



This newspaper is the sister concern of news agency Kashmir News Observer (KNO)

www.kashmirthunder.in | epaper.kashmirthunder.in | twitter.com / kashmirthunder | facebook.com/kashmirthundernews | Regd. No. JKENG/2010/39938

CDS calls for making India global leader in next-gen defence tech

Urges academia to scale innovation, seeks whole-of-nation approach to achieve goals

Sajid Raina

New Delhi, Sept 22: Calling for a whole-of-nation approach to make India a global leader in next-generation defence technologies Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan on Monday urged academia to scale innovation for making the country self-reliant.

Addressing a tri-services symposium here, CDS Chauhan, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, “The changing nature of modern warfare driven by convergence across kinetic and non-kinetic domains has necessitated advanced and integrated technological solutions.”

He emphasised the critical role of academia, start-ups and industry in developing indigenous capabilities across platforms, weapons, networks and doctrines to meet future operational



demand.

Meanwhile, in a statement, a Defence Ministry spokesman said that the inaugural edition of the Tri-Services Academia Technology Symposium (T-SATS) was held at the Manekshaw Centre at Delhi Cantonment, synergising the services-academia R&D ecosystem for development of niche and futuristic technologies tailored for the Indian armed forces.

It said that the symposium was inaugurated by

Gen Chauhan and the event witnessed participation from directors and heads of departments of academic and premier R&D institutions, along with students from 62 institutes including IISc, IITs, IIITs and private technology institutes.

The CDS also inaugurated a technology exhibition showcasing 43 selected innovative exhibits by academia.

“These innovations were evaluated by subject matter experts from various

technology domains of the three services for their potential military applications. Projects showing promise will be considered for R&D collaboration and funding support in future,” the statement said.

A major highlight of the day was a series of 95 structured one-on-one meetings between academic innovators and service representatives. These closed-door sessions provided a platform for academia to pitch R&D proposals and receive strategic guidance on converting ideas into military-use cases, fostering a collaborative and results-oriented environment, it said, adding that these meetings will continue on Tuesday.

Also, MoUs were signed with various academic institutes, including Ajeenkya DY Patil University, Gujarat National Law University, Indian Institute of Technology Madras, | [More on P6](#)

J&K Govt to seek relief package from Centre: CM

Directs depts to expedite assessment

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Sept 22: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday directed all departments to expedite their assessment so that projections for relief and restoration could be submitted to the Government of India without delay.

Chairing a high-level meeting to take a comprehensive review of flood relief and restoration measures across Jammu and Kashmir, the CM enquired about the funds released during the floods and was informed that in several districts these funds have been utilized in temporary restoration works.

The meeting was attended by Ministers Sakina Itoo, Javed Ahmed Rana, Javid Ahmed Dar & Satish Sharma and Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani. Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo; Additional Chief Secretary to the CM Dheeraj Gupta; Principal Secretary PWD; Commissioner Secretary Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs; Secretary School Education; Divisional Commissioners of Jammu and



Kashmir divisions; Inspector General of Police (NH); Deputy Commissioners; and other concerned officers also attended the meeting. Several officials joined the meeting through virtual mode.

Stressing the importance of durable solutions, he directed the Jal Shakti Department to avoid temporary fixes and instead focus only on permanent restoration of water supply

schemes. Omar also reviewed the safety audit of schools undertaken after the floods, calling for the certification process to be fast-tracked. Responding to rumours and misinformation circulating on social media about “deliberate delay” in movement of fruit trucks on Srinagar-Jammu Highway (NH-44), the Chief Minister instructed the Divisional Commissioners | [More on P6](#)

Cabinet to recommend convening of J&K Assembly session

Brief session likely in 3rd or 4th week of Oct

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Sept 22: The cabinet is set to meet on Tuesday to take a final decision on several proposals, including a recommendation to the Lieutenant Governor for convening the autumn session of the assembly.

Sources told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the cabinet, headed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, is expected to meet on Tuesday to propose a date to the Lieutenant Governor for convening the autumn session of the assembly.

“The session is expected to begin in the third or fourth week of October. It could start on any day between October

20 and 27. The cabinet would take Diwali celebrations into account before finalising its recommendation,” he said.

As per Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act- 2019, there must not be a gap longer than six months between the last meeting of one session and the first meeting of the next session.

“The Lieutenant Governor shall, from time to time, summon the Legislative Assembly to meet at such time and place as he thinks fit, but six months shall not intervene between its last sitting in one session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next session,” reads J&K Reorganisation Act- 2019. | [More on P6](#)

New laws brought greater transparency to criminal justice system: DGP Prabhat

Lauds J&K Police for becoming first in country to use eSakshya application

Raja Syed Rather

Jammu, Sept 22: Stating that new criminal laws have brought greater transparency to the justice system, Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat, on Monday said the J&K Police have become the first police force in the country to use the eSakshya application.

Addressing the inaugural function of three-day mega exhibition on new criminal laws organized by EOW Crime Branch Jammu on the directions of the Union Home



Ministry here, DGP Prabhat, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, “It’s important

to create awareness among people, especially the youth, about the new criminal laws that have | [More on P6](#)

1.37 MT fruits despatched from valley in past 10 days: Div Com

‘Sufficient essential supplies available, stocks replenished regularly’

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Sept 22: Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Anshul Garg & IGP Traffic Kashmir Division, M Suleman Choudhary on Monday held a joint press briefing to inform about the status of streamlined traffic movement on National Highway & Mughal Road, transportation of fresh fruits from valley, restoration work on NH and availability of essential supplies in the valley.

Addressing the media, the Div Com informed that during the past 10 days, under the strict Standard Operating Procedures (SoP) directed by the Chief Secretary, in collaboration with



the district administrations, Traffic Police, National Highway Team, BRO, and other relevant agencies, over 137,000 Metric Tons of fresh fruit has been successfully dispatched from the

valley via the National Highway, Mughal Road, and Parcel Train Service. Everyday around 1500-2000 vehicles including fruit trucks & empty tankers accumulating in | [More on P6](#)

Adventure tourism: Gulmarg prepares for world-class MTB event

KNO

Srinagar, Sept 22: Adventure sports in Kashmir are set for a historic boost with MTB Downhill – Zabarvan Legends Series, the first-ever international mountain biking event of its kind in Gulmarg.

Scheduled from October 9 to 12, the event, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) will see participation from top national and international athletes from Australia, Taiwan, the Czech Republic, Italy, Brazil and Indonesia.

Zabarvan Founder Sehan Shetty said the series marks the launch of Phase Three of the organisation’s vision to unify India’s mountain sports



community. “This milestone follows 1.5 years of negotiations and support from the central and state governments and coincides with Zabarvan’s second anniversary,” Shetty announced at a press conference.

The Zabarvan Legends Series will feature three challenging races across iconic Indian destinations Gulmarg (Draksheen Vaar), Shillong (Labasa’s Domain) and Guwahati (NgiKham Thunder Run), each | [More on P6](#)

Suspicious object detected, destroyed near Dal Lake

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Sept 22: Security forces on Monday detected and destroyed a suspicious object near Nehru Park on banks of Dal Lake, officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

“The object was noticed along the lakefront, prompting an immediate response. Security personnel rushed to the spot, cordoned off the area and suspended vehicular movement to ensure the safety of locals and tourists,” said an official.

“Given the sensitivity of the location, the object was destroyed through a controlled explosion as a precautionary measure. The situation is fully under control,” he added.

The controlled | [More on P6](#)

Kashmir apple growers say 65% of 22,000 MT annual production yet to reach markets

‘Freight relief fails to lift sluggish market’

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Sept 22: Despite some respite in freight charges following the deployment of RTC trucks, Kashmir’s apple growers continue to grapple with one of the toughest seasons in recent memory, as plummeting demand in outside markets overshadows the relief.

Kashmir, often called the “Apple Bowl of India”, contributes nearly 75–78% of the



country’s total apple production, producing about 2 million metric tonnes annually.

According to official figures, the valley harvested 20.64 lakh metric tonnes of apples

in 2023–24, with a similar projection of 20.56 lakh metric tonnes for the ongoing 2024–25 season.

However, instead of boosting confidence among growers, this year’s marketing season has been marred by weak demand, oversupply in mandis, and prices that continue to nosedive.

Bashir Ahmad Basheer, Chairman of the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers Cum Dealers Union, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that growers are extremely anxious | [More on P6](#)

Armed forces were given complete freedom: Rajnath on Op Sindoor

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 22: Indian armed forces were given complete freedom to appropriately respond to the cowardly terror attack on innocent civilians in Pahalagam, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has said.

Singh also said that India’s actions in response to the attack were “measured and non-escalatory.”

The Defence Minister made the remarks in an address to the Indian community at Rabat in Morocco on Sunday. Singh is on a two-day visit to the North African country.



The Defence Minister reaffirmed that the armed forces were fully prepared and had been given complete freedom

to respond after the cowardly attack on innocent Indians in Pahalagam, according to an official readout. | [More on P6](#)

Dr. Farooq grieved over demise of ex-DGP Pandith

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Sep 22: National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah Monday expressed profound grief and sorrow over the demise of former Director General of J&K Police, Ghulam Jeelani Pandith.

In his condolence message, Dr. Abdullah described the late officer as an upright, principled, and highly competent administrator who left an indelible mark on the policing and governance framework of Jammu & Kashmir. "Ghulam Jeelani Pandith Sahab was not just an officer of rare integrity and brilliance, but also a symbol of dedication and discipline in public service. His tenure in the police force reflected both professionalism and deep-rooted commitment to justice and public welfare," Dr. Abdullah said.

He noted that Pandith Sahab's rise to the rank of Director General of Police, a distinction shared by very few Kashmiris, including the esteemed Peer Ghulam Hassan Shah, stands as a testament to his remarkable capabilities and service record. "His contributions to maintaining law and order, and his fair-handed administrative style, will always be remembered as part of Kashmir's modern policing legacy," he added.

Extending heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, friends, and former colleagues of the departed officer, Dr. Farooq Abdullah prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul. "May Allah SWT grant him the highest place in Jannat and give strength to the family to bear this irreparable loss," he said. The National Conference office bearers also joined Dr. Farooq in paying tribute to the late officer, remembering him as a beacon of integrity and humility in public service.

AKA empowers tribal communities in Bandipora

KT NEWS DESK

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 22: To empower communities through grassroots leadership, responsive governance, and last-mile service delivery, district administration Bandipora is implementing the Aadi Karmayogi Abhiyan (AKA) across 31 tribal villages of the district.

The programme is emerging as a transformative step towards strengthening governance in tribal-dominated areas of the district. Under the initiative, more than 1,350 Adi Karmayogis are being mobilized across six blocks including Gurez, Tulail, Bagtore, Bandipora, and Bonakoot, covering nearly 50,000 tribal citizens. The campaign is designed to create platforms for participatory planning, community-driven development, and enhanced access to government services.

Various departments including Tribal Welfare, Health, Jal Shakti, Education, Women & Child Development, Forest, and Rural Development are actively engaged in the programme. The first phase, from July 10 to November 15, 2025, focuses on capacity building, community engagement, and development planning. District administration reiterated that the initiative is expected to ensure saturation of government schemes, promote responsive governance, and nurture local leadership in tribal areas. By institutionalizing grassroots participation, the Aadi Karmayogi Abhiyan is set to bring about long-term social and economic transformation in Bandipora's tribal communities.

20,493 water quality tests conducted across 2,645 JK villages

15-day campaign for prevention of water borne diseases concludes

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 22: A comprehensive 15 days campaign for Prevention of Water-borne diseases and intensification of Water quality testing in flood/ landslide affected areas of J&K concluded on Monday.

The campaign was launched on 4th September 2025 to prevent the outbreak of water borne diseases after devastating floods in many districts of UT. The campaign reflects the commitment of the Jal Jeevan Mission of Jal Shakti department in restoring water supply infrastructure and improving service delivery to citizens.

Intensive Water Quality testing of samples in affected areas was carried out through district and sub-divisional lab staff of Public Health Engineering Divisions. The main focus was to check contamination (if any) at both the Source and Consumer point level with at least three tests in each affected village.

Local communities and line departments like health, education and RDD played a critical role in testing of water samples in schools, anganwadi centre's and Health



Institutions. Onspot testing was carried out in Schools and AWCs and awareness camps were conducted for educating the children in this regard. Activities were organized in 6,486 schools and 1,940 Anganwadi Centre's (AWCs) to spread awareness on common WASH practices, besides 5,945 AWCs in affected areas were covered, with 2,563 centre's conducting activities on water safety.

The campaign has played a vital role in ensuring safe drinking water supply, restoring damaged schemes, and creating mass awareness to prevent outbreaks of waterborne diseases in flood-hit areas. 20,493 water quality tests have been conducted across 2,645 villages during the campaign. 8,127 tests

have been carried out in flood/landslide affected areas, and 2,205 water supply schemes have been restored.

To intensify the reach, audio spots/jingles were broadcast across all 11 FM stations including Akaashwani stations, amounting to 880 rounds of awareness messages aired across the Union Territory.

44 Announcement Vehicles were engaged, and awareness activities were conducted in 2,255 villages across the affected districts

Mission Directorate JJM of Jal Shakti department remains committed to sustaining this momentum to secure public health and provide uninterrupted safe drinking water to every household under ongoing and future initiatives.

