



Youth, startup ecosystems backbone of PM Modi's vision of New India: HM Amit Shah

Modi transformed youth from job seekers to job providers

India emerged as 3rd-largest startup, digital ecosystem

Country will rank among top 10 in global innovation index in next 3 yrs

NEP opened treasure trove for youth

GST reforms aimed at raising revenue to run country

KNO Monitoring Desk

Gandhi Nagar, Sept 23: Asserting that youth and startup ecosystems are the backbone of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of New



India, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said that during his 11-year tenure the Prime Minister has fulfilled the dream of transforming Indian youth from job seekers to job providers.

Addressing the inaugural session of the Startup Conclave 2025 here the Union Home Minister, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Before

2014, Indian youth had to leave the country to innovate, conduct research, or implement their ideas in the startup sector. In 2000, there was no concept of startups, systems, or ecosystems in India."

He said, "By 2014, there were fewer than 500 startups, and dreaming of startups was only feasible for children from affluent backgrounds." He emphasized that over the past

ten years, PM Modi launched Startup India in 2016, and today, India has become the fastest-growing country in building a world-class startup ecosystem.

Shah said that through Startup India, PM Modi has fulfilled the dream of transforming Indian youth from job seekers to job creators.

He has elevated startups beyond mere profit-making entities, making them a significant tool for self-reliance. The startup ecosystem has become a platform to address many of the country's challenges, accelerate innovation, and provide opportunities for youth creativity.

Amit Shah said that in the eight years from 2016 to 2024, India has become the world's third-largest startup ecosystem. Furthermore, over the past ten years, India has also emerged as the third-largest digital ecosystem, empowering the startup ecosystem. The digital ecosystem rapidly brings the ideas, vision, and courage of the youth to the forefront | [More on P6](#)

India must move from 'Make in India' to 'Think in India', says Army Chief

'Op Sindoor demonstrated value of self-reliant defence tech'

Sajid Raina

New Delhi, Sept 23: Stating that India must move from "Make in India" to "Think in India," Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi on Tuesday said that 'Operation Sindoor' demonstrated the positive impact of self-reliant technology, and the need of the hour is to remain ahead of evolving threats.

Addressing the inaugural session of the Tri Services Academia Technology Symposium (T-SATS) at the Manekshaw Centre, the Army Chief, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "We have to encourage domestic ideation, innovation, and system development by industry, think tanks, and academia."

He compared technological adaptation in warfare to a game of chess, saying that failing to think ahead would lead to setbacks.

He said, "While indigenous scalability has been shown, further investment in niche



technology and enterprise-scale implementation is required."

He said India's proposed air defence system, Sudarshan Chakra, would integrate multiple protective layers, starting with counter-drone systems and extending to counter-UAV and counter-hypersonic systems. "Some elements cannot not be discussed publicly for security reasons but I assure you that it's one of the best systems in the world," he added.

The Army Chief said the system would combine sensors, missiles, surveillance apparatus, and artificial

intelligence tools to provide both defence and offensive capabilities.

According to him, the concept was in the ideation phase but would be comprehensive in scope. He cautioned that adversaries were also improving their capabilities, pointing to the drones encountered during Operation Sindoor, which had shown advanced features including the use of artificial intelligence and visual navigation even after GPS jamming.

He said India's counter-drone and GPS-jamming systems had performed effectively during | [More on P6](#)

J&K floods: 150 lives lost, 178 injured, 33 missing

Over 13,000 houses damaged across UT

758 school buildings declared unsafe in Jammu

Owais Gul

Srinagar, Sept 23: Flash floods and cloudbursts that struck Jammu and Kashmir in August and September claimed 150 lives, left 33 persons missing, and caused property damage worth crores.

According to the figures available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) Kishtwar District recorded the highest number of casualties where 33 persons are still missing. "A total of 150 people lost their lives while 178 persons

were injured" data reveals, adding, "Over 13600 houses were damaged fully, severely or partially across the region during the recent natural calamities."

According to the figures 864 houses were damaged in Kashmir of which 16 were fully damaged, 57 severely and 791 partially.

An official told the KNO that the relief has already been disbursed in all these cases.

On agricultural losses, more than 12,500 hectares of land got affected and nearly 315 hectares were hit in Horticulture sector, primarily in Anantnag, Kulgam and Pulwama districts with estimated losses of about Rs 59 lakh.

In Jammu, 12,800 houses were damaged. Of them, 4,200 houses were | [More on P6](#)

Cabinet recommends Assembly autumn session from Oct 13

Statehood, reservation, highway issues expected to dominate proceedings

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Sept 23: The Cabinet on Wednesday decided to recommend to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha the summoning of the J&K Assembly on October 13.

Sources told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the Cabinet, which met this morning under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, decided to recommend to the LG the summoning of the Assembly on October 13.

"The session will be brief and may span seven days, from October 13 to 20," they disclosed, adding that the recommendation will | [More on P6](#)

CM Omar chairs cabinet meeting; key decisions taken



KT NEWS DESK

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday chaired a Cabinet

Meeting at the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar, where several important decisions pertaining to governance and | [More on P6](#)

SC dismisses petition seeking age-relaxation in jobs for displaced KPs

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Sept 23: The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed a petition seeking age-relaxation benefits in Central Government recruitment for displaced Kashmiri Pandits.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the plea, filed by Panun Kashmir Trust under Article 32 of the Constitution, asked for parity in age-relaxation for Group C and D posts, similar to what has been extended to victims of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots and the 2002 Gujarat riots.

A bench of Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep

Mehta heard the matter and dismissed the petition at the initial stage. The Court observed that decisions regarding age-relaxation and related benefits fall within the domain of policy-making and are not to be determined through constitutional writ jurisdiction.

At the beginning of the hearing, Justice Nath asked whether such an issue could be adjudicated under Article 32 and questioned if it was appropriate for the judiciary to intervene in a policy matter of this kind.

Appearing for the petitioners, Advocate-on-Record Sudarshan Rajan sought to argue that | [More on P6](#)

Jammu celebrates Maharaja Hari Singh's 130th birthday

LG Sinha pays tributes

KNO

Jammu, Sept 23: Streets in Jammu came alive with fervor and unity on Tuesday as thousands gathered to honor the 130th birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh, the last Dogra ruler of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The day, observed as a public holiday across the Union Territory, saw processions, rallies, and tributes that underscored the enduring legacy of the visionary leader known for his progressive reforms and commitment to justice.

According to the news



agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the celebrations kicked off early with a massive rally organized by the Yuva Rajput Sabha (YRS), which snaked through the heart of Jammu city, drawing participants from diverse

communities chanting slogans in praise of the Maharaja.

Members of the Shri Amar Kshatriya (Rajput) Sabha gathered at Maharaja Hari Singh Park near Jogi Gate, where floral tributes were laid at the statue,

accompanied by speeches, highlighting his role as a social reformer who championed education, women's rights, and welfare for the underprivileged.

"His motto, 'Justice is my Religion,' remains our guiding light," said one attendee, echoing sentiments shared widely on social media.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha led the official tributes, posting on X. "Tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh Ji on his Janm-Jayanti. A statesman of excellence & harbinger of change, he introduced landmark reforms to ensure welfare of common man. His legacy of inclusive governance, progressive vision & contributions to motherland continues to inspire us."

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh also joined commemorative events, | [More on P6](#)

Union Bank of India donates Rs 1 crore for J&K flood relief

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Sept 23: Union Bank of India on Tuesday extended support to the ongoing flood relief efforts in Jammu and Kashmir by contributing Rs 1 crore. A cheque was formally handed over to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at Civil Secretariat here.

Expressing gratitude, the Chief Minister appreciated the gesture of the Bank, noting that such contributions would significantly aid in relief and rehabilitation measures for the affected people. He said collective efforts from institutions and individuals play a crucial role in helping the State recover from the calamity.



Meanwhile, Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Banihal, Sajjad Shaheen and MLA Budhal, Javid Iqbal, called on the Chief Minister at the Civil Secretariat. They discussed key developmental issues

concerning their respective constituencies and sought the Government's intervention in addressing the pressing needs of the people.

The Chief Minister assured them that the | [More on P6](#)

UN chief warns world leaders of 'age of relentless human suffering'

Says global peace under siege, calls for cooperation

PTI

United Nations, Sept 23: With global peace and progress under siege, the United Nations chief challenged world leaders Tuesday to choose a future where the rule of law triumphs over raw power and where nations come together rather than scramble for self-interests.

