and accountability.

Observing that police stations serve as the primary point of contact between the police and the public, the IGP said they must be accessible, responsive and equipped with modern technology.

“Our objective is to make every Police Station in Kashmir Zone SMART and citizen-centric, where technology strengthens accountability and police services reach every citizen with dignity,” he said.

All district police heads were directed to ensure effective implementation of the initiative, with an emphasis on technology-enabled service delivery, community engagement and visible results on the ground. (KNS)

DC Ganderbal inspects District Hospital

Reviews Patient Care, Infrastructure and Healthcare facilities

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shreya Singhal, Saturday visited District Hospital Ganderbal to inspect the available healthcare facilities, assess patient care arrangements and review the functioning of various hospital services.

During the visit, the DC inspected patient care wards, available medical equipment and hospital infrastructure. She also took stock of the availability of medical supplies, roster of doctors and other staff, and the response of patients regarding the healthcare services being provided at the hospital.

Emphasising the importance of efficient healthcare delivery, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned authorities to ensure proper duty rosters, regular attendance of doctors and medical staff, and timely



attention to patients. She stressed that patients must be attended to promptly, with priority accorded to those requiring urgent medical attention.

The DC further directed the hospital administration to ensure adequate availability of essential medicines and medical supplies, maintain proper records and strengthen monitoring of staff attendance and hospital operations. She stressed that all available equipment and infrastructure must be utilised effectively to provide quality healthcare services to the public.

The Deputy Commissioner underscored the need for a patient centric approach in the functioning of the hospital, directing the concerned officers to address deficiencies, wherever identified, and ensure that patients receive timely and appropriate medical care.

The DC was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Chief Planning Officer Ganderbal, Medical Superintendent District Hospital Ganderbal, Executive Engineer R&B, Tehsildar Ganderbal and other concerned officers and officials.

DLSA G'bal conducts Special Lok Adalat on NI Act Cases

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Ganderbal, under the aegis of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and the Jammu & Kashmir Legal Services Authority, successfully conducted a Special Lok Adalat for Negotiable Instruments Act (NI Act) cases Saturday across District Ganderbal.

The Special Lok Adalat was held under the guidance and supervision of Abdul Nasir, Chairman, District Legal Services Authority (Principal District & Sessions Judge), Ganderbal.

Two benches were constituted for the amicable settlement of cases. The first bench was presided over by Mahoor, Munsiff/JMIC, Ganderbal,



with Adv. Bilal Ahmad Bhat, Panel Lawyer, DLSA Ganderbal, as a member. The second bench was presided over by Moonis Wahid, Munsiff/JMIC, Kangan, with Advocate Tariq Ahmed Raina, Panel Lawyer, Tehsil Legal Services Committee, Kangan, as a member.

The first bench heard cases at the District Court Complex, Ganderbal, while the second bench conducted proceedings at the Munsiff Court Complex, Kangan.

Several NI Act cases were taken up during the Special Lok Adalat, and

cases were amicably settled through the process of mutual agreement between the parties, resulting in the settlement of disputes and facilitating speedy justice.

The Special Lok Adalat aimed to provide an effective platform for the amicable resolution of disputes, reduce the pendency of cases, and promote accessible and expeditious justice. The initiative reflects the continued commitment of DLSA Ganderbal towards strengthening alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and ensuring the delivery of justice to all. No:-INF/DDI/K-26/3055/

DCPO B'pora reviews functioning of Child Protection Services

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) Bandipora, Bashir Ahmad Malik, Saturday reviewed the functioning of the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU), Child Helpline and Child Help Desk in the district.

The review focused on assessing the functioning of these units

and strengthening mechanisms for ensuring the safety, protection and welfare of children. Emphasis was laid on the effective implementation of child protection initiatives, timely assistance to children in need of care and protection, and improved coordination among the concerned institutions.

The DCPO stressed the need

for ensuring efficient delivery of child protection services and providing appropriate support to vulnerable children in accordance with the prescribed guidelines. He also underscored the importance of strengthening institutional mechanisms and adopting a coordinated approach to address issues related to child welfare and protection.

DC Shopian reviews functioning of Health Department

Directs improved Patient Care, optimum utilization of Staff

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh, Saturday chaired a comprehensive review meeting of the Health and Medical Education Department to assess and streamline healthcare delivery across the district, with a focus on infrastructure, manpower and patient-centric services.

Emphasizing a proactive, compassionate and gap-free approach to public healthcare, the DC called for strengthening infrastructure, optimizing manpower and ensuring seamless service delivery to meet the medical needs of every citizen without unnecessary delays.

The DC directed officials to expedite all ongoing developmental works and accelerate projects aimed at addressing infra-



structure gaps across the district.

He stressed that essential diagnostic facilities, including X-ray, CT scan, MRI and ultrasound services at the District Hospital, must remain fully functional at all times, without any bottlenecks.

The progress of New Type Primary Health Centre (NTPHC) buildings was also reviewed to ensure their timely completion, structural readiness

and provision of modern amenities. Emphasizing round-the-clock availability of healthcare services, the DC underscored the need for establishing doctors' quarters across the district.

He further directed the department to ensure the availability of surgeons, cardiologists and emergency specialists to facilitate life-saving procedures locally and minimize referrals to hospitals outside the

district.

The DC called upon health officials to discharge their duties with utmost dedication and ensure accessibility, responsiveness and effective coordination between healthcare providers and the public.

The performance and role of ASHA workers, healthcare staff and ground-level functionaries were also reviewed to strengthen grassroots outreach and ensure continu-

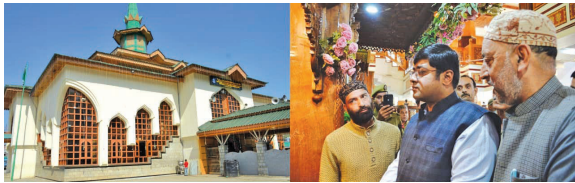
ous support to patients.

Reiterating the administration's commitment to quality healthcare, the DC stressed that the approach must remain proactive, empathetic and accessible. He directed officials to eliminate communication gaps between healthcare providers and the public and ensure that every citizen receives quality medical care without unnecessary delays or referrals.

The meeting also reviewed the status of projects being implemented under the UT Capex Budget 2026-27, TSP, C-UT Capex and various tribal schemes.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Mudassir Ahmed, Chief Medical Officer Salama Nazir, Block Medical Officers (BMOs) and other health functionaries.

DC Budgam visits Charar-i-Sharief, holds Public Outreach Program



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Jatin Kishore, Saturday visited Charar-i-Sharief and chaired a public outreach program at Town Hall, Charar-i-Sharief, to listen to the demands and grievances of local residents.

During the public darbar, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with the locals and different stakeholders and took stock of issues concerning various departments. He directed the concerned officers to address public issues and demands promptly and ensure time-bound resolution of genuine issues.

He said that all genuine demands and issues raised by locals and different stakeholders were noted and the concerned officers

were instructed to address the demands on priority.

He added that the District Administration would continue to review the measures taken to address public demands and conduct follow-up visits to assess progress.

Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner paid obeisance at the revered shrine of Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (Sheikh-ul-Alam) at Charar-i-Sharief and inspected ongoing developmental works in the area.

He reviewed the progress of the guest house and under-construction shopping complex, inspected parking facilities and the functioning of the wuzu khana, and listened to the demands of local Aqaf members. He stressed the timely completion of ongoing works while maintaining quality standards.

CEO Shopian leads 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' Flag-Off Ceremony



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Chief Education Officer (CEO), Shopian, Saturday organised a flag-off ceremony under the national initiative “Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat” in the presence of the Deputy Chief Education Officer (Dy. CEO), Shopian, along with other officials and staff members.

The programme aimed to promote national unity, communal harmony, mutual respect and cultural diversity, while strengthening the spirit of togeth-

ness among people belonging to different regions, languages, cultures and traditions of the country.

Addressing the gathering, the officers underscored the importance of peaceful coexistence, mutual understanding and respect for diverse traditions. They emphasised that India's strength lies in its unity amidst diversity and highlighted the vital role of education in nurturing responsible citizens committed to national integration and collective progress.

KVK B'pora organises Technology Demonstration on Brown Sarson

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Bandipora-1, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-Kashmir), organised a Technology Demonstration on Brown Sarson at Kootasatri, a NICRA village, to promote improved agricultural practices and strengthen climate-resilient farming among local farmers.

The programme aimed to sensitise farmers, particularly women farmers, about improved brown sarson production practices and the importance of adopting suitable agricultural technologies to enhance crop productivity

and farm income. During the programme, quality brown sarson seed was distributed among farmers to encourage the adoption of improved varieties and strengthen local oilseed cultivation.

Head, KVK Bandipora-1, Dr. Tariq Sultan highlighted the importance of technology demonstrations, improved crop management practices and the adoption of climate-resilient agricultural technologies under the National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) initiative. On the occasion, Scientists from KVK Bandipora-1, shared technical guidance on brown sarson cultivation and improved crop production practices to help farmers achieve better productivity.

Director Colleges holds interactive meeting with Principals of GDCs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Prof. (Dr.) Twinkle Suri, Director Colleges, Jammu and Kashmir, held an interactive meeting with the Principals of Government Degree Colleges (GDC) of the Kashmir Division at Government College for Women, M.A. Road, Srinagar, to discuss institutional challenges and explore measures to strengthen the overall functioning of colleges.

Prof. Seema Naz, Nodal Principal, welcomed the Director Colleges and Principals and assured her commitment to collective efforts towards strengthening the Department of Higher Education.

Addressing the gathering, Prof. (Dr.) Twinkle Suri emphasized the need to understand institutional challenges and practical realities at the grassroots level to develop effective and responsive policy perspectives. She underscored that meaningful progress in Higher Education Institutions requires collective efforts, mutual coordination and a shared commitment to ensuring effective academic delivery.

She highlighted that Principals are not merely



administrative heads but also academic leaders who play a pivotal role in shaping the academic environment, guiding faculty members and empowering students. She stressed the importance of strengthening their leadership capacities and enabling them to address institutional needs effectively.

The Director Colleges further emphasized the need to remain sensitive to student grievances, since they are the most important stakeholders of educational institutions. She called for the effective implementation of robust mentorship programme across all colleges to ensure appropriate guidance and support for students.

Prof. (Dr.) Twinkle Suri also stressed the importance of promoting innovation, research and skill development to make students industry-oriented and

employment-ready. She noted that such initiatives would help equip students with the knowledge and competencies envisaged under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

During the interactive session, the Principals shared their perspectives on the functioning of their respective institutions and highlighted various academic, administrative and infrastructural challenges faced by the colleges.

Taking note of the issues raised, Prof. Suri assured the principals that the concerns discussed would be taken up for appropriate redressal. She reiterated that collective efforts, effective coordination and sustained engagement among stakeholders are essential for ensuring the smooth functioning of colleges and strengthening the higher education ecosystem across the Kashmir Division.

DLSA Srinagar settles 46 Cases at Special Lok Adalat

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In compliance to the directions of JK Legal Services Authority, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar, organized a Special Lok Adalat for NI Act Cases (U/S 138) and MACT Cases which was held under the guidance of Naseer Ahmad Dar, Chairman District Legal Services Authority (Principal District & Sessions Judge) Srinagar, and overall supervision of Secretary DLSA Srinagar.

To facilitate the amicable settlement of cases, two benches were constituted



for the Special Lok Adalat. The 1st bench was presided over by Fayaz Ahmad Qureshi, Presiding Officer MACT Court Srinagar, and Kamiya Singh Andotra, Special Mobile Magistrate/Railway Magistrate, Srinagar as member. The 2nd bench was presided over by Mohammad Ishtiyaq Alam Baba, Forest Magistrate Srinagar, and

Vikas Bhardwaj, 2nd Additional Munsiff Srinagar as member. A total of 82 Cases were taken up by these benches for amicable settlement, out of which 46 Cases were settled.