Sewa Parva: DIPR, Amar Singh College hold day long Cultural fest



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 22: The Department of Information, as part of its ongoing Sewa Parva campaign, organised a day long cultural fest in collaboration with Amar Singh College, Srinagar here Monday.

Titled as Symphonies of Peace the event brought together eminent dignitaries, cultural personalities, faculty and students to celebrate the ideals of peace, harmony and cultural integration in line with the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and the spirit of Seva Parv.

The event provided a platform to young and budding artists to showcase their hidden talent to the thunderous applause of the audience.

DIPR has been regularly holding such cultural events and the aim of holding such events is to enhance cultural and creative spaces available to the student community and youth by providing them a platform to hone their talent.

The festival featured a vibrant blend of cultural performances including music, theatre and traditional Kashmiri art forms which captivated the audience and showcased the rich cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir. Among the art forms, Kashmiri Rauf, Punjabi

Tappe, Martial art form Gatka, documentaries on Nasha Mukht Jammu Kashmir, Qawalis and skits were performed much to the delight of the audience. Noted broadcaster and former Director, AIR, Srinagar, Syed Humayun Qaisar in his keynote address advised the students to identify their hidden talent by utilising the creative spaces. He said creative endeavours help in the personality development of an individual and induce positive thinking among them.

Prof. (Dr.) Aijaz Ahmad Hakak, Principal Amar Singh College Srinagar, Dr. Ahsanul Haq Chishti, Deputy Director Information PR Kashmir, Burhan Hussain, Cultural Officer Kashmir and Mushtaque Ali Ahmad Khan, noted Actor and Filmmaker from J&K also spoke on the occasion.

The joint initiative of the Information Department and Amar Singh College in organising the event was appreciated by the participants and it underlined the significance of such cultural platforms in promoting peace, brotherhood and cultural vibrancy, spirit of sewa- service among others.

Notably, DIPR J&K is organising a multitude of events as part of the broader Sewa Parv campaign, being celebrated from 17th September till 2nd October 2025.

DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY OFFICER PULWAMA

ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE

Application are invited from eligible and interested unemployed local youth from the villages/cluster's shown in Annexure -A to be hired as milk Recorders in the designated cluster's under National Milk Recording program.The application complete in all respects should reach the office of Chief Animal Husbandry Officer,Pulwama near Shaheed Park Pulwama by or before 29-09-2025

1. Minimum age for Candidates shall be 18 years as on -01-01-2025
 2. Minimum Qualification shall be Matriculate.
 3. The Milk Recorders will be monitored by CAHOs/LDOs/ABS officers of respective districts and VASs of the nearest veterinary centers.
 4. Monthly progress Reports have to be Submitted through respective VASs/Supervisors regularly without fail otherwise strict action shall be taken against defaulters.,
 5. Any wrong information provided will be liable for rejection at any point of time and action under rules would be initiated against the defaulter (s).
 6. If more than one application is received for a particular village(s) the selection shall be made on merit.
 7. The Milk Recorders shall have to abide by all other terms and conditions as envisaged in the scheme.
- Roles and responsibilities:-
- (a) Shall be reporting to the supervisors.
 - (b) Shall Conduct monthly milk recordings as per NMRR guidelines and SOP.
 - (c) Shall collect, label and dispatch milk samples to the milk component testing laboratory for their testing.
 - (d) Shall carry out timely date entry of all transaction carried out on Bharat pashudhan app.
 - (e) Shall maintain all relevant records and submit report's timely.

Documents,(Attested) to be attached in duplicate.

1. Domicile Certificate.
2. Education Qualification.
3. Matriculate Marksheet.
4. Two passport size photographs
5. Bank Passbook .
6. Aadhar card
7. Date of Birth certificate.

Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Pulwama .

FORMAT OF APPLICATION FOR MILK RECORDERS UNDER NMRR.

S.no	Particulars	Affix latest attested passport size photograph
1	Name (In Block Letters)	
2	Parentage	
3	Address present permanent	
4	Contact No	
5	Educational Qualification (Attested Copies to be submitted along with the from)	
6	Gender	
7	Category	
8	Cluster	
Signature of the applicant		

District	S.no	Cluster Name
Pulwama	1	Rathsunu
	2	Rajpora Tral
	3	Noorpora
	4	Chersoo
	5	Chakooru Banderpora
	6	Tahab litter
	7	Rajpora
	8	Arihal-Hawal
	9	Pampore
	10	Khrew
	11	Chandhara
	12	Kakapora
	13	Qazigund
	14	Ratnipora
	15	Goripora.

DIPK-6448/25

Dated: 22-09-2025

Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Pulwama .

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE BLOCK MEDICAL OFFICER KHANSAHIB

Subject: - Open bid Auction for sale of one-story standing Building/Demolition and lifting of the material located in the premises of SDH Khansahib.

OPEN BID AUCTION

For and on behalf of the Governor of Jammu & Kashmir (UT) an open bid auction for sale of one-story old building in standing position/demolition and lifting of material by the bidder located in the premises of Sub District Hospital Khansahib is being conducted on 25.09.2025 (Thursday) in presence of Auction Committee. The interested bidder/professional parties/Contractors are invited for Open Bid Auction on the scheduled date on spot at the venue. The bidder shall have to deposit ₹5000/- (Five Thousand rupees) in shape of bank CDR/FDR (refundable) pledged in the name of Block Medical Officer Khansahib. As per the assessment of Executive Engineer, R&B Department, Khansahib the valuation cost of building is ₹4,68,084/- (Four lack sixty eight thousand and eighty four rupees).

Terms & Conditions:-

1. The bidder has right to see the building before to submit the CDR/FDR along with copy of Adhaar Card.
2. The Auction will start from ₹4,68,084/- and will end on highest successful bidder.
3. The auction committee reserves the right to accept or reject the auction bid without any assign thereof.
4. The auction will be started at 11.00 A.M in the morning and end at 4.30 P.M. at Sub District Hospital Khansahib.
5. The successful bidder has to demolish the building structure at his own cost. No labour charges will be paid on account of building demolition by this office.
6. The successful bidder has to lift the demolished building material from the premises within week's time positively from the date of allotment Order.
7. The bidder who submits the CDR/FDR shall only take part in the Auction.
8. The successful bidder will have to pay auctioned amount on the same day in the name of BMO Khansahib in shape of Cheque & ADHAAR Card to present Auction Committee on spot.
9. The successful bidder is himself responsible to watch & ward of the auctioned material after date of allotment.

No.BMOK/ Dated: .09.2025

DIPK-6469/25

DATED: 22-09-2025

Block Medical Officer
Khansahib

Is education costlier in J&K ?

■ 100% expenditure on course fees at Hr Sec Level ■ 98.7% expenditure on course fees at secondary level

RIYAZ BHAT

Srinagar, Sep 22: In Jammu and Kashmir, 87 percent of students are paying course fees in schools. However, on the contrary only 57.1 percent students pay such charges at the national level. The official figures reveal that at least 87 percent of students reported expenditure on course fees by level of current enrolment for Jammu and Kashmir including 89.3 percent among the male and 84.3 percent among the female students.

It also said that the national percentage of students reported expenditure on course fees by level of current enrolment for each state and UT was 57.1 percent in 2025.

According to the official figures, in the



rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir, 85 percent persons including 87.7 percent males and 81.7 percent females enrolled in school reported expenditure on course fees by level of current enrolment.

Likewise, in the urban areas of Jammu and Kashmir at least 96.1 percent persons enrolled in school reported expenditure on course fees by level of current enrolment. This includes 95.9 percent of male and 96.3 percent female students

respectively.

At higher secondary level, the official figures reveal that the students in Jammu and Kashmir reported 100 percent expenditure on course fees by level of current enrolment. However, the national average at the senior secondary level is only 85.9 percent.

Similarly, at the secondary level 98.7 percent of students at both rural and urban areas reported expenditure on course fees by level of current enrolment—(KNO)

“In Jammu and Kashmir, 87 percent of students are paying course fees in schools. On the contrary only 57.1 percent students pay such charges at the national level”

Wular welcomes over 3 lakh migratory birds

SAJID RAINA

Bandipora, Sep 22: Wular Lake, India's largest freshwater lake, has witnessed a significant rise in migratory bird arrivals this year, with the Asian Water Bird Census 2025 registering more than three lakh birds—a fourfold increase from last year's count of 75,000.

An official said that this is just the beginning of their arrival. By late October, the numbers are expected to rise further as more migratory birds continue to reach Wular Lake, he said.

The official said the surge reflects the success of conservation and restoration measures undertaken in recent years. “Cleaning, desilting, habitat restoration, and the installation of CCTV monitoring have greatly improved the ecological conditions of the lake, making it a more suitable environment for migratory birds,” he added.

The census data shows that the highest numbers were recorded among



species such as Northern Shoveller, Mallard, and Gadwall. Other species, like Pintail and several rare migratory birds, were also spotted in large flocks. Wular Lake has become a preferred wintering ground for these birds, many of which travel thousands of kilometres from Central Asia, Europe, and Siberia.

Bird enthusiasts from across India have been flocking to Bandipora to observe the spectacle. “This year, the diversity and sheer number of birds is unlike anything

we have witnessed before,” said a birder who travelled from Ganderbal to the lake.

The Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA), set up by the Jammu and Kashmir government, has played a key role in these developments. Officials said that apart from bird counts, the focus is also on ensuring sustainable livelihoods for local communities that depend on the lake.

In recent years, Wular has also recorded rare sightings, including that of the Great

Bittern in November 2024, a species seldom seen in South Asia. Such sightings underline the ecological importance of the lake as a habitat for globally significant bird populations.

Wular's revival is not limited to avian life. The return of the lotus stem, locally known as nadru, after decades, is being seen as another indicator of the improving health of the lake.

Widely used in Kashmiri cuisine, nadru is prized for its taste and delicate flavour, which locals attribute to the high-quality water and unique conditions of Wular. Its comeback has provided both ecological and economic benefits, boosting the incomes of households involved in harvesting and selling the delicacy.

Experts say that sustained conservation efforts are crucial to maintaining this trend. With bird numbers crossing three lakh this year, Wular Lake is once again emerging as a thriving ecological and cultural hub in Kashmir—(KNO)

UT Govt akin to walking on sword's edge: Dr Farooq



REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Sep 22: Asserting that running a government in the Union Territory is akin to walking on sword's edge, National Conference President, Dr Farooq Abdullah on Monday said that the Omar Abdullah led regime won't step back and will continue to move on.

Talking to reporters here, the NC President expressed optimism about the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. “It's the collective aspiration of the people of the region. Every person of Jammu and Kashmir is hopeful about it.”

He said, “We believe the Supreme Court will take note of this and restore the rights that were promised by the government.”

Reacting to the detention of Mehraj Malik under the Public Safety Act (PSA), the NC President said, “Mehraj Maalik used unparliamentary language out of anger, but slap-ping a PSA on him is wrong. This could have been resolved through dialogue and withdrawal of his words.”—(KNO)

Flood victims to get comprehensive package: LoP Sharma



REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Sep 22: Leader of Opposition in Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Sunil Sharma on Monday said that Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) stands with the flood-hit people and those affected will get a comprehensive package.

Speaking to reporters in Srinagar, Sunil Sharma said that the government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah was missing on the ground after floods hit Jammu and Kashmir. “Omar sahab was busy in Chennai, preparing for Paris visit,” he said.

He said that BJP leaders, including Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh and others met the affected families after heavy rainfall led to the floods.

Pertinently, the floods hit Jammu and Kashmir after the recent heavy rainfall, causing extensive damage to the people in different parts of the region.

In this regard, the reports suggest that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to visit Jammu and Kashmir.

However, the Leader of Opposition stated that there is no information with them about the visit of the Prime Minister. “I am not the member of PMO office and don't have any information in this regard,” he added.

Earlier, BJP General Secretary (Organization), Ashok Koul and Leader of Opposition (LoP) Sunil Sharma inaugurated an

exhibition under the ongoing Seva Pakhwada celebrations, depicting the life, journey, and achievements of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the iconic Clock Tower, Lal Chowk, Srinagar.

Sharma appreciated the initiative and said such programmes help people, particularly the younger generation; understand the hard work, commitment, and sacrifices behind the making of a strong India.

“Prime Minister Modi's life story is a message of hope and perseverance. It tells us that with determination and honesty, anyone can rise above challenges to serve society in the highest capacity,” he remarked.

Speaking at the inauguration, Ashok Koul said the exhibition is not just a display of photographs but a reflection of a man's extraordinary journey from humble beginnings to becoming the world's most popular leader.

“Prime Minister Modi has dedicated his entire life to the service of the nation and upliftment of the poor. His vision of ‘Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas’ has transformed India into a confident, self-reliant nation. This exhibition is meant to inspire every citizen, especially the youth, to adopt values of dedication, honesty, and nation-first thinking,” he said—(KNO)

Cross-Border Shelling

Nana Patekar's NGO distributes relief to victims

YOGESH

Jammu, Sep 22: In a heartfelt display of philanthropy, veteran Bollywood actor and social activist Nana Patekar led a delegation from his Nirmala Gajanan Foundation to Rajouri on Monday, distributing rehabilitation cheques totalling Rs 42 lakh to 117 families devastated by cross-border shelling during Operation Sindoor.