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the UN's founders faced the same questions 80 years ago, but he told today's world leaders at the opening

of their annual gathering at the General Assembly that the choice of peace or war, law or lawlessness, cooperation or conflict, is "more urgent, more intertwined, more unforgiving."

"We have entered in an age of reckless disruption and relentless human suffering," he said in his annual "state of the World" speech. "The pillars of peace and progress are buckling under the weight of impunity, inequality and indifference."

But despite all the internal and external challenges facing the UN, he and General



Assembly President Annalena Baerbock pleaded with its

members not to give up. "If we stop doing the right things, evil

will prevail," Baerbock said in her opening remarks.

Guterres said the leaders' first obligation is to choose peace, and without naming any countries, he urged all parties -- including those in the Assembly chamber -- to stop supporting Sudan's warring parties.

He also didn't name Israel but used his strongest words against its actions in Gaza, saying the scale of death and destruction are the worst in his nearly nine years as secretary-general, and that "nothing can justify the collective punishment of the

Palestinian people."

While Guterres has repeatedly said only a court can determine whether Israel has committed genocide in Gaza, he referred to the case South Africa brought to the UN's highest court under the genocide convention by name -- and stressed its legally binding provisional measures, first and foremost to protect Palestinian civilians.

Since the International Court of Justice issued that ruling in January 2024, Guterres said, killings have intensified, and famine has been declared

in parts of Gaza. He said the court's measures "must be implemented -- fully and immediately."

The UN also is facing financial cuts as the US and some other nations pulled back funding or have yet to pay their dues. Guterres said aid cuts are "wreaking havoc," calling them "a death sentence for many."

US President Donald Trump, in one of the gathering's most closely watched speeches, said he felt the UN has "tremendous potential" | [More on P6](#)

Expedite pace of work to ensure timely completion: CS

Inspects Yatri Niwas at Kheerbhawani, inaugurates Mega Health Camp at Gbl

KT NEWS DESK

GANDERBAL, SEPTEMBER 23: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Tuesday inaugurated a Mega Health Camp at District Hospital Ganderbal under the Sewa Parv programme and Swasth Naari Sashakt Parivaar Abhiyaan.

The camp was inaugurated in the presence of Secretary, Health & Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah; Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD), Aijaz Asad; Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg; Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore along with other officers from district administration.

As part of the Abhiyaan, a wide range of healthcare services were made available to the public. Senior citizens above 70 years of age were issued Golden Health Cards under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, enabling them to access free and quality healthcare services.

The camp also featured



Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) screenings, general medical check-ups, Tuberculosis (TB) screenings,

and mental health stalls, benefiting large sections of the community.

On the occasion, the Chief

Secretary also reviewed several ongoing health infrastructure projects in the district, including the

50-bed Critical Care Block and the District Integrated Public Health Care Lab, a state-of-the-art facility along with block-level laboratories which will function on a hub and spoke model.

He also inspected the Mortuary Building, Administrative Building and Public Canteen being constructed under UT Capex Scheme.

Later, the Chief Secretary visited the Kheer Bhawani Temple at Tulmulla to review the ongoing Yatri Niwas project.

He inspected the progress of the work and received a detailed briefing on timelines for the remaining components. Secretary, RDD, Aijaz Asad, apprised him of the current status and pace of execution.

Emphasizing the significance of the project, the Chief Secretary stressed the importance of adhering to approved timelines and maintaining high-quality standards. He directed the executing agencies to expedite the pace of work to ensure timely completion.

Kupwara admin extends relief to fire-affected families

KT NEWS DESK

KUPWARA, SEPTEMBER 23: The district administration Kupwara Tuesday provided an immediate relief to families affected in the unfortunate fire incident in Punzwa Villgam causing damage to four residential houses last night.

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, a team led by Tehsildar Villgam, visited the spot and distributed interim

monetary relief among five affected families along with kitchen sets, tarpaulins, blankets, and one month's advance ration.

Expressing sympathy with the fire victims, the Deputy Commissioner assured full support from the administration, and directed assessment of property loss for sanction of relief under SDRF norms on immediate basis.

He also appealed to the general public to observe safety precautions in order to avoid fire incidents.

Field Day organised for farmers

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 23: A farmers' Field Day focused on 'Improved Technologies for Higher Pulse and Maize Production and Quality Seed production for Sustainable Crop Production'

was organized by SKUAST-K at Dryland Agriculture Research Station (DARS), Rangreth.

On the occasion, Dr. M. Ashraf Bhat, Associate Director Research, briefed the participants (farmers of three Zones and Agri. Officials of district Budgam) about latest technologies and practices for enhancing pulse and maize productivity in the region.

He impressed upon farmers to use SKUAST-K released varieties in cereal, pulse and forage crops to combat harmful effects of changing climatic scenario.

In his address, Dr. Bhat highlighted outreach activities and achievements of HADP Project

No. 1 for strengthening Seed System in the region.

The programme also included a field visit, where farmers were given live demonstrations of improved crop varieties and scientific cultivation methods.

Dr. Ajaz A. Lone, Professor I/c, AICRP on Pulses also highlighted technological advancement of pulse cultivation in temperate Kashmir ecologies.

A large number of farmers attended the event and interacted with scientists, gaining practical insights on sustainable farming practices to improve productivity and profitability.

The event was organized in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Budgam and District Agriculture Office, Budgam and was sponsored by the Indian Institute of Pulses Research (IIPR), Kanpur and the Indian Institute of Maize Research (IIMR), Ludhiana.

Sewa Parv: Budgam sees diverse activities

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 23: As part of the ongoing Sewa Parv celebrations, district Budgam Tuesday witnessed a wide range of community-oriented activities organised across different blocks, focusing on cleanliness, sustainability, cultural awareness, and agricultural best practices.

At Block S.K. Pora, a cultural Ladishah performance and a play were staged in collaboration with Government High School S.K. Pora and Government Middle School Razwen. The performances, delivered in the local Kashmiri language, emphasized eco-friendly behaviour and sustainable everyday habits, ensuring the message of Sewa Parv reached the local population in an impactful and relatable manner.

At HSS Bugam, Chadoora, a wall painting activity was carried out under Sewa Parv, where students and volunteers depicted themes of cleanliness, environmental protection, and social responsibility. The creative initiative not only beautified the surroundings but also spread awareness through art. In

Beerwah block, Horticulture department Budgam organised demonstrations on orchard drainage, water harvesting, and fruit and vegetable preservation. These practical sessions aimed to equip farmers with sustainable practices to improve productivity and reduce post-harvest losses.

Meanwhile, in Ratsun Block, a Zero Waste Celebration Festival was observed, highlighting the importance of eco-friendly practices, waste minimization, and responsible resource use, thereby encouraging community participation in sustainable living.

Additionally, cleaning drives were undertaken in and around SBM assets at Block Narbal, reinforcing the commitment towards hygiene, sanitation, and maintaining public infrastructure under Swachh Bharat Mission.

The day's activities reflected the collective efforts of schools, departments, and local communities in carrying forward the spirit of Sewa Parv, blending culture, innovation, awareness, and service to inspire a cleaner, greener, and more responsible society.

HRD prog held at Mujgund Srinagar

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 23: A Human Resource Development (HRD) programme on 'Integrated Pest Management' (IPM) was held Tuesday at Mujgund, Srinagar.

The event, organized by the Central Integrated Pest Management Centre (CIPMC), Srinagar in collaboration with the State Agriculture Department, Zone Mujgund, witnessed active participation from local farmers and agricultural officials.

Dr. M.K. Arya, Deputy Director (PP), CIPMC Jammu, was the chief guest in the event. In his address, Dr. Arya emphasized the significance of adopting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices to reduce excessive dependence on chemical pesticides. He highlighted the environmental and health benefits of IPM, urging farmers to incorporate biological and cultural methods for sustainable pest control. Assistant Plant Protection Officer (PP), CIPMC Srinagar,

delivered a detailed presentation on the National Pest Surveillance System Mobile App, explaining its user-friendly features and multiple benefits for the farming community. The app enables real-time pest reporting, expert consultation, and timely advisories, thereby enhancing pest management and crop productivity.