An amount of Rs 1,07,77,500 was awarded as settlement amount in all these cases including award of Rs 78,20, 000 in 27 MACT Cases.

NIT hosts ABC programme on sustainable metallurgy, green energy transition

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR : The Alumni Association of NIT Srinagar, in collaboration with the Office of the Dean of Alumni and International Affairs, organised an Alumni Back to Campus (ABC) Programme featuring distinguished alumnus Dr. Ing Ubaid Manzoor, Project Group Leader at the Max Planck Institute for Sustainable Materials, Germany, at the Hi-Tech Hall, NIT Srinagar.

The programme was hosted by Prof. M. A. Shah, Dean of Alumni and International Affairs, along with Ms. Toyiba, Joint Secretary-II of the Alumni Association, NIT Srinagar.

During the interactive session, Dr. Manzoor emphasised that “the green energy transition is fundamentally a materi-



als and metals transition,” highlighting the growing demand for critical metals such as nickel, copper and cobalt in batteries, renewable energy technologies and modern infrastructure.

He highlighted the carbon-intensive nature of

conventional metal production, noting that producing one tonne of nickel can generate approximately 22–28 tonnes of CO₂ emissions. He

stressed the need to develop sustainable, energy-efficient alternatives to conventional metallurgical processes.

Drawing on his research published in Nature and Science Advances, Dr. Manzoor discussed Hydrogen Plasma Smelting Reduction (HPSR), an innovative technology combining electrical energy, reactive hydrogen chemistry and high-temperature processing to extract critical metals from low-grade nickel laterites and deep-sea polymetallic nodules.

India's Space Economy to Reach USD 40-45 Billion in 7-8 Years: Dr Jitendra

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: India's Space economy, currently valued at around USD 9 billion, is expected to reach USD 40-45 billion over the next seven to eight years, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh, said during a media Roundtable here on "Space, Sovereignty and New Economy".

The Minister said India must now move beyond demonstrating its technological capabilities to building globally competitive commercial space companies. He stressed that greater domestic and international investment, predictable demand, faster regulatory approvals and sustainable business models would be essential to scaling up Indian enterprises and expanding their presence in global markets.

The Minister participated in the Roundtable organised by the 'Bloomberg New Economy Forum', being held in New Delhi. The discussion examined how countries can translate sovereign Space capabilities into commercially competitive industries, attract private capital and develop stronger supply chains while safeguarding national interests. Participants also



discussed the evolving global space economy, the role of international partnerships and the challenges of scaling up private space enterprises.

Among the other prominent participants were Vinod Kumar, Director (Promotion), Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe); and Aisha Bowe, Founder and CEO of STEMBoard and LINGO, former NASA engineer and Blue Origin astronaut. The session brought together representatives from the Space industry, entrepreneurship, academia and the international space community.

The Minister said the opening of India's Space sector to private participation in 2019-2020 under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi had produced significant results within just five to six years. India's experience demonstrates the potential of bringing government institutions and private industry together in a sector that requires substantial technological expertise, investment and long-term commitment. The priority now, he said, is to convert these capabilities into commercially viable businesses with the

scale to compete internationally.

Dr. Jitendra Singh stressed that generating demand is essential for the growth of private space companies. Referring to the Government's use-case-based approach, he said anchor government customers and support for proof-of-concept projects can help enterprises demonstrate their technologies and move towards commercial deployment. A predictable customer base can give companies the confidence to invest in production, develop market-ready products and build sustainable revenue streams.

He also stressed the need for timely regulatory approvals, lower business costs and stronger supply-chain integration. Companies seeking installation or export licences should be able to obtain the necessary approvals within defined timeframes. Referring to GST-related measures for space products, the Minister said reforms must translate into practical benefits for industry. Investment becomes sustainable when businesses have predictable demand, efficient processes and a clear path to commercial growth.

AIIMS Awantipora likely to begin OPD services in November

DDC says hospital blocks nearly complete; directs agencies to clear pending works

JAHANGEER GANAIE

PULWAMA: After missing several deadlines for its operationalisation, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Awantipora in south Kashmir's Pulwama district is likely to begin Outpatient Department (OPD) services in November 2026, an official said.

The development comes amid renewed efforts by the district administration to expedite pending works and ensure that essential facilities, medical equipment, statutory clearances and human resources are in place to make the much-awaited institution functional.

An official said that although the administration had directed the concerned agencies to make the OPD functional by the end of October, the services are now likely to



commence in November, subject to completion of pending works and necessary operational arrangements.

The proposed start of OPD services has raised hopes among people across south Kashmir, who have been waiting for the institution to become functional and provide advanced healthcare facilities closer to their homes. The project has remained a major public expectation for years, with its early operationalisation considered crucial for reducing the burden on existing government hospitals and

easing difficulties faced by patients who travel to Srinagar and other places for specialised treatment.

The latest review was conducted by District Development Commissioner Pulwama, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha, who chaired a meeting to assess construction status, pending works, statutory approvals and preparedness for operationalising different facilities at the campus.

According to details shared during the meeting, AIIMS Awantipora has achieved around 81 per cent overall physical progress, while financial

progress stands at approximately 72.59 per cent. The meeting was informed that the revised master plan and associated changes had been approved, while a detailed presentation was made on the phase-wise construction schedule, infrastructure, statutory clearances and other essential components required for the institution's functioning.

The DDC said that operationalisation should be treated as a priority, particularly in view of the healthcare needs of the people and the approaching winter season.

Reviewing Phase-I works, officials informed the meeting that Hospital Block-1 had achieved 100 per cent progress, while Hospital Block-2 was around 99 per cent complete. The DDC directed the executing agency to address all outstanding issues on priority,

with instructions to make the OPD functional by the end of October wherever feasible.

The meeting also reviewed Phase-II, which includes academic, administrative and hostel buildings. Officials said civil works had reached an advanced stage. The executing agency was directed to complete remaining civil works within 20 days wherever technically feasible and ensure the buildings are made functional by the end of November.

Reviewing Phase-III, the DDC directed agencies to accelerate works on components reporting 75 to 80 per cent progress, including remaining hospital blocks, academic buildings, residential quarters, hostels and external development works. The DDC also directed completion of the shopping complex and guest house at the earliest.

JKEEGA Pays Tribute to Former Dev Comm Er. Muzaffar Bhat

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Electrical Engineering Graduates Association (JKEEGA) paid tribute to Er. Muzaffar Ahmad Bhat (Chiken), former Development Commissioner, Power, whose demise has left a deep void in the engineering fraternity and the power sector of Jammu and Kashmir.

In a statement, JKEEGA described Er. Bhat as a dynamic and dedicated engineer who made significant contributions to the development of the power sector during his tenure. His professional commitment, vision and relentless efforts towards strengthening the power infrastructure of Jammu and Kashmir earned him immense respect among his colleagues and the engineering fraternity, the association said.

Er. Pirzada Mohammad Hidayatullah, General Secretary, JKEEGA, remembered Er. Muzaffar Ahmad Bhat as one of the pioneering engineers of the power sector, whose dedication, dynamism and contributions left a lasting impact on the department. He said the engineering fraternity has lost an experienced and distinguished professional whose services and legacy will always be remembered with pride and respect.

JKEEGA extended its heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathies to the bereaved family. The association prayed that Almighty Allah grant the departed soul the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdous, elevate his ranks in the Hereafter, and bless the family with patience, courage and strength to bear this irreparable loss.

Youth should be in libraries, playgrounds, not involved in drugs: SSP Sgr

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: SSP Srinagar Dr G V Sandeep Chakravarty on Saturday called for greater youth participation in constructive activities, saying young people should spend more time in libraries and playgrounds and stay away from drugs and other harmful influences.

"Youth should be busy in libraries and playgrounds rather than in negative energies," Dr Chakravarty said.

He said Jammu and Kashmir Police would organise cricket tournaments across all districts in October under its civic action programme to engage youth in constructive activities and keep them away from drugs.

"The main aim of this project is to keep our youth, who are the future of our country and the strength of our society, busy in constructive activities and to keep them away from negative



energies like social media and drugs," he said.

The SSP said the programme would also include volleyball, indoor games and debates to provide youth with opportunities for positive engagement.

He said J&K Police was conducting civic action programmes across districts and would organise more such activities to strengthen its engagement with youth.

Dr Chakravarty congratulated the participants and said police would continue to support initiatives aimed at preventing drug abuse and engaging youth in constructive activities—(KNO)

Kabra Pushes for Data-Driven Groundwater Management in J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Under-scoring the importance of scientific assessment and coordinated action for safeguarding Jammu & Kashmir's groundwater resources, Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, Shaleen Kabra, Saturday chaired a Union Territory-level Coordination Committee (UTLCC) meeting to review the assessment of groundwater resources across J&K under the Groundwater Resource Assessment (GWRA-2026).

The meeting focused on strengthening inter-departmental coordination, streamlining data sharing and leveraging scientific expertise to ensure reliable assessment, informed planning and sustainable management of this vital natural resource.

Emphasising the need to translate scientific knowledge into actionable interventions, the Additional Chief Secretary, JSD, Shaleen Kabra directed CGWB to share its technical reports, scientific publications and relevant resource documents with the concerned UT departments.

This, he termed, will facilitate informed planning and decision-making, strengthen groundwater conservation measures and enable departments to formulate interventions based on reliable scientific evidence.



The ACS while highlighting the significance of the exercise also called for close collaboration among all stakeholder departments and agencies to ensure the long-term sustainability of groundwater resources and strengthen water security across Jammu & Kashmir.

He underscored the need for a well coordinated, data-driven and science-based approach to groundwater management, with due emphasis on conservation, efficient utilisation and the long-term protection of available resources.

Earlier, Dr. M. Sivakumar, Regional Director, Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) outlined the agenda, highlighting the importance of scientific groundwater assessment, coordinated data sharing and institutional collaboration for effective groundwater resource management.

On this occasion Dr. Owais Ahmad, Secretary, Planning, Development and Monitoring Department, emphasised the need for harmonisation of data between CGWB and the concerned UT departments to ensure consistency, reliability and accuracy in the assessment process.

During the meeting, Pir Rayees Ahmad, Senior Scientist, CGWB, made a detailed presentation on the Board's ongoing activities in Jammu & Kashmir, covering groundwater resource assessment, aquifer mapping, groundwater management studies and other related technical interventions.

The presentation highlighted CGWB's role in providing scientific inputs, technical guidance and expert recommendations to support the UT Government in assessing groundwater resources, characterising aquifers and formulating sustainable groundwater management strategies for the times to come.

Various issues concerning groundwater management were discussed during the meeting, with CGWB officers offering technical recommendations and suitable management measures for the conservation and sustainable utilisation of groundwater.

Detailed deliberations were held on the methodology and analytical framework for GWRA-2026, inter-departmental data sharing and the implementation of the National Aquifer Mapping and Management Programme (NAQUIM).

SMC Commissioner calls for Scientific Management of Autumn Waste in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) is set to intensify its autumn sanitation measures, with a focus on the scientific management of fallen leaves, decentralised composting and prevention of indiscriminate waste dumping and open burning under the leadership of Municipal Commissioner Dr. Basharat Qayoom.

The seasonal initiative seeks to address the accumulation of leaf litter across roads, footpaths, parks and institutional premises, which, if left unattended, can obstruct drainage channels, affect urban cleanliness and contribute to air pollution when burnt.