The event, held at Rajouri Garrison, saw Patekar and fellow trustees personally hand over the aid packages to affected residents from Rajouri and neighbouring Poonch district.

The initiative, conducted in association with the Indian Army, targets families who suffered significant losses—ranging from damaged homes and livelihoods to personal tragedies—in the wake of the military operation earlier this year, which involved intense exchanges along the Line of Control (LoC).

“Nirmala Gajanan Foundation is committed to standing with our border heroes and their families in times of need,” Patekar said during the ceremony, emphasising the

foundation's roots in compassion.

Named after his late parents, Nirmala and Gajanan, the NGO has long championed education and healthcare projects across India, including the recent adoption of 45 Army Goodwill Schools in Jammu to bolster community resilience.

The distribution was attended by military officials, civil administrators, and the beneficiaries themselves, fostering a sense of solidarity.

One recipient, a mother of three from Poonch whose home was shelled during the operation, expressed profound gratitude. “This aid will help us rebuild our lives. Nana ji's kindness gives us hope,” she said.

Hundreds of civilian families in Rajouri and Poonch are grappling with displacement and economic hardship after the cross-border shelling destroyed their houses during India's four-day conflict with Pakistan in April earlier this year.

After distributing the cheques, Patekar urged greater national focus on border welfare, calling for sustained support beyond immediate crises—(KNO)

Growers struggle as freight cost sore, cold storages full

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Sep 22: With the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway witnessing frequent closures, coupled with low demand and soaring freight charges, hundreds of apple growers in Kashmir have been turning to cold storage facilities to save their produce. However, much to their frustration, all cold storage units across the valley are already booked in advance, leaving them with no option but to sell at distress rates.

Growers from Shopian, Pulwama and other areas said they are facing one of the toughest seasons in recent memory. They said the traditional supply chain has been disrupted due to

highway blockades triggered by landslides, and whatever produce reaches outside markets is being sold at a lower price because of its deteriorated condition.

“We had pinned our hopes on cold storage facilities this year so that we could wait for the right market rates. But when we approached the units, they told us all slots were pre-booked months ago,” said Abdul Rashid, an orchardist from Pulwama. “This means small and middle-class growers like us are left helpless. Big traders who can book storage space in advance are safe, but the ordinary grower is left to suffer.”

Another grower from Shopian, Gulam Ahmad, said the government should step in immediately. “Every

time there is a crisis, we are told to make use of cold storage. But the reality is different—there simply isn't enough capacity. If new units are not built, this crisis will keep repeating year after year,” he told KNO.

Fruit growers' associations also raised concerns about high freight charges. They said that even when trucks are available, transporters demand nearly triple the usual rates, further eating into growers' earnings.

“Imagine the plight of a grower—he can neither send his produce outside due to high freight costs, nor can he store it in cold storage due to advance bookings. What option is left except to sell apples at throwaway prices?” asked Bashir

Ahmad, a fruit dealer at Jabli Pora Mandi

The growers appealed to the administration to address the dual issues of transport shortage and lack of cold storage capacity. “Without immediate government intervention, Kashmir's apple industry—which sustains lakhs of families—will continue to bleed,” they said.

Cold storage unit owners explained that growers, after earning handsome returns from their stored produce in controlled atmosphere (CA) units, had already booked slots months before the season began. They added that since all slots are now fully booked, allowing others to reserve or store produce is not feasible—(KNO)

Karra alleges protocol ‘lapse’ during AICC Gen Secy visit

MUBASHIR ALAM WANI

Srinagar, Sep 22: The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) Chief, Tariq Hamid Karra on Monday alleged that security or a vehicle was not provided during the visit of AICC General Secretary and party in charge for J&K, Dr. Syed Nasir Hussain.

J&K Congress said that the protocols were violated, demanding action against officials responsible for the ‘security lapse’. “It is for the first time that an MP of such stature was not provided a vehicle. A single PSO was sent to the airport without even ensuring which vehicle he would sit in,” Karra told



reporters here in Srinagar at party headquarters.

He said the party would raise the issue with both the Government of India and the J&K administration. “There is a dual control system in J&K and nobody knows

who is responsible for what. The people who are responsible for providing security and protocol totally failed this time,” Karra said.

Karra during the presser said that their party office discussed the issue with the officer in charge, stating that the officer was on record to say that they don't provide sitting vehicles to MPs.

Accusing the government of giving special treatment to BJP leaders, Karra added, “I do not want to count those MPs and non-MPs belonging to the BJP who receive special treatment from the government. For us this is a major cause of concern,” he added—(KNO)

Garbage piles trigger health concerns in Barbar Shah

KNO

Srinagar, Sep 22: Residents of Sathu Payeen (Jogi Lane) in Barbar Shah area, here have expressed serious concern over the growing accumulation of garbage, junk and construction debris in their locality.

They also accused the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) of negligence.

Members of the Mohalla Committee said that the untended waste has

created an unhygienic environment, blocked movement on roads and spread a foul smell, disrupting the daily lives of residents.

“We have been living with this garbage for weeks. The stench is unbearable and it has become difficult for children and elderly residents to even step out of their homes,” said Mohammad Ashraf, a local resident.

Another resident, Mohammed Zahid,

added, “The debris is not just an eyesore but a serious health hazard. We fear the outbreak of diseases if the waste is not removed soon.”

The Committee further cautioned that the situation is worsening with each passing day, turning the area into a makeshift dumping ground. According to them, the debris not only poses a major health risk but also endangers children

and elderly residents living nearby.

“Our repeated requests to the SMC have gone unheard. Immediate action is necessary to clear the garbage and restore hygiene in the locality,” said a member of the Mohalla Committee, urging municipal authorities to arrange for immediate removal and proper disposal of the waste to prevent further hazards and restore cleanliness in the area—(KNO)

5 injured in Zojila Pass accident

KNO

Ganderbal, Sep 22: At least five persons were injured after a vehicle they were travelling in collided with another one near the Zojila Pass area on Monday, officials said.

An official said that soon after the incident, the injured were shifted to PHC Sonamarg, where from they were referred to SKIMS Soura for specialised treatment. The injured have been as Manzoor Hussain son of Sadiq Ali Balti, Shabir Hussain son of Hussain Ali Balti, Sadiqa Bano wife of Manzoor Hussain Balti, Masrat Za-ra daughter of Manzoor Hussain and Fareeda Bano daughter of Moad Hussain—all residents of Kargil. Police have taken cognisance of the incident, the official said—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Investors must harness J&K’s untapped potential

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has rightly emphasised at the recent Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) meeting that true economic resilience lies in balancing this success with robust industrial growth. His call for investors to view J&K as a viable and promising destination marks a critical shift toward holistic development – one that prioritises jobs, value addition, and long-term stability. For too long, industrial growth in the region has been overshadowed by

its tourism narrative. Yet, J&K offers undeniable advantages: cheaper land and power compared to neighbouring states, GST reimbursements, skilled labour, and untapped potential in sectors like agriculture, horticulture, and dairy. With only 4% of milk processed locally, compared to 80% in Gujarat, the scope for agro-industries alone is immense. Similarly, handicrafts, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy, and IT present lucrative opportunities for investors willing to look beyond subsidies

and leverage inherent strengths. The government’s commitment to improving the investment climate is evident. The candid admission of flaws in the single-window system, and the pledge to transform it into a truly efficient platform, reflects a responsive and pragmatic approach. Such transparency is essential to rebuilding investor confidence. Equally important is the acknowledgement that J&K’s current peace and openness for business are real and sustainable, despite isolated incidents

that must not define the region’s narrative. Unemployment remains a pressing challenge, and reliance on government jobs is unsustainable. Industrialisation, complemented by tourism, can create diverse employment avenues, empowering youth and fostering economic independence. The government’s willingness to listen and adapt by encouraging frank feedback from industry leaders signals a collaborative spirit that is vital for progress. J&K stands at a pivotal moment. By

harnessing its natural resources, human capital, and strategic incentives, it can emerge as a model of economic transformation. The government must now accelerate infrastructure development, streamline policies, and actively promote sectors with high growth potential. Investors, in turn, must recognise the opportunity to be part of this historic transition. Together, they can build not just industries, but a brighter, self-reliant future for Jammu and Kashmir.

India’s Manufacturing Momentum: Performance And Policy Reforms, resilience, and roadmap to global manufacturing leadership

Press Information Bureau

Manufacturing at a Turning Point

Every great economy has a story of factories at its core and for India, that story is rapidly unfolding. Over the past few years, manufacturing has increasingly emerged as a central pillar of the nation’s growth model, not just meeting domestic demand but also strengthening India’s position in global value chains.

The Index of Industrial Production (IIP), which tracks the volume of output across manufacturing, mining, and electricity, is a snapshot of how industry is performing and its contribution to GDP growth.In July 2025, the IIP recorded a growth of 3.5% year-on-year, rising significantly from 1.5% in June 2025.Manufacturing Growth also grew by 5.40% in July 2025 year-on-year, up from 3.7% of June 2025.

India’s growth story is increasingly powered by the hum of modern factory floors. From Electronics Manufacturing Cluster (EMC)in Pune, to laptop assembly line in Chennai, it reflects the spread of industrial activity across regions. Behind the scenes, policies like PLI, National Manufacturing Mission and others are turning these hubs into high-performance nodes.

With global supply chains shifting and India’s domestic market expanding, the sector is well positioned to play a pivotal role in driving and sustaining overall growth.

The Pulse of Performance

The growth in IIP in July, 2025 was driven largely by manufacturing, underscoring rising demand and stronger capacity utilization across industries.

The momentum was also mirrored in the HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI) for manufacturing. In June 2025, PMI stood at 58.4, climbing to 59.1 in July- it’s highest in 16 months, before inching up further to 59.3 in August. This latest reading signalled the fastest improvement in operating conditions in over 17 years.

The uptick was driven by a sharp acceleration in production volumes-the quickest pace in nearly five years alongside robust growth in new factory orders. Companies responded by scaling up input purchases and expanding their workforce, underscoring confidence in the sector’s near-term prospects.

The IIP’s uptick reflects India’s broader industrial ambition. By 2047, in the Amrit Kaal of independence, the goal is not just participation but leadership in global manufacturing, creating millions of jobs, and boosting exports.

Together, these indicators show a clear trajectory: India is laying the foundation for its economic growth, with manufacturing at its core.

Engines of Growth: Sectors on the Move

India’s manufacturing export engine is firing on multiple cylinders as broader merchandise trade stabilizes.

The contribution of manufacturing sector in the economy is evident with the rise in exports. In April-August 2025, total exports rose 6.18%YoY to US\$ 349.35 Billion. The cumulative value of merchandise exports during April-August 2025 was US\$ 184.13 Billion, as compared to US\$ 179.60 Billion during April-August 2024, registering a positive growth of 2.52%.

With the visible development in manufacturing sector, it shows that the sector has potential to reach Rs. 87,57,000 crore (US\$ 1 trillion) in FY26 and potentially add more than Rs. 43,43,500 crore (US\$ 500 billion) annually to the global economy by 2030, which indicates that India is steadily cementing its position as a global manufacturing hub.

While July’s IIP surge was powered primarily by basic metals, electrical equipment, and non-metallic minerals, the broader story of India’s manufacturing ascent goes beyond these categories. Alongside these high-performing industries, a set of strategic sectors- electronics, pharmaceuticals, automobiles and textiles are driving long-term structural growth and shaping India’s global competitiveness.

Together, these sectors not only anchor India’s export momentum but also reinforce its ambition to become a US\$ 1 trillion manufacturing economy by FY26. The following highlights showcase how these industries are emerging as the engines of India’s manufacturing renaissance.

Electronics: India’s Factory Floor Goes Digital

India’s electronics manufacturing sector has seen a sixfold rise in production and an eight-fold surge in exports over the past 11 years. Electronics value addition has jumped from 30% to 70%, with targets to reach 90% by FY27.

Production of electronic goods has increased from Rs 1.9 lakh crore in 2014-15 to Rs 11.3 lakh crore in 2024-25, approximately a six-fold rise. Similarly, exports of electronic goods have surged from Rs 38,000 crore to Rs 3.27 lakh crore, an eightfold increase. The number of mobile manufacturing units has grown from just 2 in 2014-15 to 300 in 2024-25, a 150-fold rise. Production of mobile phones has expanded from Rs 18,000 crore to Rs 5.45 lakh crore, about 28 times more. Export of mobile phones has increased from Rs 1,500 crore to Rs 2 lakh crore, a 127-fold jump. Additionally, mobile phones imported as a percentage of total demand have dramatically decreased from 75% to just 0.02%. Overall, electronics value addition has risen from 30% to 70%, with a goal to reach 90% by fiscal year 2027.

One of the most striking shifts has been in mobile manufacturing. From just two units a decade ago, India now houses around 300 units, reflecting a 150-fold expansion in production capacity. Exports of mobile phones tell even more dramatic story, expanding from a modest Rs 1,500 crore to nearly Rs 2 lakh crore, an increase of 127 times. At the same time, dependence on imports has almost disappeared from 75% of domestic demand being met through imports in 2014-15 to just 0.02% in 2024-25. Overall, these numbers underscore India’s transition from being a large importer to becoming a global hub of electronics and India is now the world’s second-largest mobile manufacturer.