Agriculture Extension Officer (AEO), Mujgund, briefed the attendees on the implementation of centrally sponsored schemes aimed at strengthening grassroots-level agriculture. In-charge Marketing Officer, delivered an insightful lecture on Marketing Dynamics and Entrepreneurship Development, motivating farmers towards agribusiness ventures. The programme was well-received by the local farming community, who expressed their appreciation for the informative sessions and practical insights provided. Such initiatives play a vital role in empowering farmers with knowledge and tools for sustainable agriculture and improved livelihoods.

DLSA Sgr raises awareness on POSH Act, drug abuse

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 23: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar, organized a legal awareness programme on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act and Drug Abuse at Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Zadibal.

The initiative was aimed at sensitizing students about their legal rights and responsibilities,

while also highlighting the importance of legal awareness in empowering youth to build a just and responsible society.

The programme was conducted under the chairmanship of Tasleem Arief, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, and held under the supervision of Sajad Ur Rehman, Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA Srinagar.

During the session,

Tasneem Kausar, Deputy Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsel (LADC), addressed the students on the provisions and significance of the POSH Act, underscoring the need for awareness to ensure a safe and respectful environment.

In another session, Panel Lawyer, DLSA Srinagar, delivered an insightful lecture on the menace of drug abuse, its legal consequences, and the social

responsibility of youth in combating this challenge.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from the students, who engaged actively with the speakers and expressed keen interest in understanding their rights and duties.

The interactive sessions served as an important step towards nurturing an aware and empowered generation capable of contributing positively to society.

Sewa Parv: Bandipora witnesses series of activities

KT NEWS DESK

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 23: Continuing the spirit of Sewa Parv 2025, a series of cleanliness, awareness, and community-oriented activities were Tuesday carried out across district Bandipora by various departments and municipal bodies with active public involvement.

Wetlands and Wular Conservation Management Authority (WUCMA) organized an awareness programme to sensitise fisherfolk about sustainable fishing practices, and also highlighted linkages with social welfare schemes for their welfare.

Municipal Committee Hajin conducted a door-to-door plastic waste collection drive along with cleanliness campaigns at the Animal Husbandry office and the Well Baby Clinic.

Similarly, Municipal Committee Sumbal carried out an extensive door-to-door awareness campaign on source segregation and scientific waste management. Awareness programmes and on-site visits were also conducted under PMAY (U) to guide beneficiaries.

The Committee further undertook activities



including cleanliness of Jhelum banks, clearance of community toilets, registration of vendors under PM SVANidhi, verification of PMAY beneficiaries, and sanitation of the revered Ziyarat Sharif Syed Abdullah Shah Bukhari.

Social Forestry Range Bandipora, Division Baramulla, organized an awareness programme at Panchayat Ghar Ashtangoo on reducing single-use plastics. The programme saw participation of locals, students, and

staff, and was followed by a plantation drive to encourage eco-friendly practices.

Municipal Council Bandipora also carried out several activities under Sewa Parv, including clearance of community toilets near Papchan Bridge, cleanliness drives on the banks of Wular Lake at Lankreshipora and near Jamia Masjid Nusoo, awareness among households residing along the Jhelum at Lankreshipora, besides clearance of identified hotspots along the Onagam-Kaloosa road.

10th Ayurveda Day celebrated



KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 23: AYUSH Health & Wellness Centre, Kenihama celebrated the 10th Ayurveda Day here Tuesday with series of activities under this year's theme 'Ayurveda for People & Planet'.

The celebrations were held under the guidance of District AYUSH Officer Budgam, Dr. Firdous Malik.

Addressing the celebrations, Medical Officer, Dr. Nusrat Bashir highlighted the importance of Ayurveda, stating that it is not just a system of healthcare but a complete science of life, based on the principle of harmony between the individual and the environment. She said that the observance of Ayurveda Day reflects the collective resolve to harness

the full potential of Ayurveda for global wellbeing and a healthier planet.

As part of the programme, lectures were delivered on the role of Ayurveda in healthy living and disease management. Free medical check-ups were also conducted for the needy and disease-specific medicines were distributed among the patients. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material was also disseminated for creating public awareness regarding preventive healthcare practices.

An awareness lecture on Yoga was also organised on the occasion, highlighting its significance for overall physical and mental well-being. Besides, Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) screening of individuals was undertaken, while special focus was laid on anaemia screening of the needy people.

Sewa Parv: Horticulture Deptt Anantnag holds awareness

KT NEWS DESK

ANANTNAG, SEPTEMBER 23: As part of the ongoing Sewa Parv 2025 celebrations, Horticulture department, Anantnag Tuesday organised an awareness-cum-capacity building programme (CBP) and Machinery Show at Kokernag.

The programme aimed to educate orchardists to adopt modern and scientific horticulture practices to enhance productivity, improve fruit quality, and maintain orchard health throughout the seasons.

Experts from the department

provided detailed demonstrations and practical advice to farmers.

Speaking on the occasion, SDM Kokernag, Prince Kumar, who was the chief guest, said that Sewa Parv provides an important platform for farmers and common people to directly engage with government officers, share their concerns, and receive first-hand knowledge about welfare schemes.

Subject Matter Specialist, Horticulture Development Anantnag highlighted the department's flagship schemes and their benefits, urging orchardists to avail the facilities under various government programmes.

Earlier, HDO Kokernag gave a detailed overview of the achievements and ongoing initiatives of Horticulture Zone Kokernag.

During the event, orchardists actively interacted with officials, shared their challenges, and received responses from the experts.

Later, SDM Kokernag distributed farm machinery among eligible beneficiaries of zone Kokernag in the presence of other officers.

Tehsildar Kokernag, HDO Brakpora, other officers of the department, and a number of orchardists and stakeholders also attended the program.



‘PCOS increasing among women in Kashmir’

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Sep 23: Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), one of the most common hormonal disorders among women of reproductive age, is becoming a growing health concern in Kashmir and across the country.

Doctors warn that the lack of awareness and delayed treatment often worsen the condition, leading to infertility, diabetes, and heart problems later in life.

Dr Shazia, a Gynaecologist at GMC 1 Srinagar explained that PCOS occurs when women's ovaries produce higher-than-normal amounts of male hormones (androgens). "This hormonal imbalance interferes with the regular release of eggs during the menstrual cycle. As a result, multiple small cysts can form in the



ovaries," she said.

Dr Rukhsana Akhter, a gynaecologist posted in south Kashmir, said PCOS does not have a single cause but is linked to several factors. She said that excess androgen production disrupts ovulation, high insulin levels increase androgen production, leading to irregular cycles and weight gain.

"Women with a family history of PCOS are more prone to the disorder, and sedentary lifestyle, poor diet, and stress are major contributors," she added.

Gynaecologists warn that untreated PCOS has both short-term and long-term consequences. "Initially, patients complain of irregular periods, excessive hair growth, acne, or weight gain. But over time, PCOS can lead to infertility, type-2 diabetes, high blood pressure, endometrial cancer, and serious mental health issues like

depression," Dr Rukhsana added

She said that while PCOS cannot be completely cured, its effects can be managed effectively. Lifestyle modification is the first line of treatment. "Weight control through regular exercise and a balanced diet is crucial," Dr Rukhsana added.

Doctors said that women experiencing irregular cycles or excessive hair growth should seek medical advice early. They added that depending on symptoms, doctors may prescribe hormonal therapy, insulin-sensitising agents, or fertility treatment.

According to doctors, counselling helps patients deal with stress and anxiety linked to PCOS. They urged women not to ignore symptoms, adding, "We see a rising trend of PCOS among young girls, even teenagers. Timely consultation and lifestyle changes can prevent lifelong complications."—(KNO)

Omar-led Govt will fight for people's rights: Dy CM

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Sep 23: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Tuesday said that despite facing "tough times", the elected government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah would continue to "fight for the rights of people" and "won't step back".

Talking to reporters here, the Deputy CM said the government will never succumb to the pressure. "Some people want the government to resign, but we won't do that. We are the workers of Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah. We will never succumb to the pressure and will continue to fight for the rights of the people," he asserted.

Choudhary said that all the promises made by the National Conference (NC) leadership will be fulfilled in the five-year tenure. "We have been



given five years to fulfil our promises. Only ten months have elapsed so far, and we will fulfil all our promises," he said.

The Dy CM further added that the government has been facing hurdles due to the limited powers in the Union Territory. "The government doesn't have a free hand under the dual governance system. Let the statehood be

restored, we will show what the government is capable of doing," he said while replying to the statements of the Leader of Opposition (LoP) Sunil Sharma.