Emphasising the need for a scientific and sustainable approach, Commissioner SMC, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, said, "Autumn waste management requires a planned and coordinated response. Fallen leaves and other biodegradable waste should not be treated merely as refuse but as a resource that can be put to productive use through segregation and composting. Our focus is on ensuring clean-



er neighbourhoods while promoting environmentally responsible practices."

The Commissioner has stressed the need to move beyond routine collection and disposal towards a systematic approach that prioritises resource recovery. The proposed measures include dedicated leaf-litter collection, segregation at source, composting and the use of processed organic matter for horticultural purposes.

Ward-level sanitation teams will be tasked with identifying leaf-fall hotspots and vulnerable drainage points, while additional sanitation rounds will be undertaken in areas requiring intensified attention. Particular emphasis will be placed on preventing leaves and other waste from entering drains and water bodies,

including the Jhelum, Dal Lake and Nigeen Lake.

"Keeping drains free from leaves and waste is essential to maintaining effective drainage and preventing avoidable blockages. All concerned officers must ensure timely clearance of vulnerable points, with particular attention to areas prone to waterlogging and locations adjoining our water bodies," Dr. Qayoom said.

The Corporation will also strengthen monitoring through ward-wise sanitation plans, field inspections and periodic reporting by the concerned supervisory officers. Government institutions, commercial establishments, residential communities and other bulk generators of horticultural waste will be encouraged to adopt on-site or cluster-level composting wherever feasible.

Open burning of leaves and municipal waste will be discouraged through public awareness and addressed under applicable legal provisions. Citizens will be encouraged to keep leaf litter separate from mixed waste and hand it over through authorised collection arrangements.

J&K Police Adjusts Six IPS Officers, Transfers 12 DSPs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Police Headquarters has adjusted six IPS officers of the AGMUT cadre to different positions in Jammu and Kashmir and ordered the transfer and posting of 12 Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs) with immediate effect. Buy Maps

According to Police Order No. 2897 of 2026, dated October 17, the six IPS officers of the 2023 and 2024 batches were assigned their positions following their joining the J&K segment after completing Basic Course Training (Phase-II).

Kumari Someya (AGMUT-2023) has been posted as ASP Headquarters, Jammu, while Daniel Raj C (AGMUT-2023) has been adjusted as ASP Headquarters, Budgam. Aditi Verma (AGMUT-2023) has been posted as Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO), West Srinagar.

Buy Maps

Among the 2024-batch officers, Chaitanya Giri has been posted as SDPO, R S Pura; Anant Dhanraj Singh as SDPO, Bari Brahmana; and Ayush Mani Chaudhary as SDPO, Nowshera.

The order, issued by J&K Police Chief Nalin Prabhat, also directs the transfer and posting of 12 DSPs in the interest of administration.

Abdul Ghaffoor has been transferred from SDPO Sadder to DSP Railways, Anantnag, while Sajad Ahmad Malik has been moved from DSP Headquarters, Budgam, to SDPO Sadder.

Pardeep Singh Sen has been transferred from SDPO Bari Brahmana to DSP, State Investigation Agency (SIA), Jammu. Majad Mehboob has been moved from SDPO West Srinagar to TMG, CID Headquarters.

Sajad Ahmad has been

transferred from DSP Traffic, Ramban, to DSP STWS, Jammu, while Sahil Mahajan has been moved from SDPO Nowshera to SDPO Nagrota.

Farha Nishat has been transferred from DSP Headquarters, Jammu, to DSP Economic Offences Wing (EOW), Jammu. Sajad Ahmad Mir has been moved from DSP STWS, Jammu, to DSP 19 JKAP IR, while Sartaj Ahmad has been transferred from DSP Railways, Anantnag, to DSP 21 JKAP IR.

Sanjeev Singh Slathia has been posted from DSP SIA, Jammu, to DSP EOW, Jammu, against the OAR post of DSP. Gurmeet Singh has been transferred from SDPO R S Pura to DSP Security, Jammu, while Vinod Kumar has been moved from SDPO Nagrota to DSP Traffic, Ramban.

The order directs all the officers concerned to be relieved forthwith.

CEO SSCL inspects Smart City Infrastructure

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Executive Officer, Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), Dr. Basharat Qayoom, Saturday conducted a comprehensive review of key Smart City infrastructure at Souq Market and Craft Centre, Batamalo, the under-construction Electric Bus Charging Station at Batamalo, and the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) at HMT.

The review focused on construction quality, timely completion of ongoing works, infrastructure maintenance, effective utilisation of technology and strengthening sustainable urban mobility across Srinagar.

During his visit to Souq Market and Craft Centre at Batamalo, the CEO inspected the facilities and reviewed their operational status, maintenance requirements and overall upkeep. He stressed the importance



of maintaining these public infrastructure assets in a functional, orderly and well-maintained condition, ensuring that the facilities serve their intended purpose efficiently and contribute to the city's urban development objectives.

At the under-construction Electric Bus Charging Station at Batamalo, Dr. Basharat reviewed the progress of ongoing works and took stock of the construction status, execution quality and associated infrastructure requirements. He stressed the importance of maintaining prescribed quality standards, ensuring proper coordination among the executing agencies and

adhering to the stipulated timelines. He directed the concerned officers to closely monitor the pace and quality of construction, address bottlenecks promptly and ensure timely completion of the project so that the facility can be made operational to support Srinagar's electric bus fleet and strengthen sustainable urban mobility.

Highlighting the importance of sustainable urban transportation, the CEO emphasised that the development of reliable electric bus charging infrastructure is essential for strengthening Srinagar's public transport system and promoting cleaner mobility. He directed the concerned officers



to ensure that all essential components of the charging facility are executed in accordance with prescribed standards, with due attention to quality, functionality, safety and long-term operational requirements.

At the ICCC, the CEO reviewed its functioning, monitoring mechanisms and technology-enabled operational activities. He emphasised the need to strengthen the effective utilisation of the ICCC as a central platform for integrated urban monitoring, real-time situational awareness and coordinated response to civic and infrastructure-related issues.

Dr. Basharat stressed

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

When Nature Strikes, Humanity Must Not Fall Silent

Whenever a person, a family or an entire community faces the fury of nature, comments begin to pour in from all directions. Some offer sympathy, others extend a helping hand, but there are always those who choose criticism, ridicule or even take pleasure in another person's misfortune. It is in such moments that the real character of society comes to the fore.

Natural calamities do not discriminate between the rich and the poor, the powerful and the powerless, or one community and another. When nature unleashes its fury, everyone is equally vulnerable before forces beyond human control. No one possesses a guarantee that life will always remain kind, circumstances will never change or hardship will never knock at their own door.

Every human being, in one way or another, must face difficult phases in life. Some are tested by financial distress, others by personal loss, illness or circumstances beyond their control. Communities, too, experience periods of devastation and uncertainty. What separates those who emerge stronger from those who surrender to despair is often their ability to accept reality, endure hardship and move forward with courage and dignity.

It is easy to pass remarks when misfortune strikes someone else. It requires neither courage nor wisdom to sit in comfort and judge those struggling to recover from a tragedy. The real test of character is whether we can feel another person's pain without turning it into an occasion for criticism or celebration. Those who find pleasure in the suffering of others must remember one fundamental truth: the wheel of time never stops turning. Today, one person may be facing adversity while another watches from a position of comfort. Tomorrow, the circumstances may change. The person who laughs today may find themselves searching for compassion when life puts them through a similar trial.

This is not a wish for anyone to suffer. Rather, it is a reminder that humility is essential because no one is beyond the reach of life's uncertainties. Misfortune is not always the consequence of someone's choices, nor is suffering proof of personal failure. Sometimes, people are simply caught in circumstances they neither created nor could have prevented. At such times, society must rise above prejudices, rivalries and the temptation to pass judgment. Communities facing natural disasters need solidarity, practical assistance and words that restore hope. They do not need lectures from those who have not experienced their pain, nor do they need their suffering turned into material for mockery or political point-scoring. Equally important is the strength with which people respond to adversity. Accepting a difficult reality does not mean giving up. It means gathering the courage to face what has happened, learning to live through the hardship and working towards recovery. Resilience is not the absence of pain; it is the determination to stand again despite it.

Humanity is best measured not by how loudly we celebrate our own good fortune, but by how sensitively we respond when someone else's world falls apart. A kind word, a helping hand or even a respectful silence can mean more than a thousand careless comments.

Nature will continue to test human endurance, and life will continue to bring unexpected turns. No individual or community can claim permanent immunity from adversity. The least we can do is refuse to make another person's difficult moment harder. Before celebrating someone else's downfall, remember that life can change its course without warning. Today, they may need your compassion; tomorrow, you may need theirs.

When Public Healthcare Loses The Patient, Who Picks Up The Bill?

The Buck Stops Where? When A "Choice" For Private Care Is Created By Failure Of Public Alternatives



DR. FIAZ MAQBOOL FAZILI

A private hospital may be chosen by the patient. But who decides whether the patient has a meaningful alternative? “A sick child. A frightened family. A paediatrician recommending hospital admission. The desperate parents are faced with limited choices: State run Set up, or a private facility. They understand medicine and its inherent risks, knowing that government institutions house essential, highly specialized care. Yet they worry—about overcrowding, infection control practices, bed availability, waiting times, and whether every necessary diagnostic will be functional when their child needs it most. So they choose private care. It will cost them considerably more. The central issue, however, is not where they went—it is why they felt compelled to go there. That question goes far beyond one family or one facility; it strikes at the core of public healthcare in Kashmir.

The Questions We Must Stop Avoiding? Is my piece where my pen refuses to stop writing, why?1. Is private healthcare a "choice" when public alternatives fail? -A choice is meaningful only when realistic options exist. If a patient cannot secure an investigation, an ICU bed, or a specialist consultation in a public institution, migrating to a private hospital may technically be voluntary—but it is a choice under pressure, not free choice.2. Who bears the cost of systemic shortcomings? -The family. A middle-class or impoverished household borrows money, sells assets, or depends on charity. The public system logs a referral, the private hospital logs an admission, and the family logs life-altering debt. When a system fails to provide a service, the patient should not automatically become the financier of that failure.3. Are private referrals driven by medical necessity or system gaps? This is not an accusation against frontline clinicians. A doctor cannot manufacture an unavailable ICU bed or fix a broken scanner. But referral patterns can—and must—be audited.

How many referrals occur because a treatment genuinely cannot be provided locally, and how many stem from temporary outages, poor coordination, or staffing bottlenecks that institutional planning should have solved?4. Why must families choose between healthcare and financial survival? For wealthy families, a large private bill is unpleasant; for poor families,



it is catastrophic. Healthcare must not be a direct pathway to lifelong debt. A parent should never have to sell land or calculate whether the next investigation is affordable while their child lies ill.5. Who maintains public confidence in our foundational assets? My two alma maters, two designated teaching hospitals as tertiary care, or referral centres have served generations for decades. They are indispensable public assets. Yet infrastructure alone does not create trust. Confidence is built when patients obtain timely care, essential medicines, clear communication, and reliable follow-up without needing influence or sifarish. (recommendation)

"The Patient Chose Private" — Examining the Argument: Doctors in private or corporate hospitals often note that families themselves request private admissions. While true, we must ask: what circumstances shaped that request? In the Valley of Kashmir, even influential individuals routinely seek connections to navigate government institutions, while ordinary families desperate to avoid corporate bills find themselves priced out of options. Private healthcare undoubtedly plays an important role, boasting skilled clinicians and advanced technology. The concern arises when private facilities become the only practical escape route from public vulnerabilities. Public healthcare bottlenecks like delays, bed shortages, and broken diagnostics lead directly to a forced "choice" under pressure, which ultimately results in severe financial distress and out-of-pocket debt for families. Does impressive infrastructure make a great hospital? From the viewpoint of a clinical auditor, true hospital quality is defined not by the grandeur of its building, but by its standards of patient safety, clinical outcomes, and care. For private and corporate healthcare providers that have invested heavily in luxurious, four-

star infrastructure, true accessibility and affordability remain an unfulfilled challenge in low- and middle-income states.