India has attracted more than USD 4 billion FDI Inflow in the field of electronics manufacturing since FY2020-21 and nearly 70% of this FDI is contributed by the beneficiaries of PLI Scheme.

Pharma: The "Pharmacy of the World"

India’s pharmaceutical industry is a global powerhouse ranking 3rd in the world by volumeand 14th in terms of value of production supplying over 50% of global vaccine demand and nearly 40% of generics to the US. The industry is projected to grow to USD 130 billion by 2030 and US\$ 450 billion market by 2047.

Backed by policy support for Pharmaceuticals like the PLI scheme (Rs 15,000 crore) and Strengthening of Pharmaceuticals Industry (SPI) scheme (Rs 500 crore), the industry continues to expand its global footprint. The PLI scheme is driving investments into 55 projects to make high-end drugs such as cancer and diabetes medicines in India, while the SPI scheme that focuses on raising the quality, competitiveness, and resilience of smaller pharma companies, is funding R&D and modernizing labs, enabling Indian companies to compete globally. Beyond cost efficiency, India has emerged as a hub for affordable, high-quality medicines, reinforcing its rightful title as the “Pharmacy of the World.”

Automobiles: Shifting into High Gear

India’s automotive industry is a cornerstone of the nation’s manufacturing and economic growth, contributing 7.1% to India’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 49% to manufacturing GDP, as per NITI Aayog report. During FY25, the total production of passenger vehicles, commercial vehicles, three-wheelers, two-wheelers, and quadricycles was over 3.10 crore units. As the fourth-largest automobile producer globally, India possesses the scale and strategic depth to emerge as a global leader in the automotive value chain.

Textiles: Emerging Leader

As per economic survey 2024-25, India’s textile & apparel industry is among the largest industry globally, contributing around 2.3% to GDP, 13% to industrial production, and 12% to total exports.

The sector is set to grow to US\$350 billion by 2030 further strengthening India’s position in the global market. This growth is expected to create 3.5 crore jobs. It is also the second largest employment generators, after

agriculture, with over 45 million people employed directly, including women and the rural population. As further evidence of the inclusive nature of this industry, nearly 80% of its capacity is spread across Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) clusters in the country.

To support the industry further, the government has approved seven PM Mega Integrated Textile Region & Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks backed by Rs 4,445 crore over six years through 2027-28. Under the scheme, the parks aim to attract Rs 70,000 crore in investment and generate nearly 20 lakh direct and indirect jobs. The Prime Minister recently inaugurated the PM MITRA Park in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh on 17th September 2025, where 1,300 acres of land and over 80 industrial units have been allocated. The park is expected to generate about three lakh new jobs.

Investment Flows & Global Confidence

India has steadily positioned itself as a preferred destination for global investors. Over the past decade, consistent reforms, simpler regulations, and a stable policy environment have attracted significant investments in manufacturing. Initiatives to enhance ease of doing business, coupled with targeted sectoral incentives, have reinforced India’s competitiveness as a global manufacturing hub.

Total FDI inflows into India over the last eleven years (2014-25) stood at USD 748.78 billion, up 143% compared to USD 308.38 billion received during 2003-14.

India clocked USD 81.04 billion in gross FDI inflows in FY 2024-25, up by 14% year-on-year growth.

Manufacturing FDI accelerated 18% to USD 19.04 billion in FY 2024-25 (from USD 16.12 billion in FY 2023-24)

Maharashtra led the FDI leaderboard with 39% of equity inflows, followed by Karnataka (13%) and Delhi (12%) in 2024-25.

Singapore (30%) remained the top origin, ahead of Mauritius (17%) and the United States (11%), reflecting both capital-market intermediation and strategic investors deepening their India footprint.

The Government aims to raise annual FDI inflows to USD 100 billion.

These trends reaffirm India’s position as a preferred global investment hub, enabled by a proactive policy framework, an evolving business ecosystem, and rising international confidence in India’s economic resilience.

Employment, Skills, and Human Capital

Manufacturing is not just about machines and assembly lines; it is also about people. As one of the significant employment-generating sectors, manufacturing contributes significantly to India’s job market, particularly for semi-skilled and skilled workers.

India’s employment has surged, with 17 crore jobs created in the past decade, reflecting the government’s focus on youth-centric policies and its Viksit Bharat vision. Recent PLFS data of August 2025 further underlines this positive trend. The Worker Population Ratio (WPR) rose to 52.2%, while the female WPR climbed to 32%, marking steady gains in women’s workforce participation. The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) also improved for the second successive month this year, reaching 33.7% for women. The overall unemployment rate eased to 5.1% and Unemployment Rate (UR) among male eased to 5-month low level to 5.0% in August 2025, highlighting broad-based employment creation and inclusivity across sectors, including manufacturing. In the manufacturing sector, job creation stood at 6% between 2004 and 2014, while it rose to 15% in the last decade.

The Union Budget 2025-26 provides a strong tailwind to India’s manufacturing ecosystem. A key enabler is the restructuring of the Skill India Programme, with an outlay of Rs 8,800 crore (US\$ 1.1 billion) extended until 2026. By integrating Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0, the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme, and the Jan Shikshan Sansthan Scheme into a unified, industry-aligned framework, the initiative is building a demand-driven, technology-enabled workforce tailored to the evolving needs of modern industry.

Together, these efforts aim to ensure that India’s demographic dividend is channeled

effectively into building a competitive, skilled, and adaptive workforce turning human capital into a true engine of industrial growth.

Policy Catalysts Powering the Surge

On this foundation, a set of complementary policy measures- spanning manufacturing, logistics, industrial growth, urban development, and entrepreneurship are shaping the next phase of India’s manufacturing surge. Flagship initiatives have created a strong ecosystem for investment, innovation, and scale, fuelling industrial vibrancy and job creation. Adding further momentum, the recently announced GST 2.0 reforms, with a simplified two-slab structure and reduced rates on essentials, have lowered compliance costs and boosted consumption.

Together, these measures are not just strengthening India’s domestic manufacturing base but also positioning the country as a competitive player in global value chains.

GST 2.0

Just as factories thrive on steady demand and lean costs, India’s recent GST rate cuts arrive as the fuel that keeps the manufacturing engine humming, making goods cheaper for households, inputs lighter for industries, and growth faster for the economy.

Key industrial advantages include:

Cost Compression & Stronger Value Chains: Goods like packaging, textiles, leather, wood, and logistics essentials now attract only 5% GST, cutting manufacturing costs and enhancing export competitiveness

MSMEs & Export-Oriented Industries Empowered: Rationalised rates and faster refunds in textiles, handicrafts, food processing, toys, and leather industries ease working capital constraints and support scale-up

Logistics Gets Leaner: Reduced GST on trucks and delivery vans (from 28% to 18%) combined with lower packaging costs reinforce supply chain efficiency and will benefit freight-intensive manufacturing sectors

Ease of Doing Business & Compliance: Simpler slab structure coupled with procedural simplification like relaxed registration rules for small suppliers will lower regulatory friction and boost formal participation

Auto & Ancillary Ecosystem Acceleration: Slashed GST on vehicles (including two-wheelers up to 350cc), auto parts, and tractors will drive consumer affordability and fuel demand and, in turn, increase production.

National Manufacturing Mission: The Strategic Compass

The National Manufacturing Mission (NMM), announced in the Union Budget 2025-26, is the crown jewel of India’s industrial policy. It is a long-term strategic roadmap that integrates policy, execution, and governance into a single, unified vision. Unlike previous fragmented approaches, the NMM is designed as a mission-mode framework that cuts across ministries and states to create a synchronized manufacturing push.

Crucially, the NMM places sustainability at the heart of industrialization. It prioritizes clean-tech manufacturing from solar PV modules and EV batteries to green hydrogen and wind turbines ensuring India’s rise in global supply chains aligns with its net-zero 2070 commitment.

In short, the NMM is not just a policy, it is the strategic compass guiding India’s transition from incremental gains to manufacturing leadership on the world stage.

PLI Scheme: Scale, Speed, Jobs

The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme, launched in 2020, is one of the Government of India’s flagship initiatives to boost domestic manufacturing and enhance India’s participation in global supply chains. Covering 14 key sectors ranging from mobile phones, electronics, pharmaceuticals, textiles, to drones the scheme provides financial incentives linked directly to incremental production and sales.

Some standout outcomes include:

Pharma: From a deficit of Rs 1,930 crore (FY22) to a Rs 2,280 crore trade surplus (FY25), with exports touching Rs 1.70 lakh crore.

Another record-breaking performance in Smartphone exports under the PLI Scheme. Smartphone exports have crossed INR 1 lakh crore within just five months of FY 2025 - 26 - 55% higher than the same period in last fiscal.

Solar PV, Auto, Medical Devices, Food Processing – all sectors are showing strong investment traction and job creation.

With an outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh crore, PLI is ensuring Indian manufacturers achieve economies of scale and become globally competitive suppliers.

National Logistics Policy

Launched in September 2022, it aims to overhaul India’s logistics ecosystem by reducing costs, enhancing efficiency, and driving digital integration. Working in tandem with the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan, the NLP sets ambitious goals: bringing down logistics costs, improving India’s position in the World Bank’s Logistics Performance Index (LPI) to among the top 25 countries by 2030, and building a robust, data-driven decision support mechanism. To operationalize these objectives, the government has rolled out the Comprehensive Logistics Action Plan (CLAP), focusing on digital systems, standardization, human resource development, state-level coordination, and the creation of logistics parks. Together, these initiatives are designed to provide seamless multi-modal connectivity and strengthen India’s competitiveness in global value chains.

Startup India

Launched on January 16, 2016, the Startup India Initiative has rolled out several programs aimed at supporting entrepreneurs, building a robust startup ecosystem, and transforming India into a country of job creators instead of job seekers. India boasts the third-largest startup ecosystem in the world, with 1.91 lakh DPIIT-recognized startups as of 9 September 2025, which have created over 17.69 lakh direct jobs as of January 31, 2025. This remarkable growth underscores the initiative’s success in fostering innovation, enhancing employment opportunities, and driving economic development across the nation.

Industrialization and Urbanization

The National Industrial Corridor Development Programme is India’s most ambitious infrastructure initiative, aiming to create new industrial cities as “Smart Cities”. This program focuses on developing integrated industrial corridors with robust multi-modal connectivity, promoting growth in manufacturing and systematic urbanization. Last year, government approved 12 new project proposals, involving an estimated Rs 28,602 crore investment, marking a significant step in this transformative effort, positioning India as a leading global destination for manufacturing and investment.

The Road Ahead: From Momentum to Leadership

As India advances toward its \$35 trillion vision by 2047, manufacturing will be the engine of growth. Supported by reforms, sectoral incentives, and resilient supply chains, the sector has gained strong momentum, reflected in GDP growth projections revised upward in Fitch ratings, IMF and S&P Global Outlook and the manufacturing PMI (S&P Global) hitting a 16-month high. The sector has demonstrated resilience even amidst global uncertainties.

The government’s vision of raising manufacturing’s share in GDP, backed by transformative policies like the PLI scheme, the National Manufacturing Mission, and skill development initiatives, provides a clear roadmap for industrial resurgence.

With global supply chains undergoing a strategic realignment, India has a unique window of opportunity to step forward as the preferred destination for investment, innovation, and large-scale production. If this momentum is sustained, India can transform from being the “factory of the world” to becoming the “innovation and leadership hub of the world.”

The views expressed by contributors on this page are their own and do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of the newspaper

DDC Reasi reviews performance of Banks at DLRC meeting



KT News Desk

REASI, SEPTEMBER 22: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Reasi Nidhi Malik Monday chaired the District Level Review Committee (DLRC) - cum - District Consultative Committee (DCC) meeting in the VC Room, DC Office Complex to review the performance of banks for the quarter ending June 2025.

A detailed discussion was held on sector-wise lending in priority and non-priority sectors, bank-wise position of deposits and advances, and the progress of various financial inclusion schemes in the district.

While reviewing the Credit Deposit (CD) Ratio, the DDC appreciated the improvement made as compared to the previous quarter. She, however, directed the banks with low CD ratios to take corrective measures and improve their performance in the upcoming quarter.

The DDC emphasised that the flow of credit to priority sectors such as agriculture, renewable energy, housing and allied activities must be further enhanced to promote inclusive growth.

In terms of financial inclusion, the DDC directed all banks to submit weekly progress reports to the Lead District Manager (LDM), who will also conduct weekly reviews. She called for launching an intensive campaign at the Gram Panchayat level, with specific targets set for the next six months to ensure a net increase in financial inclusion.

The DDC stressed the need for better coordination between banks and line departments to resolve grievances, ensure timely case processing and extend maximum benefits to the public.

Highlighting the need to improve banking access in remote areas, the DDC asked banks to explore possibilities for opening new bank branches in far-flung areas such as Jij Bagli, Thakrakote and Gulabgarh. She also directed that ATM facilities and Business Correspondents be made regularly available in these areas.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Narinder Kumar, representatives from RBI, NABARD, LDM Reasi Raman, DSHO, CAO and other concerned officers.

Mission Yuva Helpdesk held at Chowki Choura

Grievances of applicants resolved on the Spot



KT News Desk

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 22: A Mission Yuva Helpdesk was conducted Monday at the SDM Office Chowki Choura to address and resolve the grievances of applicants seeking benefits under the Mission Yuva Scheme.