He stated that the government has been working diligently to advocate for the rights of its people.

The Deputy CM said the issue regarding the restoration of statehood and special

status was also discussed in the cabinet meeting today. "Leave statehood aside, the LG has not finalised the business rules," he added.

Choudhary blamed the opposition parties, including BJP and PDP, for neglecting the development during their tenure. He said they must answer why the issues regarding the traffic jams have not been resolved during their rule.

The Deputy Chief Minister, after reviewing the ongoing road-widening project (Boulevard Road at Nehru Park), said that the project would be inaugurated on October 17, which will improve the traffic flow and enhance the tourist experience once the project is completed.

The government is committed to finishing the work within the set deadline, he added—(KNO)

CM's advisor slams PSA against MLA

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Sep 23: Advisor to the Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, on Tuesday said the Public Safety Act (PSA) should not have been invoked against Doda legislator Mehraj Malik. He said the issue will be raised in the upcoming Assembly session in Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking to reporters here, Wani, said the government has already made it clear that such a law should not have been applied in this case. "He (MLA Doda) was only pressing for better medical facilities in his constituency. The matter should have been resolved through dialogue, not through detention under the PSA," he said.

He added that the detention of the MLA will be a key point of discussion during the upcoming Assembly session, scheduled to begin on October 13.

Responding to statements



made by opposition leaders, Wani said the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has asked the central government to take over maintenance of the National Highway (NH) if they are unable to maintain it properly.

"It is clear that the National Highway does not fall under the jurisdiction of the elected government, yet the blame is being put on us. Similarly, law & order is not under our jurisdiction either, but again, we are being blamed. The opposition should understand these facts before making misleading statements,"

he said.

The CM's Advisor further accused the People's Democratic Party (PDP) of maintaining friendly ties with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Reacting to a recent meeting between a PDP leader and the Lieutenant Governor, he said, "They seem keen on keeping their ties intact with the BJP. I don't understand what they are crying about."

Commenting on the economic situation, he said the tourism sector has suffered significantly since the April 22 attack in Pahalgam, and so have the transport and business sectors. "Transporters who are unable to pay their monthly instalments due to the post-April situation should be granted some relief for at least a few months," he suggested.

Wani added that recent floods have caused heavy losses to fruit growers and called for adequate compensation to be provided to them—(KNO)

8-foot-long python rescued in Rajouri

UMAISAR GULL GANIE

Rajouri, Sep 23: An eight-foot-long python, which had captured a wild jackal, was successfully rescued by the wildlife protection team, police, and locals in the Nowshera area of Rajouri district on Tuesday, officials said.

Wildlife Warden Rajouri-Poonch, Nadeem Iqbal Mirza said that they received information from locals about the presence of a huge snake. "Along with police teams, we launched a rescue operation and successfully rescued the python," he said.

Mirza said it was an Indian Rock Python rescued in the village, measuring approximately 7-8 feet in length.

The warden said the python had hunted and swallowed a jackal. "The python was rescued and later released back into a protected forest area," he added—(KNO)

NH Closure Fallout

Fallen apples rot in orchards

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Pulwama, Sep 23: In Kashmir's apple heartland, orchards are strewn with fallen fruit this year, but instead of offering relief to struggling farmers, the "Giran" apples have turned into a fresh source of worry.

Locally known as "Giran", these are apples that fall prematurely from trees before harvest. Growers said that due to unusual weather and heavy fruit fall this season, nearly 30-40 per cent of the crop is "Giran". Yet, unlike past years, there are no takers for the produce.

Traditionally, small makeshift roadside mandis would spring up across Pulwama, Shopian, and other apple belts where "Giran" apples found ready buyers for juice factories and low-grade processing.

However, repeated closures of the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway have disrupted supplies so severely that these mandis were forced to shut down.

"Earlier, Giran apples at least helped us recover some costs. Even if sold at Rs 100-150 per crate, it was a relief compared to nothing," said Nazir Ahmad, a grower from Pulwama. "But this year, after highway issues, traders closed their mandis. The fruit we had procured rotted in front of us because it could not be transported outside. Now, no one wants to buy it."

The situation has left hundreds of youth, who earned seasonal income by trading in "Giran", without work. "The Giran business relies on quick movement. If the fruit doesn't reach outside mandis within

two days, it spoils. Buyers know this risk, so they simply stopped coming," explained a trader at Jabli Pora Fruit Mandi.

For many farmers, "Giran" apples once acted as a lifeline—bringing in modest earnings that supported their expenses on pesticides, labour, and packaging. Now, growers say they are forced to watch helplessly as the fruit rots in their orchards.

"This is not just about a low-grade apple; it is about livelihoods," said Abdul Hameed, another grower from Shopian. "Thousands of families, from pickers to packers to transporters, are tied to this trade. If the government doesn't take immediate steps, this part of our economy will collapse completely."

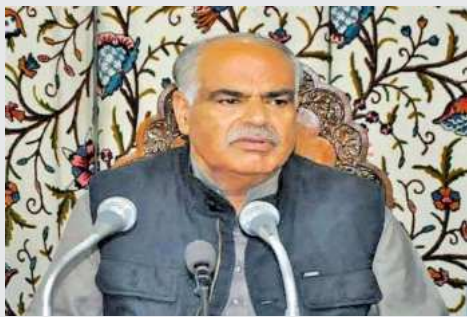
JAHANGIR GANAIE

Anantnag, Sep 23: "Law will take its own course in every matter and no one is above the law," Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) General Secretary J&K (Organisation), Ashok Koul said on Tuesday, while commenting on the detention of MLA Doda, Mehraj Malik, under the Public Safety Act (PSA).

Speaking to reporters here, Koul said, "Even National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah has himself admitted that what Mehraj Malik said against a government officer was wrong. So, what questions can the NC raise now? Law is doing its work and nobody is above it; be it the BJP or the NC."

On the restoration of statehood to Jammu & Kashmir, the BJP leader said that both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah have already assured it on the floor of the Parliament. "The PM and HM have assured that the statehood will be given back very soon," he said.

Speaking about the damages caused by recent floods in parts of J&K, Koul said the Union Territory government has conducted the necessary assessment through its revenue, agriculture, and horticulture departments. "The report will be



forwarded to the Union Government. Home Minister Amit Shah has already released Rs 209 crore to the SDRF, and a comprehensive compensation package is expected very soon. Whosoever has suffered damages will be compensated," he said.

On the issue of the upcoming assembly session, he urged the administration to take into consideration the schedule of important Hindu festivals in the coming month while finalising the dates. "Many Hindu festivals are approaching, and the government must ensure that the assembly session is scheduled accordingly," the BJP leader said—(KNO)

CRPF reiterates bond with Kashmiri's: DG GP Singh

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Sep 23: As a show of solidarity and cultural celebration, Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), GP Singh Tuesday reaffirmed that the force stands with the people of Kashmir "in every situation."

The occasion marked the flagging off of the 3rd edition of the Yashasvini High-Altitude Women's Bike Expedition 2025 from Srinagar's historic Lal Chowk.

The event, infused with tributes, cultural programs and community participation, highlighted not only the CRPF's operational spirit but also its social connect with the Valley, as locals, women riders and officers joined hands in a journey of courage and resilience.

At the start of the ceremony, DG, GP Singh paid glowing tributes to the martyrs of the 2001 Parliament attack, saluting their sacrifice and remembering those honoured with the Ashoka Chakra, India's highest

gallantry award.

Adding colour to the occasion, local artists performed Kashmiri folk music and Roul dance, creating a festive atmosphere. Cultural groups also showcased performances reflecting Kashmir's rich traditions, drawing applause from the audience, which included women and children from Lal Chowk and adjoining areas.

DG Singh, while addressing the gathering, said, "This expedition is not just a test of endurance, but a reminder of CRPF's contribution to India's internal security and its everlasting commitment to the people of Kashmir. Your encouragement inspires us to serve better."

He said the seven-day high-altitude expedition will see an all-women CRPF team cover nearly 1,400 km from Lal Chowk to Pangong Tso and back, crossing Khardung La at an altitude of 18,000 feet. He extended his greetings to the riders, calling them "torchbearers of courage and inspiration." He also acknowledged



the officers leading the expedition as, DIG Balav Sharma, Brigadier SP Rai and DK Singh, with appreciating their guidance in preparing the team for extreme conditions including sub-zero temperatures and rough terrain.