Modern private hospitals showcase impressive glass façades, luxury rooms, well-dressed patient guides and aggressive branding. Yet none of these, by themselves, constitute clinical excellence. For healthcare safety experts, a hospital's true worth lies in its clinical audit trails, KPIS, error prevention, and patient-centered care. Fee for service is the currency but Flexxxx for service, how doctors consultation ,Good morning; good afternoon visit is billed for each visit, the computer assisted billing which controls time of admission to time of discharge is programmed -stretched or orchestrated to one day stay, the desperate family and attendants can't afford questioning with a uneasy ,Why? . . . thus the inflated bill is—not its physical footprint."

The real indicators of quality in any hospital—public or private—are its doctors, nurses, patient-safety records, clinical outcomes, ethics, processes, how care is actually delivered against a pricing transparency, not the luxury of its lobby. Conversely, an overcrowded government hospital should not automatically be equated with poor medicine. Before consenting to high-cost care or expensive referrals, families have a right to ask: Who is treating me, and what are their specialized credentials? Is this proposed procedure strictly necessary, and can it be safely done in the public system? What are the total baseline costs and potential additional expenses? These are not disrespectful demands; they are responsible questions, patient family rights. Informed consent requires helping families grasp clinical options, plan of care , risks, alternatives and financial realities with honesty -patient is not a client.

Demanding transparency in patient care is not an indictment of clinicians, but a necessity for healthcare audit. Crucial gaps

persist between billing and bedside reality: families often never meet the primary treating consultant throughout an admission. In a documented case, a child admitted to the PICU at 9:00 AM was not seen by the attending consultant until 1:00 PM, yet the 24-hour discharge bill included multiple unverified consultants visit fees. As I suggested during my time with one of the corporate Hospitals Delhi, implementing a real-time, attendant-signed sign-off for every consultant visit, procedure, and consumable used would ensure authentic billing, rebuild trust, and validate genuine clinical care." Any discussion regarding health system accountability risks being misinterpreted as an attack on doctors or hospital management .That would be fundamentally wrong. Junior doctors, nurses, and specialists regularly work under extreme pressure without the power to redesign hospital infrastructure or fix supply lines.

The purpose of clinical auditing is not to penalize frontline professionals for systemic failures. It is to identify the root bottlenecks: Document the structural delay. Audit the referral trail. Review institutional deficiencies. Fix the underlying operational flaw. If a patient suffers because the broader system failed to execute a standard of care it reasonably could have delivered, systemic accountability must follow.

Rebuilding Trust: The Patient Comes First-safety is not an option.The greatest long-term danger to regional health is not that some families utilize private hospitals; it is the growing belief that quality care requires leaving the public system. That perception, left unchecked, hollows out public trust and weakens state institutions. The solution is neither to blame desperate families nor to demonize private providers. It is to make public healthcare sufficiently accessible, safe, responsive, and reliable so that "choice" becomes genuine rather than coerced. Instead of asking, "Why did the patient go to a private hospital?" we must ask, "What systemic failures happened before they arrived?"

Public hospitals remain the vital safety net for the region. They deserve sustained investment, modern equipment, transparent monitoring, and public confidence. Healthcare is not a corporate competition; it is a commitment to one single principle: the patient comes first. When that patient is vulnerable, frightened, and seeking care, society must ensure that "choice" never becomes a polite euphemism for having nowhere else to go.

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The Paradox Of Plenty Amid Persistent Hunger!



OMKAR DATTATRAY

We have celebrated and observed world Food Day, & our policy thinkers, governments and even ordinary people should introspect and make unbiased analysis about why there is hunger amid plenty of food, and it is as true of India as for some other countries in the globe. It is ironic that in India, our governments allow food to rot but do not feed the hungry with the surplus food, and this is the bitter truth of our country and its governance. World Food Day, observed every year on 16 October, reminds the world of its collective responsibility to ensure that no human being goes to bed hungry. It highlights the importance of food security, sustainable agriculture, nutrition and the elimination of hunger.

Yet, the occasion brings into sharp focus a troubling paradox – while agricultural production has increased significantly and markets are overflowing with food products, millions of people continue to suffer from hunger and malnutrition. The most relevant question is if the world produces enough food, why does hunger knock at the door of millions? It is very painful, and the persistent situation needs to be addressed to save precious human lives. The answer lies in the unequal distribution of resources, poverty, food wastage, conflicts, climate change and the failure to ensure that nutritious food is accessible and affordable to everyone.

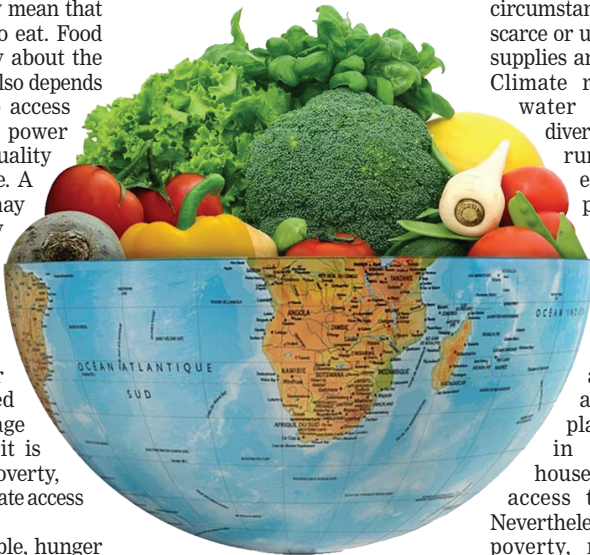
Modern agriculture has made remarkable progress. Improved

seeds, irrigation facilities, mechanisation, fertilisers, scientific farming practices, and technological innovations have helped increase crop yields in many parts of the world. Countries such as India have significant advances in food grain production, strengthening their capacity to feed large populations. However, producing more food does not automatically mean that everyone can afford to eat. Food security is not merely about the availability of food; it also depends on people's ability to access it, their purchasing power and the nutritional quality of what they consume. A wealthy household may enjoy a wide variety of food, while a poor family struggles to afford even two nutritious meals a day. This contrast reveals that hunger is not always caused by an absolute shortage of food. Frequently, it is the consequence of poverty, inequality, and inadequate access to essential resources.

For millions of people, hunger is a daily struggle rather than an occupational emergency. Low wages, unemployment, rising living costs, and unstable incomes prevent families from purchasing sufficient food. Small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, migrant workers, and people living in economically vulnerable communities are particularly exposed to food insecurity. Even when food is available in local markets, its price may place it beyond their reach. Children are particularly vulnerable. Inadequate nutrition during their formative years can affect their physical growth, cognitive development, educational performance, and long-term health. Hunger, therefore, is not simply a question of an empty stomach. It can deprive individuals

of opportunities for a healthier and more productive future.

Another disturbing contradiction is the enormous quantity of food lost or wasted across the world. Food may be lost during harvesting, storage, transportation, and processing, while edible food is also discarded by retailers, restaurants, and households. Poor storage



infrastructure, inadequate cold chains, inefficient supply networks and lack of market access can cause farmers to lose a significant portion of produce. At the consumer end, careless purchasing habits and the disposal of uneaten food add to the problem. The irony is unmistakable – food that could nourish hungry people is sometimes left to rot or thrown away. Reducing food loss and waste is therefore an essential component of the global fight against hunger. Better storage facilities, efficient transportation, improved food distribution and responsible consumption can make existing food resources go further.

Food production is increasingly exposed to extreme weather events. Droughts, floods, heatwaves,

changing rainfall patterns and other climate disturbances can destroy crops, damage agricultural infrastructure and reduce farmers' income. Conflicts and political instability create additional obstacles by disrupting farming, displacing populations, damaging supply chains and restricting access to essential commodities. In such circumstances, food may become scarce or unaffordable even when supplies are available elsewhere. Climate resilient agriculture, water conservation, crop diversification, and stronger rural infrastructure are essential to protect food production.

India has made considerable progress in agricultural production and food grain procurement. Public distribution arrangements and food assistance programmes play an important role in supporting eligible households and improving access to essential staples. Nevertheless, challenges remain; poverty, regional disparities, nutritional deficiencies, inadequate dietary diversity, and difficulties in reaching vulnerable populations require sustained attention. Food security must extend beyond cereals. A balanced diet also requires pulses, vegetables, fruits, milk and other nutritious foods, depending on dietary needs and local availability. Affordable nutrition is particularly important for children, pregnant women, nursing mothers and elderly people. Strengthening farmers' incomes, improving agricultural storage and transportation, reducing post-harvest losses, supporting local food systems and ensuring that welfare benefits reach eligible beneficiaries are important steps towards a more secure food system.

The fight against hunger

demands cooperation among governments, farmers, businesses, civil society organisations, and citizens. Governments must strengthen food distribution systems, improve social protection and invest in sustainable agriculture. Farmers need access to technology, irrigation, credit, markets, and adequate storage facilities. Community kitchens, food banks, and organised food donation initiatives can also help redirect surplus edible food towards people in need, provided food safety and appropriate handling standards are maintained. Above all, agricultural progress must be measured not only by the quantity of food produced but also by how effectively that food reaches people who need it.

World Food Day calls upon humanity to confront one of its most persistent moral and developmental challenges. The world cannot claim meaningful progress if agricultural abundance coexists with widespread hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity. The real challenge is not simply to grow more food but to build a system in which food is accessible, affordable, nutritious and sustainable. Every grain saved, every hungry person fed and every family lifted out of food insecurity represents a step towards a more humane society. The ultimate measure of agricultural success is not how much food a nation produces, but how effectively it ensures that no one is deprived of the food necessary to live with dignity. On this world Food Day, the message must be clear: hunger is not inevitable, and food security must become a shared global responsibility. The world has made remarkable progress in producing food; now it must make equally determined progress in ensuring that everyone has enough to eat.

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■ Khadi And Village Industries

Weaving The Fabric Of Inclusive, Sustainable India

With Two-Third Of The Rural Population In The Country, This Sector Holds Larger Significance As It Provides Ample Opportunities For Rural Entrepreneurs

ROOP RASHI

DR. NITESH DHAWAN

We are proud citizens of India -today the sixth largest economy in the world in terms of nominal GDP. Much of the economic growth is driven by the MSME sector contributing one-third in the overall GDP of the country. Herein again, major share comes from rural micro enterprises.

The rural economy mainly relies on cottage industries like Khadi and handloom sector along with handicraft products manufactured from rural artisans. At a time when the world is grappling with inequality, climate change and resource depletion while in the domain of IT and software, AI is on relentless march gobbling up jobs, Khadi and Village Industries (KVI) can play an important role in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and strengthening the vision of an Atmanirbhar Bharat by enabling employment at differential skill levels, with low resource use locally mitigating migration too. Khadi, Hand spun and Hand woven, has been the Soul of Bharat. The responsible production is resource efficient on energy, water utilising natural fibres. The potential to be the driver of growth is being recognised steadily, albeit, slowly.

Our industry signifies a rich cultural legacy from ancient times, exhibiting a diverse artistic sense with exemplary skill and personal touch of human emotions. Various written treatise pertaining to the Rigveda, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Thalia (by Greek historian Herodotus) and Kautilya have mentioned not only spinning and weaving but also the high quality of silk and cotton.