The Helpdesk witnessed the active participation of Business Help Desk (BHD) Members, Yuva Doots and officials from J&K Bank, ensuring a collaborative approach to addressing the concerns of applicants. A total of seven grievances were taken up, of which six were resolved on the spot, showcasing the administration's commitment to citizen-centric service delivery.

Additionally, three sanction letters were handed over to beneficiaries of the Mission Yuva Scheme by the SDM Ankush Hans in presence of Assistant Director District Employment and Counselling Centre, Jammu Mukhlis Ali.

Speaking at the event, Mukhlis Ali emphasized the importance of timely grievances redressal. He urged BHD Members and Yuva Doots to address issues at their level promptly and forward unresolved matters to higher authorities without delay. He also stressed the need for greater outreach and awareness about Mission Yuva to ensure that the youth of the Chowki Choura take full benefit from the scheme.

PAC stresses on quality education in Govt schools

Calls for hardship allowances for employees posted in far-flung areas



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 22: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Monday convened a meeting at the Assembly Complex, Srinagar, to review audit paras pertaining to the School Education Department.

The meeting was chaired by PAC Chairman Sham Lal Sharma and members including Mubarak Gul, Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurezi), Qaysar Jamshaid Lone, Devinder Kumar Manyal, and Sajad Shaheen also participated in the meeting.

The Committee undertook a detailed examination of Audit Paras 3.5 (2002-03), 2.1 (2018-19), and 4.2 (2019-20) related to the School Education Department.

At the outset, members deliberated on key issues including construction of the DIET at Poonch, establishment of Model Schools, and utilization of funds for infrastructure development and other facilities across Jammu and Kashmir.

Chairman Sham Lal Sharma emphasized the need to formulate a vibrant transfer policy and ensure deployment of category based teachers and lecturers in their local remote areas to uplift the educational scenario in such far-flung areas.

"Those who have benefited on categories including SC and ST should serve their own people and local population first in these remote areas," the chairman said.

The Committee pitched for providing hardship allowance to employees posted in remote areas for their convience.

The Committee stressed the importance of disseminating quality education to students enrolled in government schools for overall improvement of the education scenario in Jammu and Kashmir.

It also called for fast recruitment to fill vacant posts and instructed the concerned departments to expedite the process of referring vacancies to recruitment agencies.

The Committee further underlined the need to fix responsibility on officers for delays in creation of infrastructure, which has caused an undue lag in extending benefits to students under various schemes.

The Chairman directed the concerned authorities to rationalize staff across schools and ensure that students in remote areas have access to quality education and all required facilities.

The Committee also directed the administration to conduct a fresh safety audit of all school buildings and related infrastructure, particularly in

flood-affected areas, and to take immediate safety measures to safeguard lives.

PAC members called for timely completion of ongoing projects and urgent attention to the maintenance of damaged school buildings for the convenience of students.

They asserted that pending works must be expedited and completed within stipulated timeframes.

The Chairman also instructed that accountability be fixed on officers responsible for project delays and sought a comprehensive report on violations.

He reiterated the PAC's mandate to promote transparency, fiscal discipline, and accountability in governance.

Stressing the importance of providing the best possible facilities to students, the Committee recommended adopting vertical construction models for the judicious use of available land.

The meeting was attended by Principal Accountant General J&K, K. P. Yadaw; Secretary, School Education, Ram Niwas Sharma; Secretary, Legislative Assembly; Director General, Accounts and Treasuries; Directors of School Education Kashmir & Jammu and other senior officers.

Shantamanu participates in Sewa Parv celebrations



KT News Desk

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 22: Govt. College for Women (GCW), Parade Ground, Jammu Monday celebrated Sewa Parv with great zeal and enthusiasm, witnessing active participation from students, faculty, and dignitaries.

The occasion was graced by the Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Higher Education Shantmanu, who presided the event as Chief Guest.

Speaking on the occasion, the ACS commended the college and NSS volunteers for their dedication to service, discipline, and civic duty. He noted that such initiatives not only cultivate social responsibility in young minds but also reaffirm the role of higher education institutions as agents of community development.

Welcoming the gathering, Principal, Dr. Ravender K. Tickoo emphasized the significance of Sewa Parv in nurturing values of social service, environmental stewardship, and civic responsibility among students. He appreciated the

cooperation of participating colleges and lauded their contribution in channelizing youth energy towards constructive nation-building.

The celebration began with a series of service-oriented activities including a cleanliness drive, plantation drive, donation drive, and a symbolic walkathon-exhibition led by NSS volunteers from various colleges. These initiatives highlighted the true spirit of sewa—selfless service and community engagement.

Volunteers from GCOE, GDC Paloura, GDC Akhnoor, and GDC R.S Pura actively participated and donated items to the cause. NSS and NCC volunteers of GCW Parade also contributed generously towards relief for flood victims.

The cultural segment added vibrancy to the occasion with a soulful performance on Gandhian philosophy by students of the Music Department, followed by a skit on Nasha Mukta Abhiyaan by MAM College students, and a skit on Swachhta Abhiyaan by NSS volunteers of GCW Parade.

Assessment camp for CWSNs organised at Samba



KT News Desk

SAMBA, SEPTEMBER 22: The Office of the Chief Education Officer (CEO) Samba, in collaboration with ALIMCO Kanpur organised this year's first Medical Assessment Camp for Children with Special Needs (CWSNs) at Government Higher Secondary School Vijaypur, Monday.

A large number of identified CWSNs, along with their parents and guardians, attended the camp. The Camp aimed to assess the requirement of the identified CWSNs for different assistive devices under the Education Department's inclusive education initiatives.

The Chief Education Officer, in his address, highlighted the importance of inclusive education and assured that every effort is being made to provide necessary support to children with special needs for their holistic growth. He also informed the gathering about various welfare schemes, scholarships,

and facilities available under the Education Department for CWSNs.

The Zonal Education Officer Vijaypur also addressed the parents and students, sensitising them about government initiatives and encouraging them to take maximum benefit of the schemes.

The medical team from ALIMCO Kanpur conducted assessments and identified the requirements of children for aids and appliances. Special Education Teachers and Zonal Coordinators extended full support in managing the camp, ensuring proper documentation, attendance and coordination with parents.

The parents expressed gratitude to the Education Department and ALIMCO for organising such an initiative at the grassroots level.

The camp will continue as per the schedule, with the next phase to be held at Boys HSS Samba on 24th September 2025.

DHH Kashmir organises one-day capacity building prog under RAMP

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 22: Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom (DHH), Kashmir organized one-day Capacity Building Programme on Branding and Packaging at the Conference Hall, Exhibition Ground here Monday.

The programme was held under the World Bank supported Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme, being implemented by Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir.

The programme was inaugurated by Director, Handicrafts and Handloom (H&H), Kashmir Mussarat Islam, in presence of Deputy Director Training, Mirza Shahid Ali, and other officers from the Resource Cell of the Directorate.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Director underscored the critical role of branding and packaging in enabling Kashmir's artisans and weavers to remain competitive



in the present market scenario. He urged participants to focus on forming producer companies, which would be extended support under the RAMP programme, thereby enhancing collective strength and market outreach.

The training was conducted by expert faculty from the Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), Sheikh Nowsheen and Ajaz A. Mulla, who provided hands on guidance, case studies, and design approaches to strengthen

product identity and market readiness.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from more than 100 women artisans, particularly those engaged in GI, ODOP, and DEH products. Participants were introduced to evolving consumer preferences, branding tools, and value-added packaging techniques aimed at empowering grassroots craft producers to access wider and premium markets.

This initiative is part of an ongoing series of capacity-building efforts under RAMP, designed to strengthen MSMEs and the artisan community of Kashmir by improving product positioning and market access.

The Directorate reaffirms its commitment to extend sustained support to artisan clusters, cooperatives, and entrepreneurs through training, infrastructure development, and market linkages, ensuring sustainable livelihoods and enhanced global recognition of Kashmir's rich craft heritage.

Rajouri: 216 Senior Citizens provided assistive devices

KT NEWS DESK

RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 22: On the directions of District Development Commissioner Abhishek Sharma, the Social Welfare Department in collaboration with Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) organised an aids and appliances Distribution Camp for Senior Citizens under Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) here at Dak Bungalow Rajouri.

The programme organized under the aegis of Sewa Parv 2025 was graced by Chairperson District Development Council Advocate Naseem Liyaqat Choudhary as the Chief Guest alongside MLA Rajouri Iftkar Ahmed.

At the outset, District Social Welfare Officer Abdul Rahim informed that as many as 216 senior citizens will be provided 1,064 units of aids and appliances including wheelchairs, hearing aids, walking sticks, knee braces and foldable chairs.



Speaking on the occasion, the DDC Chairperson lauded the Social Welfare Department for working tirelessly to ensure welfare schemes reach the people at the grassroots level in every corner of the District. He also appreciated the proactive approach of the department in extending support to senior citizens and other vulnerable

groups of society.

In his address, MLA Iftkar Ahmed made the gathering aware about the revised pension rates. He further informed that such distribution camps will be organised in every block of the district to cover the left-out beneficiaries, thereby ensuring maximum coverage under the scheme.

Legislators discuss dev priorities with CM Omar



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Sept 22: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday met various Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) to discuss key issues concerning public welfare and development in their constituencies.

Mehar Ali (Kangan), Tanvir Sadiq (Zadibal), Showkat Hussain Ganai (Zainapora), Er Khurshid Ahmad (Gool), Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurez), and Ajaz Ahmad Jan (Poonch) met the Chief Minister separately, highlighting various

development-related concerns and requirements specific to their constituencies.

The Chief Minister assured the visiting legislators that the government gives top priority to matters of public importance and is committed to addressing all issues of significance to ensure equitable growth and welfare across Jammu and Kashmir.

He also underscored his government's ongoing engagement with elected representatives to strengthen development planning and delivery at the constituency level.

CS assesses progress on transit accommodation for migrant employees at Zewan

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Sept 22: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Monday visited the Zewan site, one of the major locations identified for the construction of transit accommodation under the Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP), to take first hand assessment of the ongoing works of flats for Kashmiri Migrant employees.

On this occasion besides the Principal Secretary, PWD and Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir he was accompanied by DC, Srinagar; Relief Commissioner; Chief Engineer, R&B (Central) and other concerned officers.

During the visit, the Chief Secretary reviewed in detail the progress made on the construction of 936 one-BHK flats taken up at Zewan. Out of these, 624 flats have already been constructed while another 312 are at different stages of execution. So far, 703 flats have been allotted, marking an increase of 51 allotments since March 2025.

The Chief Secretary also assessed timelines for further completion and was informed that 96 more flats are

targeted for completion up to September 2025, followed by 72 flats between October–December 2025, and 144 flats from January–March 2026.

Reviewing the financial progress, it was informed that the revised approved cost of the Zewan project stands at Rs197.37 Cr, out of which Rs124.07 Cr had been utilized up to March 2025. The balance cost of Rs73.30 Cr has been proposed as outlay for 2025–26, with Rs36.65 Cr already released during the current financial year.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Secretary emphasized the need to complete the project within the set timelines and ensure early handover of completed flats. "This project must be completed on time and the completed units should be allotted to the employees without any delay," he stressed.

Highlighting the locational advantage of the Zewan site, Dulloo added that the transit accommodations here are ideally suited for employees serving both in Srinagar and Pulwama districts. "This site is feasible for migrant employees posted in Srinagar as well

as Pulwama, and it is therefore imperative that the flats are made ready for occupation at the earliest," he observed.

He directed the concerned executing agencies to maintain high standards of quality in construction and adhere strictly to timelines so that the objective of providing secure and dignified housing to migrant employees working in the Valley is fully realized.

The Chief Secretary is regularly monitoring the progress of all transit accommodations being raised across different districts of the Valley. These projects have witnessed tremendous progress in the last few years and are set to be completed as per the given deadlines.

It is noteworthy to mention here that at the UT level under the PMDP, a total of 6000 transit accommodations are being constructed for Kashmiri Migrant employees with a revised approved outlay of Rs 1245.38 Cr. With additional commitment from the UT Government, the total availability for the project stands at Rs 1325.85 Cr, including Rs983.28 Cr for construction of flats and Rs 342.57 Cr for allied works.

NH closures during peak fruit season raise doubts of economic sabotage: Karra

Waris Fayaz

Srinagar, Sept 22: Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President, Tariq Hameed Karra voiced strong concern over repeated Srinagar–Jammu National Highway closures during the peak fruit season, saying the disruptions are crippling Kashmir's apple economy and raising "serious doubts of an economic sabotage", aimed at weakening the Valley's key horticulture sector.

Speaking at a party convention in Uri, Karra, as per the news agency–Kashmir News Observer (KNO), hinted at a larger "design" behind the economic disruptions, says the Valley's backbone fruit industry has been badly hit by these highway closures.

"People doubt that whenever the fruit season is at its peak, the road challenges occur. We should investigate whether there is any conspiracy to crush the economy of Jammu and Kashmir, be it horticulture, agriculture or other sectors," the Congress leader said.

He recalled that during the recently concluded assembly elections, the people's "biggest challenge" was to keep the

BJP out of power. "The people of Jammu and Kashmir succeeded in keeping the BJP away from the corridors of power. Post government formation, we once again reiterated our demand for the restoration of statehood which was snatched unconstitutionally," he said.