It is worth mentioning, the Yashasvini High-Altitude CRPF Bike Expedition is an exclusive Mahila Bike series that began in March 2023 with the Delhi-Jagdalpur ride. Its second edition was flagged off in September 2023 from Srinagar,

Shillong, and Kanyakumari to Kevadia. This year's edition, flagged off from Kashmir's heart, adds special significance, strengthening the CRPF's message of unity, courage, and people's connect.

Moreover, a statement issued as accessed by KNO reads: to carry forward the message of patriotism and national integration, the 3rd Edition Yashasvini High Altitude CRPF Bike Expedition 2025 was flagged off today by, Gyanendra Pratap Singh,

IPS, DG CRPF from the iconic clock tower at Lal Chowk, Srinagar. It reads as, the bike expedition comprising 33 fearless women bikers shall undertake a journey from Srinagar to the breath-taking Pangong Tso Lake via Khardung La in Ladakh showcasing a vibrant display of women empowerment, resilience, grit, and teamwork of CRPF's women warriors.

"The nine-day bike rally shall cover approximately 1,400 km culminating with their return to Srinagar on October 1, 2025. The bikers will carry the National Flag along with the Force's message to the nation: "Desh Ke Hum Hain Rakshak", the statement reads.

It reads as, speaking on the occasion, G.P. Singh, IPS, DG CRPF, congratulated the women bikers, stating that they are the torchbearers of the CRPF and deserve special appreciation and gratitude. He also reiterated that the CRPF stands with the people of Kashmir in every

situation and expressed gratitude to the local population for their continued support.

"Also present on the occasion were Dr. Anamika Singh, President, CWWA, Sundari Yadav, Zonal Head CWWA, Deepak Kumar, ADG (Training) CRPF, Rajesh Kumar, ADG, J&K Zone CRPF, SJM Gilani, SDG (Coordination) PHQ J&K Police and Vidhi Kumar Birdi, IGP Kashmir Zone, Vineet Brij Lal, IG Kashmir Ops Sector CRPF, Pawan Kumar Sharma, IG Srinagar Sector CRPF and senior officers of CRPF, J&K Police and civil administration," it reads with adding the event was also marked by vibrant cultural performances, including the Kashmiri folk dance Roul, and a Taekwondo demonstration.

The statement also reads, DG CRPF honoured the Veer Naris and the families of the martyrs who were specially invited and assured them of all possible support and timely assistance—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Time For A Sustainable Urban Vision For J&K

The proposal for a comprehensive urban revitalisation strategy in Jammu & Kashmir could not have come at a more critical time. As the region grapples with rapid urbanisation, traffic congestion, and environmental degradation, the need for a forward-looking, ecologically sensitive urban policy has never been more urgent. The strategic vision outlined, drawing inspiration from successful models like Kerala's, offers a transformative pathway toward sustainable development. At the

heart of this proposal is the establishment of a dedicated Urban Commission, which would provide the institutional framework needed to coordinate planning, implement reforms, and ensure accountability. Such a body is essential to address the haphazard growth that has plagued cities like Srinagar, where infrastructure struggles to keep pace with population demands. The Commission could spearhead much-needed integration of sewage, stormwater, and sewerage systems, which

is a fundamental step toward conserving vital water bodies like Dal Lake and preventing urban flooding. The innovative River Metro project proposed for the Jhelum, Chenab, and other waterways represents a visionary approach to decongesting cities while promoting eco-friendly transport. Similarly, the push for electric mobility, in partnership with expert institutions, aligns with global sustainability goals and could significantly improve air quality. The plan to develop boardwalks

around Khushalsar and Gilsar lakes is another commendable suggestion, one that would not only protect these ecosystems from encroachment but also create vibrant public spaces for recreation and tourism. These ideas highlight a broader philosophy: urban development need not come at the cost of environmental or cultural heritage. By learning from states that have balanced growth with sustainability, Jammu & Kashmir can avoid repeating past mistakes and instead build resilient,

livable cities. The government must now act decisively to translate these proposals into action. Prioritising lake conservation, green mobility, and participatory planning will require political will, adequate funding, and community engagement. Delays will only deepen the urban crisis. By embracing this strategic vision, Jammu & Kashmir can pave the way for a future that is not only prosperous but also sustainable and inclusive. The time to build that future is now.

Seeds Of The Future:
Clean Plant Programme Gaining Momentum
Transforming Indian horticulture with disease-free planting material

Press Information Bureau

There are growing challenges posed by climate change, as well as biotic and abiotic threats to plant health. These challenges directly translate into agricultural losses, reducing farmers' income and overall productivity. India has invested significantly in boosting farm productivity, yet systemic pathogens (primarily viruses) continue to pose a major threat, causing significant yield losses. These pathogens reduce crop quantity, quality and longevity. By the time symptoms appear, it is often impossible for farmers to manage diseases in the field. Starting with disease-free planting materials has therefore been recognized as the most effective strategy to combat these challenges.

To address this, the importance of preventive measures such as ensuring high standards in seed quality and implementing clean plant programmes- have been widely recognised. Such measures not only safeguard plant health but also come with the added advantage of being free from adverse side effects. Accordingly, on 9th August 2024, the Union Cabinet approved the Clean Plant Programme (CPP) proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

Overview: The Imperative for Clean Planting Material

The Clean Plant Programme (CPP) was launched as a major initiative to provide farmers with access to high-quality, virus-free planting material. The National Horticulture Board (NHB) serves as an implementing and executing agency in association with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), which oversees technical progress and facilitates capacity building. The initiative involves a significant investment of Rs 1,765.67 crore, which also includes an Asian Development Bank approved loan of \$98 million in December 2023.

What is CPP?
India's Clean Plant Program (CPP), conceptualized by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare in collaboration with the

Asian Development Bank, is a novel initiative aimed at ensuring healthy, disease-free planting material of key fruit crops. The program seeks to enhance farmers' productivity and profitability, ultimately boosting India's global competitiveness.

The initiative has started to take its shape with the following planned developments:

9 Clean Plant Centres are to be established across the country to ensure disease-free, productive planting material. Of these, 3 will be set up in Maharashtra at a cost of Rs 300 crore-Pune (grapes), Nagpur (oranges), and Solapur (pomegranates).

Modern nurseries are to be developed, with financial support of Rs 3 crore for large nurseries and Rs 1.5 crore for medium ones. These nurseries will provide 8 crore disease-free seedlings to farmers every year.

International cooperation is to be undertaken with countries such as Israel and the Netherlands for implementation of the programme.

A national-level laboratory is to be set up in Pune for research on original plant species under CPP.

On-Ground Actions and Progress

The following showcase the key on-ground activities undertaken as part of CPP:

CPP Website Launch: The official CPP website has been launched as a central hub for resources, updates, and insights to revolutionize horticulture in India. The link to the website: <https://cpp-beta.nhb.gov.in/>

Hazard Analysis (HA): A critical step in profiling viruses and virus-like agents, forming the foundation for certification and Clean Plant Centers.

Grapevine: ICAR-IARI (New Delhi) and ICAR-NRC for Grapes (Pune) surveyed key grape-growing regions (Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Jammu & Kashmir, Mizoram). A total of 578 samples were tested, completing hazard analysis for grapevine.

Apple: 535 samples collected from Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Punjab are under testing, with hazard analysis in progress.

Citrus: Preparations have begun for hazard analysis, paving the way for healthier, virus-free citrus cultivation.

Clean Plant Center: India's first Clean Plant Center is in progress, with the bidding process for its design currently underway.

Nursery Visits:

October 23-24, 2024: National Horticulture Board (NHB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) officers visited grape, pomegranate, and guava nurseries in Nashik and Ahmednagar (Maharashtra) to study nursery ecosystems, design, operations, and cost structures.

November 18-22, 2024: The same team visited nurseries in Jammu & Kashmir to evaluate apple and temperate crop cultivation practices in cooler climates.

Lab Assessments: A step towards strengthening of diagnostic and computational capabilities

Between January 16-20, 2025, scientists and officials from ICAR, NHB, and ADB visited public and private laboratories across India. These visits evaluated laboratory capabilities for developing a bioinformatics pipeline for HTS data analysis under CPP. This will help scientists more quickly and efficiently check for virus in many types of crops and better test nursery plants to keep them safe and healthy.