While cotton has been cited in Ramayana and aligned to characteristics of Saint, the spectrum of weaves reflect the rich cultural tapestry. Through Khadi 'Production by Masses' using hand spun and hand woven, was utilised by Mahatma Gandhiji to confront Mass production by the Colonialists. The fabric of freedom is becoming aspirational fashion statement today because of its unique characteristics of being natural, comfortable and sustainable. Its handmade character gives it an individuality and hence it does not need to compete with generic production in volumes.

The journey of Khadi—from a symbol of swadeshi and freedom to a contemporary fashion and lifestyle choice especially for environmentally aware new generation—demonstrates how tradition can adapt to changing consumer preferences. In fact, Tradition of near source production, which is more sustainable, is by default, intrinsic strength in Khadi ecosystem. In 21st Century, KVIC takes inspiration in our mandate from the clarion call of Hon'ble Prime Minister, "Khadi for Nation, Khadi for Fashion and Khadi for Transformation" while contributing to farm, fibre and market connect.

It has to be noted that Hand spinning is the cardinal differentiator between Khadi and Handlooms. Since Yarn is also done by hand, the labour-intensive nature production enables employment to large section of people. The Khadi institutions, the aggregators of the hand-made hank produced in distributed architecture, have been assisted by Khadi and Village industries over last seven decades. Capacity enhancement through Skillling and upskilling is being done through KVIC's departmental and non-departmental training centers.

With two-third of the rural population in the country, this sector holds larger significance as it provides ample opportunities for rural entrepreneurs. Such interventions directly advance SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by creating income-generating opportunities for people at the grassroots. Recent measures, including increases in spinning and weaving wages from April 2025 by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), incremental support to improving working tools, conditions, tools infra, marketing interfaces, further demonstrate the emphasis on improving artisan incomes and making traditional livelihoods attractive and economically sustainable. The aggregate production has reached ~Rs 4000 crore(approx.) with Sales reaching about Rs 8000 crore(approx.) due to constant strengthening of the Khadi and Village industries (VI) Ecosystems over period, especially last one decade.

Marching forward, the comfort fabric has been evolving into new categories and aspirational statements. Its transformation is evident in the emer-



gence of Khadi denim, designer saris and bridal wear, contemporary shirts and trousers, and collections by mainstream brands such as Raymond and Peter England. Centre of Excellence for Khadi (NIFT, Delhi), an initiative between Ministry of MSME and Textiles, has developed 2129 Khadi design collections in the multiple categories of apparels, collections of home-made-ups, featuring prints, weaves, embroidery, and painting, sari designs and continues to enable the Khadi Institutions/ aspirants through CoEK knowledge portal.

Our foray into infant wear is

Khadi directly addresses women's empowerment and hence aligns to Inclusive development. Around 80 percent of around half a million Khadi artisans are women. Female participation was found to be dominating in GVI schemes, particularly in Agar-batti, Handmade Paper, Honey Mission, and Service Industry segments according to the study.

inspired by the fact that global infant and baby wear segment is expected to be exceeding \$60 billion by 2030 (CAGR between 5-8.1%) and there would be priority to organic cotton, hypoallergenic fabrics and non-toxic manufacturing processes. Navyug Khadi designs reflecting positioning of Brand for 21st Century India, launched at National

Crafts Museum and Hastkala Academy, Pragati Maidan with 710 new products presenting the "New Khadi of New India" in a contemporary and innovative manner along with Khadi Knowledge Portal. A collection of Wellness/ Yoga wear 'Svadhya' has been recently launched on International Yoga Day to attract all age groups from Gen Z to young at heart.

Employment generation in Khadi requires very low investment. The assistance is being provided through schemes viz. Khadi Vikas Yojana, Gramodyog Vikas Yojana, PMEGP enabling KVI institutions/units in providing employment opportunities. The government is giving a major push to revive traditional industries by providing them all the necessary support including financial assistance, working capital facilitation, quality raw material support training, tool-kits, wage compensation, marketing support, promotion of digital payments and social security benefits.

As per the evaluation study conducted by EDII, Ahmedabad, in its report submitted in January, 2026, over 75% of artisans across all the schemes reported a measurable increase in income post-intervention and a stable year-round employment was created for artisans who previously depended on seasonal or migratory labour which

growing global demand and huge export potential which needs to be tapped. With its quantum and varieties of traditional handmade products, India occupies an inevitable place in the world. 85% of the global handloom production occurs here and the 'intrinsic value' can be leveraged for 'higher returns'. Other handloom nations like Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Cambodia and Indonesia manufacture very limited range of products but these are mainly for domestic production.

India has the huge potential to cater to the global demand of Khadi and handloom products based on its demographic advantage and diversified cultural heritage. Consumers around the world are showing growing interest in products that are handmade, traceable, natural and environmentally responsible. This presents an opportunity to reposition Khadi and handmade products not merely as traditional goods, but as premium products that embody authenticity, strong backstory of craftsmanship and sustainability. KVIC has got registered as EPC on the Trade portal of Consulate General of India at New York, USA under Ministry of External Affairs. KVIC has initiated registering the progressive KIs with EXIM licenses and also engaging with Consulates in India for exposures to our strengths, which should enable



actually helped in reducing the migration of labour. Artisans trained under food processing, agarbatti, and Honey Mission have diversified into new product categories—such as essential oils, scented candles, or value-added honey derivatives. This diversification has improved resilience against local market fluctuations.

Khadi directly addresses women's empowerment and hence aligns to Inclusive development. Around 80 percent of around half a million Khadi artisans are women. Female participation was found to be dominating in GVI schemes, particularly in Agar-batti, Handmade Paper, Honey Mission, and Service Industry segments according to the study.

Therefore, the engagement of a large number of women in any capacity in this sector has ensured direct remunerations for them, thus empowering them through financial independence and improved self-worth both within and outside of their homes. By enabling women to participate in productive economic activity, Khadi contributes directly to SDG 5 (Gender Equality) while also helping reduce social and economic disparities under SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

The handmade industry has a

building bridges.

While Khadi has its recognition, the Brand is being protected through registering trade Mark in other countries so that our producers and value chains are protected. Further unique Branding, Geographical Identification (GI) tag has been recently awarded to Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) in respect of Ponduru Khadi (which will enhance its value realisation for products of unique cotton and products spun and woven through equally unique process. The inaugural BRICS MSME Forum held in Agra this year exhibited specialized and premium products, including GI-tagged Ponduru Khadi, Bharat Kasturi Cotton, Bengal Muslin and naturally coloured cotton products.

We need to ensure Quality and assurance in our products for enhancing new gen Z customer acquisition, retention and higher value returns for such niche products. Towards this end, the department's Central Sliver Plant (CSP), established nearly three and a half decades ago, are being modernized. Of the five currently operational CSPs, the plants located in Chittaradurga, Karnataka, and Kuttur, Kerala, have completed modernization and are operational.

The Sliver plant in Karnataka utilises Solar energy for 50% of the requirement while wind power is being explored to make the production totally environmentally supportive.

This approach resonates with SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) by connecting traditional enterprises with design, technology, modern markets and evolving supply chains. Technology Up-gradation of Khadi Institutions' Production Infrastructure and technology-based Common Facility Centres (CFCs) are proposed to strengthen Village Industries clusters through shared infrastructure and modern processing facilities. KVIC is enabling Traceability solutions across the value chains which should enable integrating IT to tradition and attract new gen interest in the production ecosystem also.

Last but not the least, the cottage industry is eco-friendly in nature being energy efficient, water efficient and use of natural fibres/ colours. Khadi is an eco- friendly fabric with very less carbon footprint and environmentally sustainable. The measurement of this is being studied by premier Institutions (IIT, IIMs) to enable suitably factoring in the product as well as Brand promotion narrative to agile new gen consumer – domestic and international.

The focus of the world economies has recently shifted towards taking initiatives with a more pragmatic approach in ensuring development that has social and environmental connotations alongside economic growth. The ethical aspects of materialistic expansion have drawn attention of the policy makers in the wake of alarming environmental concerns, rising inequalities, hunger and poverty and inequitable distribution of resources. The 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development with its 17 goals adopted by World nations in 2015 underline the course of action for achieving the development based on poverty eradication, judicious use of environmental resources, and distributive social justice.

KVIC in collaboration with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research-Central Institute for Research on Cotton Technology (ICAR-CIRCOT), is actively exploring initiatives aimed at developing naturally coloured cotton varieties. This approach aligns with eco-friendly practices by minimizing water usage, chemical pollution, and energy consumption associated with traditional dyeing processes. It would be therefore pertinent to give impetus to this sector which has the capacity to provide sustainable livelihood solutions.

At a time when the fashion industry is under increasing pressure to address waste, pollution and excessive resource consumption, Khadi offers an alternative philosophy; produce thoughtfully, consume responsibly and value the skill behind every product.

In fact, whatever fibre or filament, by nature (eg plastic wrapper) and / or length (eg desi cotton) cannot be converted to Yarn by mechanised spinning industry, can be done through hand charkha and can enable 'in loop' as well as 'out of loop' recycling and upcycling and thereby contribute to additional employment categories in hand spinning.

This directly connects Khadi with SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 13 (Climate Action). Sustainable agricultural practices, including responsible cotton cultivation, can further strengthen its contribution to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) by promoting more sustainable rural ecosystems. With these potential, constant support and promotion would keep making the supply chains stronger, deeper and wider in delivering responsibly to human society.

The larger message is simple; sustainability, need not always come from the newest technology only. Sometimes, it can emerge from practices that communities have preserved for centuries that modern society is rediscovering. Khadi represents precisely such a possibility. It combines heritage with innovation, employment with entrepreneurship, women's empowerment with social inclusion, and economic activity with environmental responsibility. We, at KVIC, are trying to uncover, demystify, reassert and reinforce that MAGIC woven by Artists of Threads, our spinners and Artisans, for the environmentally conscious world. (PIB)

(Roop Rashi is Chief Executive Officer, KVIC & Dr. Nitesh Dhawan is Dy.CEO, KVIC, Mumbai)

CM Expresses

skill demands. The Chief Minister said the initiative would strengthen industry linkages, promote outcome-based training and equip the youth of Jammu and Kashmir with industry-ready skills, enhancing their employability and access to better livelihood opportunities.

He said the investment would help transform ITIs into modern skill development hubs, ensuring that vocational training remains responsive to changing economic needs and emerging employment opportunities.

Air India, Al Express

to and from Jeddah, Riyadh and Dammam until 24 October 2026,” Air India said in a post on X, and mentioned that it was committed to providing as much flexibility as possible during this period.

The airlines said that passengers holding confirmed Air India or Air India Express bookings issued on or before the 15th of October, with travel dates between 9 and 25 October, are eligible for a one-time complimentary date change on their respective airline up to the 10th of November.

It said that passengers who do not wish to rebook on the originally preferred sector for a future date may, instead, choose to rebook from an alternative station in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region served by their respective airline, subject to availability.

The flight operator informed that passengers whose flights have been cancelled may also opt for a full refund if they choose not to travel. The airlines have advised affected passengers to contact their respective customer care centres or visit booking offices in India and Gulf countries for assistance with rebooking and refunds.

The airlines said they are closely monitoring the situation and they will keep passengers informed of further developments.

PDD Announces

KPDCL. “In previous LCP there were only 129 feeders with round the clock power facility but under the new LCP, 85 new feeders have been added for 24*7 electricity supply because they have AT&C losses of less than 20 percent.”