Karra asserted that the Congress deliberately stayed away from joining the new government despite extending "issue-based support" from the outside. "We had promised statehood in our manifesto and until the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir are restored, we will not be part of the government. We did support the government but we will continue to speak about the people's miseries," he said, adding that Congress would not shy away from highlighting governance failures even while extending backdoor support.

Pledging to continue the struggle, Karra assured that under the leadership of Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi, the Congress would "not compromise" on issues concerning the rights and economy of the people. "We will raise our voice on every front where people's economy or rights are being obstructed," he said. (KNO)

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

CDS calls for

Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), MS Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, Nirma University, Oriental Institute of Science and Technology, Rashtriya Raksha University and National Research Development Corporation, it said.

Themed 'Vivek va Anusandhan se Vijay' or 'victory through wisdom and research', the symposium, a first of its kind, is a significant step towards fostering deeper integration between academic research capabilities and defence technology requirements, the statement said.

By connecting the armed forces with the vast untapped intellectual and technical capital within Indian academia, T-SATS aims to build a "sustainable and strategic partnership to co-create future-ready solutions for national security," it said. (KNO)

J&K Govt to

and IGP (NH) to issue verified information promptly so that people remain updated with facts.

Chief Minister was informed that slow movement has been on account of poor road conditions in certain stretches of National Highway and not deliberate.

During the meeting, Omar Abdullah expressed concern over damage to the historic Mubarak Mandi Heritage Complex in Jammu. Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, informed that land subsidence along the Circular Road had damaged the backside of the complex, underscoring the need for urgent protective measures.

The Chief Minister impressed upon his Council of Ministers to finalize departmental projections quickly and for District Authorities to reconcile figures with Departments to arrive at accurate figures so that a consolidated proposal could be submitted to the Government of India for a comprehensive restoration package. He directed officials to ensure robust preparedness, strengthen embankments and put in place effective response mechanisms to safeguard lives and property. He further directed concerned Deputy Commissioners to submit report regarding admissibility of ex-gratia relief in favour of next of kin of families from J&K who lost their lives in Himachal Pradesh in recent land slide.

Earlier, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg presented a detailed report on the impact of the floods. He informed that losses in Kashmir division included 16 houses which were fully damaged, 57 severely damaged, and 791 partially damaged, with relief already disbursed in all cases. Tragically, one life was lost, for which compensation has been provided, while three other deaths in related incidents in Anantnag were compensated through the Red Cross. The meeting was informed about loss to live-stock, damage to cattle sheds and compensation disbursed in these cases.

Giving details of infrastructure damage, it was informed that nearly 90 km of roads were affected across 279 road stretches, of which 52 have been restored while the rest are under repair. Eighty-seven bridges and culverts were also damaged, with more than half already restored. A breach in the Jhelum at Zoonipora, Shalina in Budgam, is currently being repaired. In the power sector, over 9.34 crore has been proposed for the restoration of damaged poles, conductors, and transformers. Out of 563 affected water supply schemes, 385 have been fully restored, while work is underway on the rest. Safety audits have been conducted on 115 school buildings, with certificates already issued for 43 schools.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir gave account of agricultural losses with more than 12,500 hectares of land affected and nearly 315 hectares in Horticulture impacted, primarily in Anantnag, Kulgam, and Pulwama, districts with estimated losses of about 59 lakh. On essential supplies, the situation was reported as stable, with stocks of petrol, diesel, and LPG sufficient for several days. Fruit transportation

from Kashmir to Jammu and Delhi is progressing smoothly, with over 1.37 lakh boxes already moved.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu presented the situation in the Jammu Division, reporting several human and heavy material losses. He said the floods claimed 150 lives, left 178 people injured, and 33 missing, with Kishtwar recording the highest casualties. Housing losses were severe, with more than 4,200 homes fully damaged and over 8,600 partially damaged, the worst-hit districts being Udhampur and Jammu. Livestock losses stood at 1,455 and crops over 1,300 hectares were damaged.

It was informed that financial assistance exceeding 40 crore has been disbursed from the State Disaster Response Fund, with an additional 3.35 crore provided from the HCM Relief Fund. Restoration work is underway across sectors, with over 2,700 km of roads and more than half of the damaged bridges already temporarily restored. Permanent restoration of roads and bridges is estimated at nearly 893 crore. The power sector was also badly affected, with over 49,000 distribution transformers hit—almost all of which have now been restored. More than 2,000 water supply works were damaged, with around 1,600 temporarily restored, requiring nearly 195 crore for permanent restoration.

The education sector also bore the brunt of the floods, with more than 8,800 schools audited for safety. Over 5,500 have been issued safety certificates, of which around 5,200 were deemed safe, while 758 were declared unsafe. In public health, 442 water samples tested and over 1,500 health camps were organized, screening nearly 80,000 people. Encouragingly, no warning signs of disease outbreaks have been reported.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah reiterated that permanent restoration of infrastructure and restoration of livelihoods would be taken up on a war footing once a comprehensive package is approved by the Government of India.

DG felicitates CRPF

and encouraging atmosphere," he said, adding, "The felicitation aims to motivate personnel, boost morale and reinforce vigilance among forces deployed across sensitive areas." (KNO)

New laws brought

replaced the colonial-era statutes. New laws have brought greater transparency to the justice system, with technology being a key enabler."

"The objective of organizing such a grand exhibition is to create widespread public awareness. People must know how the new laws function, how they empower citizens, and how technology is making justice delivery more efficient," the DGP said.

He hailed the J&K Police for taking the lead in adopting modern practices, becoming the first police force in the country to use the eSakshya application.

DGP Prabhat said the Police in the Union Territory have been implementing the new criminal laws on the ground with "enthusiasm and commitment," ensuring that investigations are carried out in a time-bound manner.

He commended the efforts of the Crime Branch for hosting the exhibition, which, he said, aims to familiarize citizens with the provisions and benefits of the new legal framework.

He announced that similar exhibitions would be held in every district of J&K to ensure that information about the laws reaches every section of society. "By engaging directly with the public, the police aim to bridge the gap between citizens and law enforcement," the DGP added.

Meanwhile, a Crime Branch spokesman in a statement said that the DGP J&K was the chief guest on the occasion and ADGP Armed J&K Anand Jain, IGP Jammu zone Bhim Sen Tuti, IGP Crime J&K Sujit Kumar Singh, DIG D-K-R Range Shridar Patil, DIG J-S-K Range Shiv Kumar, DIG R-P Range Tejinder Singh, DIG Traffic Jammu Dr.

Haseeb Mughal, DIG Pers J&K Mubassir Latifi, Session Judge Retd. Subash Gupta, Director FSL Gurmukh Singh, were the special guests of honour. District SSPs, Staff officers, Senior officers of Prosecution, SDPOs and other gazetted officers were also present on the occasion.

A large number of people including students and scholars thronged the exhibition site on the 1st day of the event and got themselves educated regarding the new criminal laws. The NCL exhibition of this kind is organized first time in Jammu and it will continue till 24th of September from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM daily, the statement added.

SSP Benam Tosh, the nodal officer, has invited the people to participate in the exhibition and get valuable knowledge about new criminal laws.

Various stalls showcasing the functioning vis-a-vis new criminal laws, i.e. Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSs) and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), are displayed by District Police, Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL), Police Control Room (PCR), Women Police Station, Cyber Police Stations, Prosecution, ANTF, CICE, Special Crime Wing (SCW), Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Crime Branch Jammu, J&K Health Department and other units. (KNO)

Cabinet to recommend

Since the last sitting of the previous session was held on April 29, then—according to the rule that no more than six months should pass between sessions—the next session should be held by October 28.

The issues of statehood and reservation are likely to dominate proceedings of the House.

In the last assembly session, three resolutions on statehood lapsed due to disruptions created by National Conference following rejection of the adjournment motion brought by their legislators on the Waqf (amendment) bill–2025.

The issue of reservation also came up repeatedly during discussions in the House with PC president Sajad Gani Lone cornering the government over the issue.

The issue of detention of MLA Doda Mehraj and his assault during the last budget session could also come up for discussion. (KNO)

Adventure tourism

designed with unique technical and fitness challenges.

The Gulmarg leg will include a 2.5 km high-difficulty trail requiring extreme skill and endurance, with gondola rides offering riders brief recovery intervals.

Highlighting Zabarvan's broader mission, Shetty said the initiative also focuses on developing indigenous gear, training and sponsoring local athletes, and creating grassroots events with international competition.

Among the home-grown talents supported by Zabarvan are snowboarder Zubair Ahmad Lone, who is preparing for the 2026 Winter Olympics, and Guinness record-holding cyclist Adil Teli, set to represent India in an upcoming UCI competition in Australia.

Shetty thanked J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, MLA Gulmarg Farooq Shah and officials of the Gulmarg Development Authority (GDA) for their guidance, while acknowledging sponsors Indigo, Spoke Hub, Kirloskar Ferrous, and Span Foundation for making the series possible.

"Our aim is not just a sporting milestone but to showcase Gulmarg's potential as a premier global adventure destination, blending sport, tourism, and local culture," Shetty said, noting that all marshals, volunteers, and medics for the event have been recruited locally. (KNO)

Suspicious object

blast neutralised the suspected object without causing any damage or casualties. Authorities later resumed traffic movement after the site was declared safe, the official said as per KNO.

Witnesses said soon after the object was spotted vehicles of the security forces surrounded the spot and disposed of the device.

Meanwhile, videos of the controlled explosion went viral on social media, showing the suspected object being destroyed in a loud blast. Officials said that teams are investigating to ascertain the exact nature of the object.

Moreover, later in the day, security forces secured the lakefront while photographs from the spot pointed out locals and security personnel gathering to check the site and commuters resuming their journey after traffic was restored near Nehru Park. (KNO)

1.37 MT fruits

Valley are being systematically despatched towards Jammu on alternate days via NH & Mughal Road, he informed.

"The pattern of traffic is streamlined & monitored by the Traffic Police personnel so that if traffic on NH is plying towards Jammu today the traffic will be plying on Mughal Road towards valley & tomorrow the traffic will move towards valley on NH while through Mughal Road the vehicles will move towards Jammu," he said.

The pattern is reversed so that the traffic flow is streamlined & remains uninterrupted, Div Com stated.

He added that the restoration of the National Highway is being expedited with the support of local administration and agencies & the IGP Traffic is closely monitoring the traffic movement in coordination with NHA & local administration which has resulted in fast movement of vehicles.

He informed that as of now movement of trucks has significantly increased from previous 1500–2000 vehicles per day to 4000–4500 vehicles per day now.

He added that 2000 fruit laden trucks have left from Qazigund towards Jammu, and all the fruit laden trucks from the valley shall be despatched towards Jammu by late evening.

Yesterday, around 1800–1900 trucks have reached Jammu via Mughal Road so that the dispatching of fresh fruit is given top priority and growers may not face any inconvenience, Garg said.

"Recently the Parcel train service was inaugurated by HLG of J&K so the fruit is directly taken from Srinagar to Adarsh Nagar Delhi," Div Com said and added that 800 to 1000 tons of fresh fruit are being transported daily through Parcel Train Services to Delhi.

He said that the demand for train loading operations from Baramulla and Anantnag is being processed further to help the farmers.

In response to rumors of shortages of essential supplies, Div Com said that the stock of essential supplies, including petrol, diesel, LPG, and other crucial items is adequately available for at least one week. There is no need for panic buying, he said.

He added that the FCS&CA department continues to ensure availability of fuel at pumps and its fair distribution besides replenishing stocks regularly. He appealed to people not to pay heed to rumors in this regard. He also added that divisional administration, district administrations and FCS&CA are closely working to ensure availability of food stock in the Valley.

Citing improvement in weather, he stated that the buffer stock will be augmented on a day to day basis.

Garg said that the Chief Secretary is personally reviewing the situation daily to streamline the one-way traffic system and issuing regular directions to agencies to work with close coordination. He appreciated people for the cooperation amid the recent circumstances which helped administration to address the challenges properly.

Speaking on the occasion, IGP said that around 8,000 to 10,000 trucks carrying essential goods for the valley that were previously stranded have been cleared, facilitating smoother movement of essential goods.

Armed forces were

"We took action not based on religion but on deeds (Humne dharm dekh kar nahi, karm dekh kar maara hai)," Mr. Singh said, quoting the Ramcharitmanas to describe the nation's firm yet restrained approach, it noted.

In response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7, targeting terrorist infrastructure in territories controlled by Pakistan.

The strikes triggered four days of intense clashes that ended with an understanding on stopping the military actions on May 10.

The Defence Minister also highlighted the progress achieved by India in the last decade under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Despite geopolitical challenges, India has emerged as the fastest-growing major economy, and is poised to enter the top three soon, he said.

Singh highlighted India's digital transformation, rapid strides in the knowledge economy, and the surge in startups from 18 unicorns a decade ago to 118 today.

Singh underlined the "remarkable growth" of India's defence industry, which has achieved production worth Rs 1.5 lakh crore and defence exports exceeding 23,000 crore to more than 100 countries.

The defence minister lauded the hard work, dedication, and honesty of the Indian community.

Singh's visit to Morocco will also be the first-ever trip to that country by an Indian defence minister.