From Source to Soil: Producing Clean Planting Material

The following diagram illustrates the step-by-step process of acquiring, testing, and propagating clean planting material under the CPP:

If the acquired plant material tests negative for pathogens, it undergoes re-testing and is then used to produce and maintain disease-free mother plants. These plants provide clean planting material that is distributed through accredited nurseries to farmers. If the material tests positive, virus elimination is carried out using therapies such as tissue culture, heat, or cryo-therapy, followed by plant propagation to ensure disease-free planting stock.

Key Benefits

The key benefits of CPP are as follows:

Farmers: Access to virus-free, high-quality planting material, for boosting crop yields and enhancing farmer income opportunities.

Nurseries: Provides streamlined certification processes and offers infrastructure support, enabling nurseries to effectively propagate clean planting material and promote growth and sustainability.

Consumers: Delivers superior produce free from viruses, improving the taste, appearance, and nutritional value of fruits available to consumers.

Exports: Strengthens India's position as a leading global exporter by focusing on higher-quality, disease-free fruits

Equity and Inclusivity: Ensures affordable access to clean plant material for all farmers, regardless of landholding size or socio-economic status; actively engages women farmers in planning and implementation by providing resources, training, and decision-making opportunities; and develops region-specific clean plant varieties and technologies to address India's diverse agro-climatic conditions.

Alignment with other initiatives

CPP is set to boost India's horticultural sector while aligning with Mission LiFE and the One Health initiatives to promote sustainable and eco-friendly agricultural practices. Moreover, through plant health management, CPP helps farmers adapt to climate change, as rising temperatures not only trigger extreme weather events but also influence pest and disease behaviour.

Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)

An India-led global mass movement to nudge individual and community action to protect and preserve the environment. Introduced by PM Narendra Modi at COP26 in Glasgow on 1st November 2021, it draws from India's rich cultural heritage, which promotes conservation of natural resources and harmony with nature. It seeks to channel the efforts of individuals and communities into a global mass movement of positive behavioural change.

National One Health Mission

One Health is a multidisciplinary approach that unites human, animal, and environmental health sectors to solve the health, productivity, and conservation challenges. In India, with its one of the largest livestock populations, diverse wildlife, dense human population, and diverse flora, there are both opportunities for coexistence and risks of disease spread. Events like the COVID-19 pandemic, Lumpy Skin Disease in cattle, and Avian Influenza highlight the need to look beyond human health and include livestock, wildlife, and the environment. By leveraging the strengths of each sector, One Health promotes integrated and agile responses to achieve the goal of 'Health and Wellness for All. The Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC), in its 21st meeting, approved setting up the National One Health Mission.

Policy Alignment: CPP and MIDH

The Clean Plant Programme complements the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)- a centrally sponsored scheme, launched in 2014-15 for holistic growth of horticulture sector.

Quality planting material and micro-irrigation are among the key components under MIDH in boosting productivity of horticulture crops from 12.10 MT/ha in 2019-20 to 12.56 MT/ha in 2024-25 (2nd advance estimates).

Conclusion

The Clean Plant Programme is progressing, with actions already in motion and planned developments set to accelerate its reach and impact. Looking ahead, CPP is set to advance further with concrete on-ground actions - including wider consultations with nurseries for certification; development of training programmes for relevant authorities, preparation of a hazard analysis protocol for citrus, diagnostic protocols for mango, guava, litchi, avocado and dragon fruit; and the release of matching-grant and cost-norm guidelines for nurseries. CPP is no longer a vision - it is emerging as a transformative step to strengthen India's horticulture, empower farmers, and help the sector truly bloom.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

How Living In A Digital World Changes Kids' Brains
Neuroimaging data confirms what frustrated parents and teachers have long suspected

Amanda Sacks-Zimmerman

I recently wrote about how children and adolescents who spend more time in digital environments than they do having real-world experiences (see "Getting Our Kids' Brains Back on Track"). One of the more disturbing aspects of this trend is how neurotypical brains that are not exposed to critical experiences can produce the same symptoms we see in neurodivergent brains.

Studies have shown that neural connections are different in the brains of children with attention disorders-and that early functional changes (meaning those in brain networks, not visible in brain structures) may be precursors to the white matter changes that are plainly visible later on. In any brain, functional differences can become permanent if no one intervenes to change the environment and behaviors.

We can literally see the results in the intricate frontal lobe connections that appear on advanced neuroimaging scans. Kids who spend time in three-dimensional environments have rich connections between their frontal lobes and other parts of their brains. Kids who spend hours consuming digital content don't. That difference has nothing to do with a diagnosis of ADHD or other



cognitive disorder-the phenomenon exists independent of a diagnosis.

The Effect Starts Early

MRI scans show changes in the gray matter of children as young as 3 to 5 years of age who consume lots of digital content. The changes are notable in brain areas responsible for language development, reading, empathy, and other higher-order cognitive skills. Over time, as these children continue

to truncate the time spent in real experience, we can expect to see the effects become even more pronounced.

One objective measure can be found in the working memory section of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS). Neuropsychologists use WAIS to evaluate many areas of cognitive ability; one section evaluates working memory, which is critical in the processes of decision-making,

reasoning, and behavior. WAIS has been revised several times over the years, and with each edition, we can see the scores that are considered normal for different age groups, extrapolated from thousands of people who took the test.

The WAIS-R was released in 1981; at that time, the working memory raw score (number of correct responses) considered normal for teens ages 18-19 was 14. When WAIS-5 was released in 2024, the normalized raw score for that age group was 12.

A drop of two points over 40 years may not seem worrisome, but it's a telling change-especially when you consider how much technology has intruded into teen lives in the second half of that period. What I see in patients today suggests that the decline is hastening, and the next normed score will show another drop, potentially even larger.

Intervening Earlier Is Better

We cannot wait until a child reaches adulthood and enters an advanced working world where executive functions are expected to be top of mind. We could better prepare our youth for adulthood if we integrated multifaceted executive function into classroom settings throughout education. (I wrote about how we might do that in my previous post.)

Teachers and parents have observed the

changes in children over the past decade; the data now confirms what we all can see. The good news is that, armed with this information, we can reverse the trend and get our kids' brains back on track for developing the skills they need to succeed.

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Online: Amanda Sacks-Zimmerman Ph.D. at Weill Cornell

Source: Psychology Today

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Ayurvedic medicines have less side effect: Sakeena

Addresses 10th National Ayurveda Day celebrations

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 23:

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Tuesday virtually addressed the 10th National Ayurveda Day celebrations organised by Directorate of Ayush, J&K at Convention Centre, Jammu.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar; Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah; Director Ayush, J&K, Dr. Suresh Kumar Sharma; Director Health Services, Jammu, Director Family Welfare J&K, MD JKMSCL, former Directors of Ayush, Healthcare professionals and other officers also attended the event, either in person or through video conferencing.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister underlined the significance of Ayurveda as one of the oldest and most effective systems of holistic healthcare. "Ayurveda embodies India's cultural wisdom, offering a lifestyle and healthcare model deeply connected to nature. The theme 'Ayurveda for People and Planet' reminds us that the health of individuals and the health of the environment are inseparable. It is our responsibility to preserve this knowledge and make it accessible to every household.", Minister Sakeena said.

The Minister called upon all the participants to carry out a dedicated awareness campaign



on the benefits of Ayurveda so that people take due benefits from it. "These celebrations will be fruitful only when the message of benefits of Ayurveda reach to common masses in every district, in every panchayat and every area of Jammu and Kashmir", the Minister said.

The Health Minister further said that there is not much awareness about Ayurvedic medicines, highlighting that people should be made aware that Ayurvedic medicines have less side effect as compared to general medicines.

Minister Sakeena also highlighted various initiatives of the government in health sector, adding that the Omar Abdullah led government is determined to take advanced medical care facilities to far flung and rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

She called upon all the participants that every effort should

be made so that the people can take due advantage of these initiatives which is the main purpose of this government.

She further lauded the Directorate of Ayush, J&K for its continuous efforts in expanding Ayush healthcare services, promoting awareness, and bringing traditional systems closer to the youth through education and outreach. She stressed on further public outreach programs, capacity building and extension of facilities in each nook and corner of J&K, so that Ayush becomes a household name.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar in his address lauded the role of Ayush in life style disorders. He stressed on the need to focus on strength areas of Ayush like Non Communicable diseases.