Pertinently, PDD in the month of January this year has directed the JPDCL and KPDCL to initiate strict actions including deducting up to 50 percent of salary against the officials of divisions and feeders where Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses exceed 40 percent.

Besides, the department had issued the revised Load Curtailment Plan (LCP) with extra hours of power shedding to the areas having AT&C losses of more than 40 percent and between 15 percent and 40 percent respectively.

PDD in an official communique had said that the measures are been taken in order to improve billing efficiency, collection efficiency and to reduce AT&C losses—(KNO)

‘Kashmir Faces

imports nearly 84 percent of power from other states even as the Union Territory generates nearly 370 Megawatts (MWs) from its local stations.

The official figures in this regard reveal that the Union Territory was importing nearly 2000 MWs of power from other states and UTs.

Top officials have informed that out of the total power production capacity of 1197 MWs from the Jammu and Kashmir owned plants, the power generation fluctuated between 360-400 MWs.

The official had informed that the region was generating 298 MWs of power from the Baghilhar-1 hydroelectric power project, 49 MWs from other projects of Kashmir division and 20 MWs through the Independent Power Producers in Jammu division.

According to the official figures, The State Load Despatch Centre (SLDC) had recorded a power load of 1170 MWs in Kashmir division and 1130 MWs in Jammu division respectively.

It also said that from the centrally owned hydel projects in Jammu and Kashmir that has a generation capacity of nearly 2200 MWs, the authorities were generating nearly 1100 MWs of power.

Previously, this news agency reported that Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are likely to witness a power deficiency of 14 percent during the solar peak hours in the month of October.

The Northern Regional Power Committee (NRPC) in this regard had further said that the regions may face

power deficiency of nearly 12 percent during the non-solar hours.

The official figures in this regard said that Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh is likely to face power paucity of 400 MWs against the available power position during the solar peak hours in the month of October.

It also said that during the non-solar peak hours, the regions may face a power shortage of 337 MWs—(KNO)

Crime Branch

being reported to law-enforcement authorities.

He said the chargesheet invokes applicable provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

The spokesperson said the chargesheet was presented before the Court of the Munsiff Judge, Kishtwar, who is holding charge as the Principal District and Sessions Judge, Kishtwar, as the regular presiding officer is on leave.

He said the SIT was constituted by Inspector General of Police (IGP), Crime, Jammu and Kashmir, Sarah Rizvi, and headed by Sanjay Kumar Parihar, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Special Crime Wing, Jammu.

The team examined the evidence and conducted the investigation through coordinated efforts, culminating in the filing of the chargesheet within the stipulated period. Further investigative action, including the filing of a supplementary chargesheet, may be undertaken if additional evidence emerges, in accordance with law—(KNO)

CIPET Centre In

Srinagar, including land provision, but did not convey formal approval.

With no actual land allotment made for setting up the centre, the Government of India wrote several letters to the J&K administration seeking suitable instructions for the formal allotment of the ITI Zainakote premises to CIPET. However, there was no response from the J&K Government.

On January 12, 2021, the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals requested an alternate site in Jammu based on industry feedback. It sought 10 acres of land near IIT Jammu since no progress was being made with respect to the proposed site at Srinagar.

Subsequently, the J&K administration proposed land at the Jagti site, but no further communication was received by the Department regarding it.

The purpose of establishing CIPET learning centre is to train local youth in petrochemicals, plastics, and polymer science, helping them gain skills for jobs in related industries—(KNO)

India’s Internal

mobilisation, and ultimately it leads to law and order problems,” he said.

The problem of technology and social media would confront the young officers, and they will have to find resources to come up with creative solutions which are as per law, he said.

On the paradigm shift in the conventional internal security landscape, Mohan said militant naxalism has largely ended, while insurgency in the North East is now reduced to minuscule levels.

“What is happening in certain parts of the North East is not insurgency. It is largely ethnic conflict,” he said.

Through a series of ceasefire agreements and tripartite agreements, most of the erstwhile insurgent groups have joined the mainstream, he said.

“Homegrown terrorism has also come to, more or less, an end. Foreign-inspired terrorism, except for a few parts of the country, is no longer visible in any other part,” he said.

Although he stated that homegrown terrorism has dwindled to minuscule proportions, the recent Red Fort blast in Delhi indicates that it has not come to an end, Mohan said. The problem of homegrown terrorism and foreign-inspired terrorism has not fully ended, he said.

Talking about the menace of narcotics, Mohan said the Home Minister has publicly announced that the country would be free of narcotics in three years, Mohan said.

On the challenge of cybercrime, he said people with little skills and knowledge can easily become cyber criminals. Cybercrime has become an “easy business” with the proliferation of mule accounts in the banking system and the proliferation of fake SIM cards, he said.

While central institutions handle

cyber threats, the foremost battles would have to be fought in the states and Union Territories, he said.

The top official also highlighted the challenge of foreigners staying in the country illegally, committing crimes, radicalising people and distorting the markets of the country.

While India adheres to ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’ (the idea of treating the world as a family), the primary rights over the country’s resources belong to the citizens of the country, he said. As a national policy, illegal foreigners should be identified, and action should be taken against them as per law, he said.

Regarding anonymisation of crime, he cited instances such as hit jobs being advertised on the dark net, with money being transferred to carry them out and threat calls being made through a VPN from foreign locations.

Technology has to keep pace with the law enforcement efforts, Mohan said.

Noting that the Centre is prioritising technology in policing, he said it has set up a network of young IPS officers utilising Artificial Intelligence to modernise law enforcement.

The parade marks the culmination of Phase-1 training of the 78th Regular Recruit batch of IPS.

A total of 151 officer trainees, including 37 women officers, took part in the Dikshant Parade. The 151 officer trainees include 16 foreign officers from neighbouring countries.

CS Lays Foundation

strict adherence to prescribed time-lines and quality standards.

Emphasising the importance of the project, Atal Dulloo said the restoration and conservation efforts were aimed at reviving the temple’s decades old glory and preserving its architectural and cultural heritage.

He said the initiative reflected the Government’s commitment to conserving the region’s heritage while recognising the cultural contributions of different communities of Kashmir’s diverse social fabric.

The Chief Secretary observed that the temple holds considerable historical, cultural and religious significance and represents an important part of Kashmir’s shared heritage. He expressed hope that the restoration work would help preserve its aesthetic appeal, heritage value and social significance for future generations.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Chief Planning Officer Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Joint Commissioners of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation Syed Abu Qasim and Nuzhat Qureshi, Superintending Engineer R&B Tatheer Manzoor, along with Officers from the R&B, PHE, KPDCL, SMC, Police, Revenue and other concerned departments, were present on the occasion.

No School Can

adhere to the prescribed norms and that parents are not subjected to unnecessary pressure or financial hardship.

She added that Chief Education Officers (CEOs) and Zonal Education Officers (ZEOs) would be made members of the committee and entrusted with monitoring the situation at their respective levels.

The involvement of district- and zonal-level education officers, she said, would help strengthen oversight and facilitate the timely identification of violations.

The minister’s remarks come amid recurring concerns among parents over the alleged practice of private schools directing them to purchase textbooks, stationery, uniforms and other educational items from selected shops, often limiting their freedom to choose vendors and compare prices.

Parents have frequently raised concerns that such arrangements can increase the cost of education, particularly for families with more than one school-going child.

Earlier during the visit, Itoo laid the foundation stone for the new building of Government Boys Higher Secondary School Banihal, which is being constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 11 crore. MLA Banihal Sajjad Shaheen and senior divisional officers of the Education Department were also present on the occasion.

Addressing a public gathering, the minister reiterated that the elected government was committed to fulfilling its promises to the people despite the challenging circumstances in Jammu and Kashmir.

She said the government was working to address public grievances and resolve issues affecting people across different sectors, including education.

The proposed school building is

expected to strengthen educational infrastructure in the area and provide students with improved facilities—(KNO)

India Rejects UN

“A mandate holder who relies on anonymous inputs to generalise for 1.4 billion people does a disservice to the very mandate she holds. We urge this Special Rapporteur to verify before she vilifies and to bring the required rigour and fairness in her reports,” he said.

In her report, Romero notes that in India, young people created a “satirical political movement”, a reference to the Cockroach Janata Party, and said that “young people from India reported retaliation or stigmatisation for discussing mental health or gender justice.”

Swarup further emphasised that “this level of arbitrary report writing is precisely the reason that the United Nations and its institutions have lost credibility.”

He said that in India, these freedoms, together with freedom of speech and expression, are guaranteed to every citizen under Article 19 of the Constitution, and are protected by an independent judiciary, a free press, and an empowered National Human Rights Commission.

India also termed the report ironic, taking note of the “satirical political movement” created by the country’s youth.

“In which repressive State does a satirical youth party question the government, marches on the capital, and then sits across the table with senior national leaders,” Swarup said.

He pointed to the High Commissioner for Human Rights’ comment in the Human Rights Council last month that dialogue with young leaders is far more effective in the context of youth-led movement in India.

“Perhaps that update escaped the Special Rapporteur’s attention,” he said, adding that when students protested this summer over irregularities in public examinations, the government engaged constructively with the youth.

Within weeks, the Indian Parliament amended the Public Examinations Act, doubling punishments for paper leaks, carried out a systemic examination overhaul, and created fast-track courts in every state, specifically dedicated to prosecuting individuals involved in exam fraud, he said.

“This is the true testament of democracy in action. Youth represents our strength and shared future,” he said, as he cited Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s words that youth capability will become India’s capability, and their success will take India’s success to new heights.

Further, over five million young people took part in the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue this year, shaping national priorities directly with the Prime Minister.

Several ministers, including Prime Minister Modi, continue to engage with youth of the country directly and through social media, he said.



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Article 371 can provide constitutional safeguards for Ladakh: CS Kundra

RAJA SYED RATHER

LEH: Ladakh Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra on Saturday said Article 371 of the Constitution offers sufficient flexibility to provide constitutional safeguards for Ladakh, with a separate provision, proposed as Article 371K.

Addressing a press conference here, Chief Secretary Kundra, said, “These provisions were discussed during negotiations to address the region’s demands and are under active consideration.”

He said, “Several models had been considered, including the Sixth Schedule, statehood and a Union Territory with a legislature, before Article 371 was proposed as a possible alternative.”

“Fundamentally, as I said, it is about constitutional safeguards. It has many models,” he added.

Kundra said the Sixth Schedule was designed for a different geographical, historical and cultural context, particularly in North-eastern states where minority tribes require protection against possible discrimina-



tion by majority tribes.

“They need protection against any discriminatory action from the majority. So, the Sixth Schedule has a different geographical, historical, cultural context and it doesn’t make much sense to talk about it here,” he said.

On the demand for statehood or a Union Territory with a legislature, he said Ladakh currently receives 100 per cent funding from the Centre, including for employees’ salaries and pensions.

He said that in Union Territories with legislatures, such as Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi, public accounts are separate and the administrations have to meet salary and pension obligations through their own income. “So, it was

suggested that we will fulfil the fundamental demand of the central government. But we will find another creative solution for that,” he said.

Kundra further said Article 371, under which special provisions from Article 371A to Article 371J already exist, could provide the flexibility required to frame constitutional protections suited to Ladakh. “Article 371A to J is still there. So, Article 371K was suggested that it will be written especially for Ladakh. Now, in the last meeting, you agreed to this,” he said.

He said the minutes of the previous meeting had been signed by the participants, describing the atmosphere as positive. “And in

general, we can say that it was a happy atmosphere that good progress has been made,” Kundra said.

Referring to subsequent discussions, he said Ladakh’s representatives had sought documents explaining the proposed structure and the framework for moving forward. “What kind of structure will it be? Will it have a framework? How will we move forward?” he said, recounting the questions raised by the representatives.