During the visit, he will hold a bilateral meeting with his Moroccan counterpart Abdelatif Loudiyi.

Following the talks, both sides are expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of defence.

The MoU will provide for an institutional framework to expand and deepen bilateral defence engagement, including exchanges, training, and industrial linkages, officials said.

Ties between India and Morocco have gained momentum since King Mohammed VI met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 in India.

Kashmir apple growers

about the slow pace of sales.

"So far, only 30–35% of the produce has been transported to markets, while nearly 70% is still lying in godowns and orchards. The government's step of pressing RTC trucks into service did help check skyrocketing freight rates, but the bigger problem this year is demand. The rates in mandis are falling further instead of improving," he said.

Growers across south Kashmir's fruit-rich districts of Shopian and Pulwama echoed the same concerns.

Ghulam Nabi, a grower from Shopian, said: "Our apples are reaching mandis, but buyers are not offering fair prices. After the freight issue was addressed, we hoped for some improvement. Instead, the rates are dropping every single day. It is extremely discouraging."

Abdul Rashid, another orchardist from Pulwama, said quality was not the issue this year: "The produce is excellent, but what is the use if there is no demand? The cost of labour, sprays, and packaging has gone up, and if rates remain so low, growers will suffer heavy financial losses again."

This industry has already suffered heavy losses due to the highway crisis, followed by high freight charges, diseases and natural calamities.

As per the fruit growers' associations, this industry has suffered a loss of over Rs 1200 crore so far due to highway closure.

The apple industry, regarded as the backbone of the valley's rural economy, directly or indirectly supports more than 3.5 million people. With the sector already battered by frequent highway closures, inadequate cold storage capacity, and rising production costs, growers fear that this year's poor returns could push many families deeper into debt. (KNO)

‘Inherent habit’ of Congress to abandon any dev work that’s difficult: PM Modi

PTI

Itanagar, Sept 22: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday alleged that the Congress has an "inherent habit" of abandoning any development work that is difficult, and this caused significant harm to the Northeast.

Addressing a rally at the Indira Gandhi Park in Itanagar after unveiling development projects worth over Rs 5,100 crore, Modi said he knew that the Northeast couldn't be developed from Delhi, and so, he sent ministers and officers more frequently to the region, and he himself came here more than 70 times.

"One inherent habit of Congress is that they never take up development work which is difficult to do; they abandon it. This habit of Congress caused significant harm to Arunachal Pradesh and the entire Northeast. In the hilly and forested areas, where development work



was challenging, Congress would declare the regions backward and simply forget them," he claimed.

The PM said that with the launch of GST reforms on the first day of Navratri, people will receive a "double bonanza" this festive season.

"Today, next-generation GST reforms have been implemented across the country, and the GST 'Bachat Utsav' has begun. During the season of festivals, the people have received a double bonanza," he said. "The

GST reforms will reduce kitchen budget, helping women," he added.

The PM said the previous Congress government kept on increasing taxes even as everything got expensive.

"Congress imposed a heavy tax burden on the people, but our government has gradually reduced taxes, giving relief," he said.

Modi alleged the border villages were neglected by successive Congress governments, leading to the migration of people from these areas. He claimed

that the Congress also overlooked Arunachal Pradesh, as it has only two Lok Sabha seats.

"When I was given the opportunity to serve the nation in 2014, I resolved to free the country from the mindset of Congress. Our guiding principle is not the number of votes or seats in any state, but 'nation first'. Our only mantra is 'Nagrik Devo Bhava' (the citizen is God)," he said.

"Modi worships those whom no one has ever asked about. That is why Arunachal Pradesh, which was neglected during Congress rule, has since 2014 become a centre of developmental priority," he added.

The PM said the projects he unveiled were an example of "double benefits" of the "double-engine" government.

"Arunachal got Rs 1 lakh crore from Centre in the last 10 yrs, which is 16 times more than what it got during Congress rule," he said.

People will save money on 99% of daily use items, Vaishnaw hails GST reforms

ANI

New Delhi, Sept 22: As the Goods and Services Tax (GST) reforms come into effect on Monday, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said that the move will lead to savings in households. Ashwini Vaishnaw met shopkeepers in the national capital and raised awareness regarding the next-generation GST reforms.

Speaking to the media, he said, "I want to wish everyone for Navratri. PM Narendra Modi has taken a historic decision to reduce the tax slabs, which will help every household save. Bachat mahotsav has begun. Shopkeepers and customers both are very happy..People will save money on about 99 per cent of the daily use items. I thank PM Modi for this."

"We need to make one more resolution to use swadeshi as much as possible in our day-to-day life," he added.

Today onwards, the previous four-slab system has been replaced with a streamlined two-slab regime of 5



per cent and 18 per cent. A separate 40 per cent slab has been retained for luxury and sin goods.

Products like Ultra-High Temperature (UHT) milk, pre-packaged and labelled chena or paneer, and all the Indian Breads will see NIL rates, while the GST on household goods like soaps, shampoos, toothbrushes,

toothpaste, tableware, and bicycles now stands at 5 per cent. Earlier today, Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the rationalisation of GST, calling it a "double bonanza" given to the people during the season of festivals.

"From today, next generation GST reforms have been implemented, and GST Bachat Utsav has started. On the occasion of festivals, the people have gotten a double bonanza," the Prime Minister said while addressing a public event in Itanagar. While attending a 'GST Bachat Utsav' event in Itanagar, the Prime Minister met with various artisans and industry leaders in the state. He met with entrepreneurs who are selling local goods, from packaged milk to food items, and highlighted the 'swadeshi' products of the country.

He also handed them placards of 'Garv se Kaho Yeh Swadeshi Hai'. The shopkeepers were very happy on receiving them and said that they would place these placards on their shops.

PM Modi makes impossible possible: VP Radhakrishnan

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 22: Prime Minister Narendra Modi can make the impossible possible, Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan said on Monday (September 22, 2025), highlighting his relations with world leaders, including US President Donald Trump, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping, who have described the PM as their good friend. Addressing an event to release two sets of speeches delivered by the Prime Minister, the Vice-President said, despite the United States imposing a 50% tariff on India, Mr. Trump has always hailed Modi as his great friend.

Similarly, Chinese President Xi shares good relations with PM Modi "in spite of differences of international politics", the vice president said.

Addressing his first public event after assuming the office of the Vice-President, Mr. Radhakrishnan, said, "Though 50% duty has been put on India by America, Trump is always saying Modi ji is my great friend. Even in that situation, he has not said that I am against Modi. He is always telling I am for Modi." Mr. Radhakrishnan stated that the Prime Minister is also a close friend of Russian President Putin.

"...at the same time, Xi also, in spite of the differences in international politics, is a good friend of Modi ji. That we have seen today," Mr. Radhakrishnan said and asserted "that is why he makes the impossible possible." Referring to Mr. Modi's approach, he said the Prime Minister does things for the masses with a pure heart and does not expect anything in return.

Addressing the event, Rajya Sabha Deputy Chair Harivansh said the prime minister speaks the language of the people and speaks for them.

Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said in the past, when Government schemes were launched, they used to work as "band aid". But after Mr. Modi came to power, he turned around the mindset on a bigger scale of outreach of the schemes.

The Union Minister said Mr. Modi uses politics for public service, and every decision taken by him is based on the greater good of society.

Adani Group stocks continue to surge after Sebi clean chit

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 22: Adani Group companies continued to rally on Monday, with Adani Power surging 20 per cent, propelled by heavy buying following markets regulator Sebi's clean chit in the Hindenburg case.

The regulator's order, which dismissed allegations of stock manipulation and related-party misuse, has led to optimistic investor sentiment, sending Adani stocks sharply higher for the second day in a row.

Shares of Adani Power jumped 19.99 per cent to hit



its upper circuit limit of Rs 170.15 on the BSE. The stock of Adani Total Gas soared

17.49 per cent, Adani Green Energy zoomed 8.12 per cent, Adani Energy Solutions

jumped 5.67 per cent, Adani Enterprises Ltd surged 4 per cent, NDTV went up by 3.51 per cent, Sanghi Industries edged higher by 3.29 per cent, Adani Ports went up by 2 per cent, ACC (2 per cent) and Ambuja Cements (2 per cent).

The rally in the stocks came after Sebi on Thursday concluded its investigation, stating that it found no evidence to support the accusations raised by US-based short seller Hindenburg Research in early 2023.

On Friday, Adani group firms ended higher, with Adani Power surging over 12 per cent.

Japanese automaker Nissan to way to develop self-driving technology

AP

Tokyo, Sept 22: Japanese automaker Nissan is developing new self-driving technology as it works to turn around its struggling auto business.

In a recent demonstration of the technology, set to be available in 2027, a Nissan Ariya sedan outfitted with 11 cameras, five radars and a next-generation sensor called LiDAR maneuvered its way through downtown Tokyo, braking for red lights as well as pedestrians and other cars at intersections.

Previous Nissan self-driving technology was designed for freeway driving, where the lanes are clearly marked and



easier to decipher. The new technology is designed for congested, unpredictable city streets.

It's an already-crowded field. The self-driving car market is estimated to reach \$2 trillion by 2030, according to market researcher IndustryARC, riding on the back of

advances in AI, sensor technologies and data processing capabilities.

Japan's top automaker, Toyota Motor Corp, has a partnership deal with Waymo, another self-driving technology developed by Google. Waymo has also arrived in Japan, in partnership with a cab

company, but it's still in the testing stage.

Other automakers are also working on autonomous driving technology, including Honda Motor Co, General Motors and Mercedes-Benz, as well as companies outside the auto industry like Amazon and its subsidiary Zoox.

Nissan's push comes at a time when the overall Japanese auto market is facing serious challenges because of President Donald Trump's tariffs. Nissan especially is struggling.

It has slashed jobs and appointed a new chief executive, Ivan Espinosa, to attempt a turnaround. The maker of the March subcompact, Leaf electric cars and Infiniti luxury brand posted losses for the

‘New GST cut to save up to Rs 1.5 lakh crore for investors in renewable energy’



PTI

New Delhi, Sept 22: GST reduction on renewable energy will save up to Rs 1.5 lakh crore for investors till 2030, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi said on Monday.

The comments from the Union New & Renewable Energy Minister assume significance as Monday is the first day of implementation of the Goods and Services Tax reduction.

In a bonanza to consumers, the GST Council, comprising the Centre and states, decided to reduce tax rates on goods and services, from September 22 -- the first day of Navratri.

The GST cut will give a significant boost to India's ambitious target of having 500 GW of renewable energy by 2030.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of the CII 6th International Energy Conference, Joshi said, "I thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for cutting GST on renewable equipment from 18 per cent to 5 per cent, especially on the occasion of the Navratri festival."

He further said this will save Rs one lakh crore to Rs 1.5 lakh crore for investors till 2030.

According to the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, given that India plans to add around 300 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030, even a modest 2-3 per cent cost reduction can free up

Rs 1-1.5 lakh crore in investment capacity.

Rooftop Solar under PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana will become cheaper by Rs 9,000-10,500 per 3 kW System.

Farmers under PM-KUSUM are expected to save Rs 1,750 crore on 10 lakh solar pumps with the GST cut, the ministry estimates show.

Earlier, addressing the conference, Joshi said at the COP26 in 2021, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi first laid down the roadmap for the country's clean energy journey, he set a target that many thought was impossible: 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030.

"Today, I am proud to say that we have already achieved over 50 per cent of our installed power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources, and we have done it five years ahead of the timeline. We have also crossed 50 per cent of the 500 GW target (252 GW)," he said. He informed that nearly 20 lakh homes have benefited from solar power under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana.

He further said in a recent clean energy auction, Madhya Pradesh secured India's lowest-ever price for solar power with battery storage at just Rs 2.70 per unit.

He said the transmission system has been planned for about 537 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030.

Why diabetes patients should eat onions

Study shows they slash blood sugar & cholesterol

TOI HEALTH

New Delhi, Sept 22: Research indicates that onions may offer benefits for diabetes management. A study found that onion extract, alongside metformin, significantly reduced blood sugar and total cholesterol in diabetic rats. Incorporating onions into daily meals could naturally support blood sugar and heart health, complementing existing treatments for diabetes.

Why diabetes patients should eat onions: Study shows they slash blood sugar and cholesterol Type 2 diabetes affects millions

of people worldwide and is characterised by persistently high blood sugar levels caused by insufficient insulin production from the pancreas. Managing this condition often requires a combination of medication, diet, and lifestyle changes. Recent research indicates that a common kitchen vegetable, the onion (Allium cepa), may offer additional benefits for diabetes management. A study presented at The Endocrine Society's 97th annual meeting found that onion extract, when administered alongside the antidiabetic drug metformin, significantly reduced blood sugar



by up to 50 percent in diabetic rats. The extract also lowered total cholesterol, suggesting that including onions in daily meals could support blood sugar and heart health naturally.

Diabetes-friendly benefits of onions and how to include them

Onions may help regulate blood sugar levels, support cholesterol management, and improve overall metabolic health. They are low in calories but may increase metabolic rate and appetite, making them a healthy addition to meals. Diabetes patients can include onions in various ways: Raw in salads or

sandwiches for a crunchy, flavorful addition Cooked in soups, stir-fries, or curries to enhance taste and nutrients

Grilled or roasted as a side dish Blended into sauces or dips for everyday consumption

Cholesterol-lowering effects In addition to reducing blood sugar, onion extract also lowered total cholesterol levels in diabetic rats. The higher doses of 400 mg/kg and 600 mg/kg produced the most significant reductions. This dual benefit on both blood sugar and cholesterol positions onions as a promising dietary supplement for managing metabolic and

cardiovascular health in people with diabetes.