Secretary Health, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed in his virtual address, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed

Shah, said that Ayurveda is a science of life that goes beyond curative medicine by addressing prevention, lifestyle management, and wellness and its integrative approach is essential in combating the modern epidemic of lifestyle disorders. He stressed on Research and Development, Scientific Validation, Standardization and mass public awareness so that Ayush becomes the most acceptable system all over the globe.

In his key note address, Director Ayush, Dr. Suresh Kumar Sharma highlighted the growing importance of Ayurveda in today's healthcare landscape. He said, "Ayurveda not only aims to cure diseases but also to maintain harmony within the body and with nature. The theme for this year reflects the need for sustainable health practices that benefit both people and the planet.

The Directorate of Ayush, J&K is committed to providing quality Ayush healthcare services across the Union Territory and to integrate Ayurveda-based preventive and promotive health measures into the mainstream".

He also elaborated on the achievements of the department, including the operationalization of Ayush Health & Wellness Centres, promotion of herbal awareness campaigns, and expanding access to traditional healthcare in rural and urban areas alike.

The mega event witnessed the enthusiastic participation of nearly 700 medical professionals, paramedical staff, students, and members of the general public. The celebration was enriched with cultural programmes reflecting India's Ayurvedic heritage, as well as inspiring lectures by renowned Ayurvedic physicians on subjects like immunity building, lifestyle disorders, mental wellness, and the ecological significance of Ayurveda.

On the sidelines of the function, 15 thematic stalls were installed, showcasing Ayurvedic methodologies, Panchakarma therapies, Unani regimental therapies, medicinal plants, and yoga asanas. These stalls attracted large crowds and provided hands-on knowledge and demonstrations, creating awareness among the participants about the practical applications of Ayush systems in daily life.

DC inspects restoration work at Naigad WSS



KT NEWS DESK

KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 23:

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma Tuesday visited the Naigad Gravity Water Supply Scheme to review the ongoing restoration work of rain affected pipeline undertaken to reinstate water supply to the town and adjoining areas.

During the inspection, the DC reviewed two major damaged spots at Bajri Point Wagam Nallah and another site at Wagam Nallah, where water supply lines were severely affected.

The first damaged site was rectified earlier, while restoration work at Bajri Point Wagam Nallah is currently underway.

The existing track, damaged due to sinking, has been realigned to facilitate

interconnection with the gravity line and make the system functional at the earliest.

The DC held detailed discussions with the Executive Engineer, AEE, AE and field staff of the Jal Shakti Department regarding the challenges faced in the restoration process. He directed the department to accelerate the pace of work to ensure early resumption of supply to the residents of the town, who have been facing water shortage due to the damages. He also assured full support and timely arrangements from the District Administration to facilitate smooth completion of the project.

The DC was accompanied by ExEn Jal Shakti Kishtwar, Er. Sanjeev Kumar Gupta, AEE Jal Shakti Kishtwar Rahul Kotwal and other concerned officials.

Doda observes Sewa Parv



KT NEWS DESK

DODA, SEPTEMBER 23:

The spirit of Sewa Parv 2025 celebration continues to resonate across District Doda with a series of green, clean, and wellness initiatives organised Tuesday by the Ayush and the Forest Departments.

The programs highlighted community service, environmental sustainability, and public health awareness, engaging officials, staff and local residents alike.

The Ayush Department observed Sewa Parv, Poshan Maah, and Swachhta Pakhwada in all 29 Ayush institutions (AAMS/GADs) of the district under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh and Director Ayush J&K, Dr. Suresh Sharma. The activities included plantation drives, cleanliness campaigns, diet and nutrition awareness

programs, and Ayush wellness camps. Supervised by District Ayush Officer Dr. Ajay Tickoo, the initiative reflected the department's commitment to health, wellness and sustainable living.

Similarly, the Forest Division Doda joined the district-wide celebrations, conducting plantation drives to promote ecological balance and awareness programs focusing on forest conservation.

Officials, staff members and community members came together to reaffirm the importance of environmental responsibility and sustainable development.

The combined efforts of the twin departments showcased harmony between nature, health, and society while embodying the true essence of Sewa Parv—service to people, service to nature and service for a healthier tomorrow.

Health screening, awareness activities held



KT News Desk

UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 23:

In continuation to ongoing Sewa Parv and Swasth Nari Shakshat Parivar Abhiyaan campaign, the health teams, under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai on Tuesday conducted comprehensive screening and counselling for women across Udhampur district.

The individuals were screened for hypertension, diabetes, anaemia, tuberculosis and common cancers and provided free diagnostic tests like haemoglobin, blood

sugar, sputum, chest X-ray and ultrasound.

Health education sessions promoted balanced nutrition, healthy lifestyle and importance of early disease detection. Women with health concerns were referred for further care.

Meanwhile, a series of activities and awareness programmes were organised in Block Ramnagar, where participants pledged to "Say No to Plastic" and adopt eco-friendly alternatives, reaffirming commitment to a clean, green and sustainable future.

SEVA PARV

KU organises cleanliness drive, field visits, literacy prog

KT News Desk

Srinagar, September 23:

To mark the ongoing Seva Parv 2025 celebrations, the University of Kashmir (KU) organised a series of community outreach initiatives, reflecting its commitment to social responsibility, inclusivity, and civic awareness.

The events were coordinated by varisty's Department of Students' Welfare.

Weeklong cleanliness drive

The National Service Scheme (NSS) unit of KU launched a weeklong Cleanliness Drive across the main and satellite campuses. The programme was flagged off by Prof. Shazia Manzoor, Head, Department of Social Work KU, who underlined the importance of collective responsibility in maintaining hygiene and sustainability.

Dr. Waqar Amin, Coordinator NSS KU, highlighted the role of such initiatives in nurturing civic sense and environmental consciousness among students. KU NSS Programme Officers, Dr. Humaira Showkat and Dr. Aijaz Ahmad, also



motivated the volunteers.

A large number of NSS volunteers and staff of the varsity's Environment and Hygiene wing actively participated in the drive.

Field visits to senior citizen home, SOS village & ICDS centres

The Department of Social Work organised a field visit to Ahati Waqar Senior Citizen Home, SOS Children's Village and ICDS Centres. Students engaged with elderly people and children through life skills activities, storytelling, and interactive sessions, aiming to spread joy and instil compassion through meaningful interactions.

Adult literacy and career counselling programme

The Directorate of Lifelong Learning (DLL), in collaboration with Phaag Development Forum, organised an Adult Literacy Programme and Career Counselling Session for Youth at Darbagh, Harwan. The programme aimed to empower local adults with basic literacy skills while guiding young people on career opportunities, skill development, and future prospects.

The series of initiatives under Seva Parv 2025 showcased KU's ongoing efforts to promote education, social responsibility, environmental awareness, and community care.

JMC Commissioner inspects 27 MLD STP at Bhagwati Nagar

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 23:

To ensure timely delivery of urban infrastructure and foster the sewage management system in the city, Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) Dr. Devansh Yadav Tuesday visited the 27 MLD Capacity Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) developed on Activated Sludge Process (ASP) technology at Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu. The Project, constructed by NBCC (India) Limited in 2016 to improve sewage treatment capacity, has started partial functioning since last month.

During the inspection, the Commissioner took a detailed review of the functioning of the plant and enquired about the status of facilities created under the project. While appreciating the progress made so far, Dr. Yadav noted that certain crucial works are still pending which are necessary to make the plant



fully operational and beneficial for the public.

Directing the NBCC officials to complete all pending works within 15 days, particularly making the in-house laboratory functional and activating the gaseous chlorine system for effective disinfection, Dr. Yadav also stressed the importance of securing operational consent from the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee (JKPCC), which is a statutory

requirement to ensure compliance with environmental standards.

The Commissioner highlighted that once these steps are completed, the plant will be formally handed over to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Government of Jammu & Kashmir. This will pave the way for its full-scale operation and provide much-needed sewage treatment facilities to

stake-holders.

"Completion and commissioning of this plant is a critical step towards ensuring cleaner water bodies, reducing environmental hazards and improving public health in Jammu," Dr. Yadav said while interacting with officials.

The Commissioner further emphasized that the JMC is committed to providing modern urban infrastructure for better sanitation and environmental protection. He urged upon the executing agency to adhere to the timeline and assured full cooperation from the Corporation for expediting clearances and facilitating inter-departmental coordination.

Among others, senior officers of JMC, engineers from the executing agency, and representatives of the Housing and Urban Development Department accompanied the commissioner during the visit.