Kundra said the Ministry of Home Affairs provided a detailed 32-page document to the leaders on February 16, outlining various aspects of the proposed framework.

He said the constitutional amendment, the demands of Ladakh’s people and the nature of the future democratic structure would be shaped through further deliberations. “The constitutional amendment and the demands of the people here. What kind of democratic structure will it be? It will come out through a discussion, through reflection,” he said—(KNO)

Civil Defence Volunteers training programme begins in Pulwama

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: A three-day Civil Defence Volunteers Training Programme commenced Saturday at Circuit House, Pulwama, with the objective of enhancing the preparedness, skills and response capabilities of Civil Defence volunteers for effective assistance during disasters and other emergencies.

The programme is being organised by Headquarters 12 Sector Rashtriya Rifles in collaboration with the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Pulwama, and is being conducted from October 17 to 19, 2026.

ADC/CEO, DDMA Pulwama, Dr. Sheikh Mohd Ashraf inaugurated the programme and appreciated the initiative aimed at strengthening community-level emergency preparedness.

He stressed that effective disaster response depends on trained personnel, timely action and close coordination among the administration, emergency services and community volunteers. He also



highlighted the important role Civil Defence volunteers can play in assisting authorities, supporting evacuation and extending immediate assistance to affected communities during emergencies.

Under the programme, Headquarters 12 Sector Rashtriya Rifles is facilitating and conducting the training and practical demonstrations, while DDMA Pulwama is coordinating the participation of Civil Defence volunteers and contributing through its disaster-management

expertise and resource persons.

The training covers key aspects of Civil Defence, emergency response, search and rescue, evacuation procedures, safety measures, and the roles and responsibilities of volunteers during disaster situations.

As part of the practical component, personnel of 12 Sector Rashtriya Rifles conducted demonstrations and hands-on training for the participants. Volunteers were familiarised with emergency-response

equipment, rescue techniques and procedures relevant to different emergency scenarios.

Specialized sessions are also being conducted by trainers and personnel from SDRF, Fire & Emergency Services, Police Department and DDMA Pulwama, providing participants with practical and operational knowledge relating to disaster management and emergency response.

The sessions also focused on how Civil Defence volunteers can effectively support the administration and specialised agencies at the community level.

A specialised awareness session by a representative of 44 Rashtriya Rifles focused on CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) hazards and hazardous environments. The session covered the classification of chemical agents, associated symptoms and indicators, preventive and protective measures, and immediate protective actions in the event of exposure.

CUK’s DTS concludes World Tourism Day 2026 Celebrations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: Department of Tourism Studies (DTS), Central University of Kashmir (CUKashmir), brought its week-long World Tourism Day 2026 celebrations to a close at Green Campus here, recognizing students’ achievements across various competitions.

In her welcome address, Dr. Shahnaz Akhtar, Coordinator, DTS, highlighted the activities conducted during the week-long celebrations. She stated the Department had extended the observance beyond a single-day programme to provide students with opportunities to showcase their talents, engage in creative activities, and gain practical exposure to event management. She emphasized that such initiatives help students develop skills relevant to the tourism and hospitality industry and reaffirmed the Department’s commitment to organizing meaningful learning experiences.

Dr. Ashaq Hussain Najar, Sr Assistant Prof DTS, presented an overview of the activities organized as part of the celebrations, including quiz competitions, reel-making and videography, photography, and handicraft and regional cuisine displays.

He appreciated the active participation of students, congratulated the winners in various categories, and expressed his gratitude to the jury members, Dr. Shabir and Dr. Rameez, and Dr. Ruban, faculty member of the B.Voc. programme, for their contribution in conducting and evaluating the competitions.

Dr. Faizan Ashraf Mir, Sr. Assistant Prof. DTS, emphasized the importance of co-curricular activities in the overall development of students and appreciated the Department’s initiative in organizing the celebrations. He observed that education extends beyond textbooks and examinations, and participation in such events helps students develop confidence, creativity, a sense of responsibility, and diverse skills essential for their personal and professional growth.

During the event, Mr. Faisal, a student of MBA-TTM 3rd Semester presented a video reel in which latest Departmental events and activities both in-house and outside were being highlighted and showcased.

During the event, the winners of various categories of events were felicitated with awards and certificates.

Katra resonates with devotional fervour as Navratra celebrations continue



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KATRA: The holy Town of Katra witnessed varied devotional and cultural activities, including Prabh Feri, Shobha Yatra and ‘Mata Ki Kahan’, as part of the ongoing Navratra Festival 2026. A large number of devotees, pilgrims and locals participated in the celebrations. Additional Superintendent of Police Kameshwar Puri attended the Shobha Yatra as the Chief Guest.

Speaking on the occasion, he highlighted the religious and cultural significance of the Navratra Festival and appreciated the efforts to preserve the region’s rich spiritual traditions. He also emphasised the importance of maintaining peace and harmony and ensuring a welcoming environment for devotees visiting the holy town. The Shobha Yatra featured colourful tableaux depicting spiritual grandeur of revered deities.

The Prabh Feri attracted enthusiastic participation from devotees, who sang bhajans and chanted religious hymns. ‘Mata Ki Kahan’ offered devotees an opportunity to connect with the spiritual significance and religious traditions associated with Shri Mata Vaishno Devi.

Meanwhile, the All India Devotional Song Competition at Yog Ashram Complex also attracted a huge crowd of devotees. The competition is being organised by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Department and PTC Network, with support from sponsors, the District Administration and the local community.

Among the 15 participants, Rahul Lakhotra secured first position, while Bunty and Narinder Kumar shared second position. Dr. Arvind Kaur, Netra Tikku, Ajay Kumar, Gurdeep Singh and Surjit Lalika jointly secured third position. The competition was judged by music experts Dr. Surinder Sharma, C.L. Verma, Suraj Singh and Ravi Raguvanshi. Suraj Singh and former competition winner Ravi Raguvanshi enthralled the audience with their performances, drawing an enthusiastic response. The event also saw the participation of representatives from the administration, media, tourism sector and local organisations.

The day’s programmes highlighted Katra’s rich spiritual heritage and added to the festive atmosphere, reinforcing the message of faith, devotion and cultural unity.

GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPTT.

GROUND WATER DIVISION SRINAGAR

BAGHI-ALI-MARDAN, NOWSHARA SRINAGAR.

E-mail:- hakeemmushaq.75316@jk.gov.in Tel./FaxNo:-0194-2411285

EXTENSION NOTICE 5TH.

OF RE-TENDER NOTICE/ CORRIGENDUM.

Subject: Augmentation of Water Supply Scheme Chatterhama by way of construction of Additional Bore Well.

Reference: 1. This office Retender Corrigendum Notice vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/ Camp./ 3506-19, Dated: 19-06-2026, Bearing Tender ID No. 2026_PHE_307393_3.

2. This office Extension Notice 5th issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/ Camp/2363-76, dated: 11-05-2026.

3. This office e-NIT No. 03/JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2026-27, issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp/64-76, dated: 03-04-2026. Bearing Tender ID No. 2026_PHE_307393_1.

Due to “NO Response” for the above mentioned work advertised vide e-NIT No. and Tender ID No under reference. Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 14-10-2026 Up-to 11:00 AM.

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Last date & Time of submission of bids	27-10-2026 Up-to 01:00 PM
2.	Date & Time of opening of tenders	28-10-2026 01:00 PM

NOTE:
All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endst: nos.
No: -JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp./14486-500.
Dated: 14-10-2026.
DIPK-6885-26
DT: 17/10/2026

Sd/= Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt. Ground Water Division Srinagar.

GOVT. OF UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

R&B DIVISION RAJBAGH SRINAGAR.

E-NIT No.98 /R&B/RAJ of 2026-27 issued under Endorsement No: 8795-8805 Dated: 14.10.2026.

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, e-tenders (in single cover system) are invited on Percentage (%age) basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with the J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways, and/or other State/Central Governments for the following work:

S.No	Name of Work	Base Cost Excl. GST (₹ in Lacs)	TOTAL / Adv. Cost (Base Cost + GST) (₹ in Lacs)	Cost of Tender Document	EMD	Time of Completion	Class of Contractor/ Agency
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Development of Bund Road Along Doodh Ganga Nallah from Natipora to Chanapora (Balance Work).	84.72	99.95	₹1600/-	₹2,00,000/-	90 Days	“AAY”

Position of AA No.: Accorded vide Order No: CE(R&B)CK/AA/01 of 2025-2026 Dated: 29.11.2025.
Position of TS No. Accorded vide Order No.SE-PWD(R&B)Sgr-South/TS/217 of 2026-2027 Dated: 14.10.2026.
Position of Funds: Budgeted / Committed.

1. The bidding documents, which would include qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications/drawings, a bill of quantities (B.O.Q.), a set of contract terms and conditions, and other details, can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in on the dates listed below:

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	14.10.2026.
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	15.10.2026 from 10:00 AM
3	Bid submission Start Date	15.10.2026 from 10:00 AM
4	Bid Submission End Date	22.10.2026 Up to 04:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	23.10.2026 at 11:30 A.M in office of the Executive Engineer, PWD (R&B) Division Rajbagh Srinagar.

2. Bids must be accompanied with Cost of Tender document in the shape of Treasury Challan under M.H-0059 in favour of Executive Engineer, R&B Division Rajbagh, Srinagar (Tender inviting Authority) (The Date of Treasury Challan & EMD should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer, R&B Division Rajbagh, Srinagar (Tender Receiving Authority).

3. At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload Earnest Money/Bid Security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/TDR/BG pledged to the Tender Receiving Authority, i.e. Executive Engineer, R&B Division, Rajbagh Srinagar. The Earnest Money/Bid Security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after submission of Performance & Additional Performance Security (wherever Applicable) and Drawl of Agreement (FORM-25).

*Abnormally Low Bid Price (ALB) :
As per the Circular instructions of Finance Deptt. Vide NO.FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 Dated: 08.08.2025, which is reproduced as :-

1. Where the bid price is below 10% but not below 20% of the Project Cost put to bid, the additional Performance Guarantee/ Security Percentage shall be incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of bid price below 10% of the project cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional bid performance guarantee being 0.1% and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.

2. Where the bid price is 20% or more below of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee percentage shall be incremented by 0.2% for every percentage of bid price below 20% of the project cost put to bid in addition to 1% of the bid price and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.

3. The Additional Performance Security shall be treated as part of the Performance Security and shall be released after the DLP is over successfully.

4. The successful bidder shall provide Performance Security @ 3% of the contract value alongwith the Additional Performance Security (wherever Applicable) in the shape of CDR/FDR/TDR/BG within 02 days after opening of Bids & declaration of lowest successful bidder / issuance of L.O.A (whichever is earlier) which shall be released after Successful Work Completion and DLP is satisfactorily over. The EMD @ 2% of successful bidder will be released only upon submission of the 3% Performance Security/ Performance Bank Guarantee (PBG) & Addl. Performance Security (APS) (wherever applicable).

5. The Successful Bidder shall also furnish the valid Group Insurance along with the Performance Security.

6. The date and time of bid opening shall be notified on the Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and automatically communicated to bidders via an e-mail message sent to their e-mail address. Responsive Bids will be opened online on the same Web Site in the Office of the Executive Engineer, (R&B) Rajbagh Division, Srinagar (Tender Receiving Authority).

7. Bids for the work shall be valid for 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.
These Conditions shall supersede the above conditions as laid down under Clause (1-47) as envisaged above, wherever the prospective bidders bidding for Macadam Work does not own or possess a Hot Mix Plant (HMP).