Incorporating onions regularly can complement existing treatments like metformin and provide a simple, cost-effective way to support diabetes management naturally. While more research is needed to confirm these effects in humans, onions could provide a simple, affordable, and effective dietary addition for diabetes patients. Incorporating onions into daily meals may help manage blood sugar levels, lower cholesterol, and support overall metabolic health while complementing medications such as metformin.

Pro-Palestinian strikes, protests disrupt transport across Italy

AFP/REUTERS

Rome, Sept 22: Pro-Palestinian protests, strikes and blockades swept across Italy on Monday, disrupting transport and port operations, as unions and activists demanded an end to Israel's offensive in Gaza and called for sanctions.

The mobilisation coincided with France's and several other countries' intention to recognise the State of Palestine at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, following recognition by the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada on Sunday. But Italy has taken a more cautious stance and will not recognise a Palestinian state for now.

In Rome, hundreds of high school students gathered outside Termini train station, waving Palestinian flags and chanting "Free Palestine!"

Michelangelo, 17, told AFP he was there to support "a population that is being exterminated." Francesca Tecchia, 18, joined her first protest, saying "what is happening (in Gaza) is too important."

"Italy must come to a standstill today," said Federica Casino, a 52-year-old worker demonstrating alongside the students "for Gaza's dead children and destroyed hospitals."

Strikes also hit Italy's ports. In Genoa, dockworkers blocked access roads early in the morning, waving Palestinian flags and vowing to stop Italy being used as a staging post for arms shipments to Israel. Further down the coast in Livorno, an entrance to the port was also blocked.

"The Palestinian people



continue to give us yet another lesson in dignity and resistance," said Ricky, a protester from the Autonomous Port Workers' Collective. "We learn from them and try to do our part."

Demonstrations were also reported in Milan, Turin, Florence, Naples, Bari and Palermo. In Rome, bus services were disrupted and metro trains faced delays, though in Milan and other cities most underground lines continued to run. Airlines were not affected. Several schools closed after unions joined the strike.

Dockworkers in Genoa and Livorno say their aim is to halt supplies linked to Israel's campaign in Gaza, which has left the territory devastated after nearly two years of war. More than 65,000 Palestinians, a majority civilians, have been killed in the Israeli military campaign since the October 7, 2023 Hamas-led attacks that claimed 1,219 lives in Israel, according to official figures and UN-verified data.

North Korea's Kim open to US talks, has 'fond memories' of Trump

AFP

Seoul, Sept 22: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un says he has "fond memories" of US President Donald Trump and is open to future talks with the United States — if he can keep his nuclear arsenal.

Kim met Trump three times for high-profile summits during Trump's first term, before talks collapsed in Hanoi in 2019 over what concessions Pyongyang was prepared to make on its atomic weapons.

The US demand that Kim give up his banned weapons has long been a sticking point between the two countries, with Pyongyang under successive rafts of UN sanctions over its nuclear and missile programs.

"If the United States discards its delusional obsession with denuclearization and, based on recognizing reality, truly wishes for peaceful coexistence with us, then there is no reason we cannot meet it," Kim said, according to a report Monday by the official Korean Central News Agency.

"I still personally hold fond memories of the current US president, Trump," Kim added, in a wide-ranging speech to the country's Supreme People's Assembly.

Since the failed 2019 summit, North Korea has repeatedly said it will never give up its atomic weapons and declared itself an "irreversible" nuclear state.

Kim reiterated that denuclearization was not an option.



"The world already knows well what the United States does after it forces a country to give up its nuclear arms and disarm," he said.

"We will never give up our nuclear weapons."

Kim said sanctions had only helped the North in "growing stronger, building endurance and resistance that cannot be crushed by any pressure."

Kim also added he had "no reason to sit down with South Korea," even as Seoul's new President Lee Jae-myung has sought to ease tensions with the North.

"We make it clear that we will not deal with them in any form," he said.

Kim's speech reiterates Pyongyang's position that it must be recognized as a nuclear state before any talks can take place, Hong Min, a senior analyst at the Korea Institute for National Unification, told AFP. "It reaffirms the North's stance that recognition as a nuclear-armed state, along with a willingness to

improve relations with it, are the prerequisites for dialogue," he said.

"It calls for a fundamental shift toward equal dialogue and improved relations as a nuclear-armed state,"

North Korea has in recent years declared the South its principal enemy and blown up rail links and roads connecting the two countries.

Russia ties "The lengthy and detailed justifications reflect equal parts confidence and desperation," Yang Moo-jin, former president of the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, told AFP.

"While outwardly aimed at foreign powers, the speech carried a strong domestic message, seeking to pre-empt instability," Yang said.

Kim has been emboldened by the war in Ukraine, according to analysts, securing critical support from Russia after sending thousands of North Korean troops to fight alongside Moscow.

China silent on US H-1B visa hike, but opens doors to global talent

PTI

Beijing, Sept 22: China on Monday declined to comment on US President Donald Trump's move to impose a hefty USD one lakh fee for H-1B visas, but at the same time invited global professionals to work in the country as it prepares to roll out a new employment visa next month.

On Friday last week, the Trump administration announced a USD 1,00,000 fee on H-1B visas. The fee is a one-time fee on submission of a new H-1B petition.

"China will not comment on the US visa policy," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun told a media briefing here when asked about Trump's decision.

However, at the same time, he said in the era of globalisation, cross-border talents promote technological and economic progress globally, and Beijing welcomes global professional talent to explore opportunities in the country.

China welcomes "talents from various industries and areas across the world to come and stay in China, jointly contribute to the progress of the human society and achieve success in their careers", Guo said.

Indians account for nearly 71 per cent (over 2.8 lakh) of all H-1B visas, followed by Chinese professionals with around 11.7 per cent or over 46,600. China's K-Visa to take effect from Oct 1

While the US tightens its visa regime, China last month announced a new work permit called K-Visa under which qualified professionals from across the world can come to the country and explore work opportunities.

The K-Visa, set to take effect from Oct 1, is aimed at attracting young science and technology talent and does not require a domestic



employer or entity to issue an invitation.

According to the state-run Xinhua news agency, the new visa category was approved by the State Council and signed into law by Premier Li Qiang last month as part of amendments to the country's entry and exit regulations.

China's silence on the H-1B issue comes against the backdrop of trade negotiations with the US, where student and work visas are also under discussion. Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping last week spoke over the phone, during which they reportedly agreed to the US takeover of the popular Chinese app TikTok.

The US and Chinese trade negotiators concluded their fourth round of talks in Spain last week to reach a trade deal on tariffs.

As per the decision, China will add the K-Visa category to its existing 12 ordinary visa types, available to eligible science and technology professionals.

Compared to the existing visa types, K visas will offer more convenience to holders in terms of the number of permitted entries, validity period, and duration of stay.

K-Visa holders can also engage in education and cultural exchanges, science and technology activities, and entrepreneurship and business.

Prannoy, Ayush to spearhead Indian challenge at Korea Open

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 22: Still searching for consistency this season, HS Prannoy will headline India's challenge alongside rising star Ayush Shetty at the USD 475,000 Korea Open Super 500 badminton tournament beginning in Suwon, Korea on Tuesday.

With two successive finals at the Hong Kong and China Masters, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty have revived India's season but will skip this week's event, leaving the focus on Prannoy and Ayush to carry the tricolour. Prannoy, a 2023 World Championships bronze medallist, has endured a string of early exits this season but has stretched top opponents, with most matches going the distance.

Wins over China's Lu Guang Zu and



narrow defeats to Lakshya Sen and Anders Antonsen underline his ability to still push the best in the business.

The 33-year-old opens against a qualifier and is likely to run into veteran Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei in the second round.

Ayush, meanwhile, remains the only Indian to win a BWF title this

season, clinching the US Open crown. The 22-year-old from Mangalore has since grown in stature with wins over Japan's Kodai Naraoka, Chou Tien Chen, Canada's Brian Yang, India's Kidambi Srikanth, former world champion Loh Kean Yew and Denmark's Rasmus Gemke.

He will begin against Su Li Yang of Chinese Taipei.

Kiran George also features in the men's singles draw and faces a stiff opener against Singapore's fifth seed Loh Kean Yew.

In women's singles, Anupama Upadhyaya takes on fourth seed Putri Kusuma Wardani of Indonesia.

In doubles, the mixed pair of Mohit Jaglan and Lakshita Jaglan will open against Japan's Yuichi Shimogami and Sayaka Hobara.

Russia says NATO airspace accusations create 'tension'

AFP

Moscow, Sept 22: Russia denied on Monday that its aircraft were violating NATO airspace and warned that countries making such accusations risked "escalating tensions."

Three Russian fighter jets entered NATO member Estonia's airspace on Friday, remaining there for 12 minutes before being escorted out by NATO aircraft, Tallinn said. The MiG-31 jets, which were overflying the Gulf of Finland, had their transponders switched off and did not engage with Estonian air traffic



control, the Baltic country added.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Monday denied Estonia's version of

flights." Russia considers Estonia's statements "empty, unfounded, and a continuation of the country's utterly unstoppable policy of escalating tensions and provoking a confrontational atmosphere," Peskov told reporters.

NATO ambassadors will convene on Tuesday for talks on the incursion, after Estonia called for urgent discussions under Article Four of the alliance's founding treaty.

Poland invoked Article Four earlier this month after around 20 Russian drones violated its airspace.

'Friends' New Season: Shubman & Abhishek are like fire and ice, feels Suryakumar Yadav

PTI

Dubai, Sept 22: The contrasting batting styles of inseparable best buddies Abhishek Sharma and Shubman Gill makes them a riveting "fire-and-ice" combination in India's T20 cricket set-up, feels skipper Suryakumar Yadav.

On Sunday, what looked like a tricky chase of 172 in the Asia Cup clash against arch foes Pakistan, became a cakewalk because the two best friends since the age of 10, conjured an eye-catching 105-run opening stand.

Abhishek went on to score a scintillating 74 off 39 balls, his first fifty in the tournament while Gill shrugged off disappointment of an underwhelming league stage with a facile 47 off 28 balls. "It's like a fire-and-ice combination. They complement each other really well. And that's what I want to see. If someone is batting brilliantly, the other can take the back-seat and rotate the strike. It was required today to have a very good start. And they did (provide that)," Suryakumar told mediapersons after India's six-wicket win in the Super 4 game here on Sunday.

Having played together



since Punjab U-12 days, they know each other's game well and switch gears and swap roles long before the opposition can figure what is unfolding.

If one looks at their scoring pattern, Abhishek prefers the aerial route while Gill bisects the fielders on both sides with a surgeon's precision.

If Abhishek prefers heavy hitting, Gill's go-to method is silken grace.

Against spin, Gill looked a million dollars but he could take the tab of Abhishek's dinner bill as his friend bowled an extensive spell of left-arm spin to him prior to the Pakistan game.

Friendship off the field, Suryakumar feels always helps in growing good on-field understanding.

"It's really important to be very good friends off the field. When you open together, that bond matters. Sometimes you don't have to say anything in the middle," he said.

"Just a look (glance) is enough - to take a cheeky single, to complement each other if one's flying or if one's struggling. That friendship comes into the picture when they bat together," the skipper couldn't have summed it up more accurately.

If there is anything called net session obsession, these two who can match each other. Abhishek and Gill are sure to be present even on optional days when no one else bothers. Even if that meant playing a full 40-over game against Oman in the

sapping Abu Dhabi heat, taking a two-hour bus journey one way from Dubai and returning to the ICC Academy for a session the next day to help each other.

During the COVID phase, both stayed at Yuvraj Singh's house in Chandigarh, would do nets together and train with the white ball legend in his home gymnasium.

Suryakumar, a pioneer of innovative T20 hitting also decoded the two batters, especially Abhishek, who has grown by leaps and bounds in past six to eight months.

So what has changed for Abhishek?

"It's just the way he is. Abhishek is very selfless when it comes to his batting style. In the Powerplay, he goes hard, but even after that he knows what is required. He analyses situations, he's learning from every game.

"Most importantly, he never misses practice. Even if he doesn't want to bat, he'll be at the ground, doing something. If you keep working that hard, God always has plans for you," the skipper put forth his take.



BAAGHI 4 (A)
HINDI - 02:45 PM



JOLLY LLB 3 (UA16+)
HINDI - 10:40 AM, 05:15 PM
HINDI ATMOS - 12:00 PM, 03:15 PM, 06:30 PM



DEMON SLAYER INFINITY CASTLE (UA13+)
JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
11:00 AM, 01:50 PM



THE CONJURING LAST RITES (A)
ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
06:00 PM

INOX
SRINAGAR

TICKETS AT:
www.bookmyshow.com
www.inoxmovies.com
Paytm, Inox App

CALL 95416 13868
FOR ASSISTANCE WITH TICKETS

MOVIES
Schedule
TUESDAY, 23RD SEPT.



BOOK YOUR
TICKETS NOW