No: 8795-8805
Dated: 14.10.2026.

DIPK-6860-26
DT: 17/10/2026

Executive Engineer, (R&B) Rajbagh Division Srinagar

5th T20I: Stay grounded, keep playing fearless cricket, says Samson on carrying WC form forward

IAN S

BENGALURU: India wicketkeeper-batter Sanju Samson on Saturday said the confidence he gained from his World Cup performances had helped him understand his own game better, adding that he now wishes to be grounded and continue playing fearless cricket.

Samson was the Player of the Tournament in this year's T20 World Cup triumph, and though his form has been up and down in recent times, the Indian team has persisted with him in the shortest format.

"It definitely gives you a lot of confidence. After that, you start understanding your own patterns. You focus on your process, reduce the outside noise, and figure out your own way of creating the best environment in your mind to go out there and perform."

"Sometimes you score runs, and sometimes you



don't. So, I try to understand that, stay grounded, and continue playing fearless cricket," Samson said to former India teammate Yuzvendra Chahal in the Hindi broadcast feed, as rain held up the start of the fifth and final T20I against the West Indies at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday.

Asked what goes through a player's mind when the rain refuses to relent, Samson had a

light-hearted message for Chahal. "We're missing someone like you (Chahal) in the dressing room! Someone who can keep the atmosphere light."

"When it's raining, there's not much point in thinking too much about cricket at that moment. (Ravi) Bishnoi and Arshdeep (Singh) are keeping themselves occupied, so you know how things go in the dressing room."

Looking ahead to the

five-match T20I series against New Zealand starting on October 22, Samson said a packed calendar left little room for preparation, and that experience would have to make up for it.

"To be very honest, with the way the schedule is structured these days, you don't get much time to practice or prepare. That's where your experience comes in. You try to stay in a good mental space and make the most of whatever time you get."

"We have just one day of batting practice. We'll reach there on the 20th, practice on the 21st, and play the match on the 22nd. So, we'll try to carry forward the good things we've done here."

"It takes a little time to adjust to the conditions there, so we'll take two or three balls to assess them. We'll follow the things we've learned through experience and play while respecting the conditions," he concluded.

Ahead of New Zealand tour, Shubman Gill to turn out for Punjab in Ranji Trophy second round

IAN S

NEW CHANDIGARH: India's Test and ODI captain Shubman Gill will turn out for Punjab in their Ranji Trophy second round match against Chhattisgarh in New Chandigarh, starting on Sunday. The development comes at a time when Gill is eyeing to get some red-ball game time under his belt before departing for the New Zealand tour.

Gill, 27, has been drafted into the squad at the eleventh hour, with Uday Saharan to continue to lead the side. India's ODI series in New Zealand runs from November 4 to 15, but Gill will play only the first three matches. He will then hand the 50-over captaincy to Shreyas Iyer and shift his focus to the two-game Test series that follows.

An India A side will be touring New Zealand at the same time for three unofficial Tests against New Zealand A. Yashasvi Jaiswal and KL Rahul



have been named for all three games. Gill, however, will not be a part of it, as he was originally expected to turn out in one of those India A.

But that plan has fallen through as the third four-day game, scheduled from November 7 to 10 in Lincoln, clashes with the second and third ODIs. The Ranji Trophy outing, therefore, offers Gill a timely chance at long-format practice before the Tests. Gill is likely to bat at number four for Punjab, which could see Jashanpreet Sidhu left out of the playing eleven.

Punjab's batting will be further bolstered by the return of wicketkeeper-

from Vidarbha to Punjab ahead of the domestic season, marked his return with figures of 5-70, his 16th five-wicket haul in first-class cricket.

With Gill, Prabhsimran and the three centuries from the opening game, Punjab will field a formidable batting lineup as they look to build on their early points against Chhattisgarh in front of their home crowd at the New PCA Stadium.

The Punjab-Chhattisgarh match will be broadcasted on JioHotstar and Star Sports Khel, while Karnataka-Saurashtra and Kerala-Odisha clashes will be live-streamed on JioHotstar.

Punjab squad: Harnoor Pannu, Vihaan Malhotra, Shubman Gill, Uday Saharan (captain), Jashanpreet Sidhu, Salil Arora (vice-captain), Raman-deep Singh, Prabhsimran Singh (wk), Harpreet Brar, Emanjot Singh Chahal, Harjas Tandon, Gurnoor Brar, Umesh Yadav, Gursimran Singh, Sanvir Singh and Sehaj Dhawan

ISL 2026-27: Thoi Singh's late equaliser helps Inter Kashi hold Odisha FC



IAN S

PUNE: Thoi Singh scored a late equaliser as Inter Kashi fought back to secure a 1-1 draw against Odisha FC in the Indian Super League at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex here on Saturday.

Odisha took the lead in the 56th minute through an own goal by Inter Kashi defender Pratik Chaudhari, but Thoi struck late in the second half to deny the visitors all three points.

Both teams created opportunities in the opening half but failed to find the breakthrough. Inter Kashi threatened through

Sajad Parray and Wayne Vaz in the early stages, with Parray's left-footed attempt from outside the box going wide. Vaz also missed the target after receiving a pass from Jitendra Singh.

Odisha responded with attacking moves of their own, as Rahim Ali saw his effort from the left side of the penalty area blocked in the 22nd minute. The visitors continued to pose a threat from set pieces, while Rahim had another chance in first-half stoppage time but sent his shot wide.

The teams went into the half-time break goalless

despite creating opportunities at both ends.

Inter Kashi began the second half positively, with Rosenberg Gabriel and Vaz attempting to test the Odisha defence. However, it was the visitors who broke the deadlock when Chaudhari inadvertently turned the ball into his own net in the 56th minute.

Odisha came close to extending their advantage in the 76th minute when Mahmoud Eid connected with a pass from Lalrinfela Khlangte. However, Inter Kashi goalkeeper Albino Gomes made a timely save to keep his side in contention.

The hosts continued to push for an equaliser and were rewarded late in the match. Following a set-piece situation, Thoi found space in the centre of the box and fired a left-footed shot into the bottom-left corner to make it 1-1.

Inter Kashi looked for a winner in the closing stages, but Aritra Das's direct free-kick sailed high and wide. Neither side could find another goal as the contest ended in a draw, with Inter Kashi rescuing a point after falling behind.

Fenesta Open: Khushi Kadian completes hat-trick by winning U-16 and U-14 singles titles



IAN S

NEW DELHI: A day after winning the U-16 doubles title, Haryana's Khushi Kadian completed a hat-trick at the 31st Fenesta Open National Tennis Championship on Saturday by winning the Girls' U-16 and U-14 singles titles to cap an extraordinary week at the DLTA Complex in the Capital.

Kadian began the day with a hard-fought 7-6 (7-3), 7-5 win over Ranjhana Sangram in the U-16 singles final before returning to the court later in the afternoon to defeat second seed Siddhi Pandey 6-3, 6-2 in the U-14 singles final in one hour and 16 minutes. "It is very important

to me, and I feel really great about winning these titles," Kadian said after her second match of the day. "The whole week has been very great for me, playing 15 matches in a row in one week. This was a test for me, and thankfully I have passed this test quite successfully. I am very happy that my hard work has paid off. This is the biggest tournament we have, and I wanted to win this tournament at least once in my career."

Kadian credited her parents and coaching team for their constant support and encouragement. The triumph also helped her overcome painful memories from an earlier edition of the Nationals.

"I want to be an inspiration," she added. "My mother and my father, they keep me motivated, and especially my coaches. They all keep supporting me. I'm so happy that they are there for me and clapping for every point and motivating me. A few years back, in the Under-12 nationals, I got injured badly, and I wanted to win those nationals but couldn't. So, I really wanted to win the Nationals this time, and I'm very happy about it."

PPL Storm into Kilo North Kashmir T20 Premier League Final



GMK SPORTS DESK

LOLAB: Pathan Panthers Lolab stormed into the final of the Kilo North Kashmir T20 Premier League after registering a convincing 37-run victory over NCC Narbal in the first semi-final at Chandigarh Cricket Ground, Lolab.

With an impressive performance in the knockout encounter, Pathan Panthers Lolab became the first team to secure a place in the tournament's grand finale, taking another sig-

nificant step towards the coveted championship title.

The victory marks a major milestone in the Panthers' campaign, as the team continues its strong run in the competition and strengthens its bid for the title.

Meanwhile, the battle for the second spot in the final will be decided in the upcoming semi-final, where Friends XI Lolab will take on Sopore XI in what promises to be a keenly contested encounter.

With the tournament entering its decisive stage, cricket fever is gripping North Kashmir, as fans eagerly await the final showdown. The league has provided a platform for local cricketing talent while promoting sportsmanship, competitive spirit and community participation across the region.

All eyes are now on the second semi-final, with the winner set to join Pathan Panthers Lolab in the much-anticipated title clash.

ISL 2026/27: East Bengal FC begin title defence against confident Churchill Brothers



IAN S

MARGAO (GOA), 17 OCT (IANS) East Bengal FC will look to begin their title defence in style when they clash with Churchill Brothers FC Goa and renew their long-standing rivalry in the Indian Super League (ISL) 2026/27 at the Fatorda Stadium in Goa on Sunday.

Churchill head into the fixture on the back of a historic 2-1 victory over Mumbai City FC in their ISL debut, while defending champions East Bengal begin their domestic campaign after a busy run of continental and cup com-

mitments. Churchill Brothers made an absolute statement of intent in their memorable top-flight opener. Gaurav Bora opened the scoring before Colombian forward Sebastián Gutiérrez delivered a clinical late strike to secure maximum points against the Islanders.

However, head coach Dimitris Dimitriou believes his side can improve further ahead of their second consecutive home fixture.

"Of course we got a win; we got the first three points, but for sure there are a lot of spaces for improvement.

We have worked very hard and analysed our game. I believe we are going to play better football on Sunday," he said.

For East Bengal, Sunday's match marks the start of their title defence in the league, featuring new arrivals such as goalkeeper Phurba Lachenpa, midfielder Dani Ramirez, Australian attacker Chris Ikonomidis, forward Ake Loba and Polish striker Lukasz Zwolinski. Antonio Lopez Habas's side have had a busy run across domestic and continental competitions, most recently losing 3-2 to Iraq's Al-

Shorta in the AFC Champions League Two, with David Lalhlansanga scoring both goals.

Habas expects a difficult test against the Goan side, but his objective remains clear: start the league campaign with three points. "It's a dangerous match for a dangerous team against us and us. Our idea is the three points. We respect them, but we have to push our level," he said.

The encounter brings together two clubs with a shared history in the National Football League and I-League. Their last meeting, in February 2020, ended in a 1-1 draw. Sunday's fixture will be their first meeting in MG ISL history, adding another chapter to their rivalry.

The match also gives Provat Lakra a chance to face his former club after moving from East Bengal to Churchill Brothers. The hosts will look to make home advantage count, while the defending champions will be happy with nothing less than all points if they are to make a statement.

INOX

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MOVIES

Schedule

18 OCTOBER 2026 | SUNDAY

DRISHYAM: THE CONCLUSION (HINDI) (UA 16+)

10:20 AM 12:50 PM 03:05 PM 06:20 PM

PRAHAAR: THE UNTOLD STORY OF UJJWAL NIKAM (HINDI) (UA 16+)

12:10 PM 06:00 PM

NAYYI NAVELLI (HINDI) (UA 16+)

10:00 AM 01:20 PM 04:10 PM 07:00 PM

STREET FIGHTER (HINDI) (UA 16+)

09:40 AM 03:50 PM

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