'SEWA PARV DAY-7'

Ramban admin organizes Health Camps

KT News Desk

RAMBAN, SEPTEMBER 23:

Continuing its commitment to public welfare under the ongoing Sewa Parv, the district administration Ramban, under the aegis of Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan Tuesday organized a series of Specialized Health Camps across the district under the 'Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan'.

A Specialized Health Camp was held at NTPHC Nowgam, while two additional camps were organized at AAM SC Kudgi and AAM SC Chamalwas to deliver essential healthcare services at the grassroots level. These camps primarily focused on women and children's health, ensuring that preventive healthcare reaches the most vulnerable sections of the society.

During the camps, screening was conducted for Non-Communicable



Diseases such as Hypertension, Diabetes, and Oral, Breast and Cervical Cancer. Antenatal check-ups (ANCs) for pregnant women and screening for anaemia were also undertaken. In addition, vaccination of children and screening for Tuberculosis (T.B.) were carried out, alongside enrolment of beneficiaries under the Nikshay Mitra initiative.

Extensive counselling sessions on menstrual hygiene, nutrition and various other health-related programmes were also organized to raise awareness at the grassroots level. To extend

benefits of health and social security schemes to all eligible beneficiaries, generation of AB-PMJAY and Vay Vandana Cards was facilitated during the camps.

The health camps form part of the District Administration's broader effort to make healthcare accessible and to spread awareness on critical health issues, especially among women and children. Meanwhile, other line departments also conducted parallel activities to provide public services at the citizens' doorsteps in line with the objectives of Sewa Parv.

President Murmu presents 71st National Film Awards

Shah Rukh Khan, Rani Mukerji, Mohanlal honoured at star-studded ceremony

Malayalam legend Mohanlal receives Dadasaheb Phalke Award

Hindi Films dominate main categories, regional films recognized

President highlights women-centric films and indian cinema’s growth

Awards celebrate film diversity, promote ‘Make in India’ initiative

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 23: President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday presented the National Awards for acting to Shah Rukh Khan, Vikrant Massey and Rani Mukerji while Malayalam superstar Mohanlal was honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke lifetime achievement award at a ceremony that doffed its hat to mainstream popular cinema.

Filmmakers Vidhu Vinod Chopra, who took home the best film prize for '12th Fail', and Karan Johar and Apoorva Mehra, who received the award for 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani' for best popular film providing wholesome entertainment, completed the starry ensemble at the 71st National Film Awards.

The best director award went to Sudipto Sen for 'The Kerala Story'.

The National Awards for 2023 were announced in August. It's the first National Award for friends and frequent collaborators Shah Rukh and Rani as well as for Vikrant. While Shah Rukh got it for his role in 'Jawan', sharing his win with '12th Fail' star Vikrant, Rani bagged it for 'Mrs Chatterjee vs Norway'.

There were whistles and loud cheers as Rani and Shah Rukh went up to receive their awards at the traditionally sober ceremony. Mohanlal, recognised for a remarkable career spanning five decades and more than 360 films, got a standing ovation from the crowd gathered at the city's Vigyan Bhawan.



"I got to know that when Mohanlal's name was announced for Dadasaheb Phalke, there was a wave of happiness among people. It shows that he has made a space for himself in countless people's hearts," the President said in her address after the award ceremony.

"He has presented the softest of the soft and toughest of the tough emotions quite naturally," Murmu added in a speech in which she congratulated all the winners and touched on various issues, including the plurality of Indian cinema, Indian sensibility and women-centric films.

"Now we see women in many places in cinema like actors and producers. I have seen films about mothers, women uniting against societal wrongs, and strong women who raise their voices. I salute these filmmakers on behalf of sisters and

daughters. Please thank your crews for your success, they are behind it," she said.

Just like Indian literature is created in various Indian languages, the President said Indian cinema is advancing in so many languages, dialects, regions and local environments.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw spoke of the Make in India initiative of the government.

"Equipment used in the film industry such as big cameras... should be made in India. We will be starting a programme on this soon," he said. The minister also stressed on the need to create a live concert economy with proper policy support, uniform guidelines and easy permissions.

As the recipient of the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award, Mohanlal was the only awardee who spoke.

He said he was deeply humbled to be the youngest recipient, and "only the second ever" from the state to be bestowed with this national recognition.

"This moment is not mine alone. It belongs to the entire Malayalam cinema fraternity. I see this award as a collective tribute to our industry, legacy, creativity and resilience," added the 65-year-old movie legend known for landmark films such as 'Iruvar', 'Vanaprastham', 'Pulimurugan' and 'Drishyam'.

Hindi cinema dominated the awards in the main categories.

Among those presented awards were Meghna Gulzar and Ronnie Screwvala for the biopic on Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, 'Sam Bahadur', the best film promoting national, social and environmental values.

Vaibhavi Merchant won

the best choreography award for 'Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani' song 'Dhindhora baaje'. Shilpa Rao was named best female playback singer for 'Jawan' track 'Chaleya'.

Sanya Malhotra-starrer 'Kathal: A Jackfruit Mystery' was named the best Hindi film.

Regional movies were recognised in categories such as best supporting actor and actress and in technical segments.

The best supporting actor trophy was shared by Vijayaraghavan for Malayalam film 'Pookalam' and Muthupettai Somu Bhaskar for Tamil film 'Parking'.

The best supporting actress honour went to Urvashi for the Malayalam movie 'Ullozhokku' and Janki Bodiwala for Gujarati title 'Vash'. Both movies won best films in their respective language segments.

Ashish Bende bagged the award for best debut film of a director for Marathi film 'Aatmapamphlet'.

The best film in AVGC (animation, visual effects, gaming & comic) went to Telugu film 'Hanu-Man', which also won the best action direction award.

'Animal', another Hindi blockbuster of 2023, won awards for best sound design, best music director (background music) and a special mention for re-recording mixer.

The National Award for best screenplay was shared between Telugu movie 'Baby' and Tamil film 'Parking'.

'Baby' singer PVN S Rohit was recognised as the best male

playback singer for the song 'Premisthunna'.

The best music director for songs went to GV Prakash for Tamil movie 'Vaathi'. Kasarla Shyam was named best lyricist for Telugu movie 'Balagam' song 'Ooru Palleturu'.

Deepak Kingrani was named best dialogue writer for the Manoj Bajpayee-fronted Hindi film 'Sirf Ek Bandaa Kaafi Hai'. The best editing prize went to Malayalam title 'Pookkalam' and production design to another Malayalam movie '2018'.

Sukriti Veni Bandreddi ('Gandhi Tatha Chettu'), Kabir Khandare ('Gypsy') and 'Naal 2' cast members Treasha Thosar, Shrinivas Pokale, and Bhargav Jagtap were recognised in the best child artiste category. 'Naal 2' was also named best children's film.

In the language film categories, the winners were - 'Rongatapu 1982' (Assamese), 'Deep Fridge' (Bengali), 'Parking' (Tamil), 'Kandeelu' (Kannada), 'Shamchi Aai' (Marathi), 'Puskara' (Odia), 'Godday Godday Chaa' (Punjabi) and 'Bhagavanth Kesari' (Telugu).

The winners for various non-feature categories were also announced with Hindi movie 'Flowering Mani' being named the best film, while the best documentary went to 'God, Vulture and Human'. The best director award was bagged by Piyush Thakur for 'The First Film' and the best script went to Chidananda Nayak's Kannada short film 'Sunflowers were the First Ones to Know'.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Youth, startup

of the nation and the world.

He said that in 2015, India's ranking in the Global Innovation Index was 91st, and today it has reached 38th. The Home Minister expressed confidence that within the next three years, India will rank among the top ten countries in the Global Innovation Index and, in the coming years, will lead global innovation.

NEW EDUCATION POLICY OPENED TREASURE TROVE FOR INDIA'S YOUTH

Shah said that Prime Minister Modi, through the New Education Policy, has created a vertical for research and study on the Indian Knowledge System, opening this treasure trove for India's youth. By leveraging this knowledge, young Indians can conduct world-class research.

The Union Home Minister said that in the 11 years of the PM Modi led government, significant transformations have been witnessed in the country, with efforts made in every sector to expand the startup ecosystem.

The credit for this expansion goes to the ecosystem created by Prime Minister Modi, as well as to students and youth. He highlighted that the number of startups has grown from 500 in 2014 to 1.92 lakh today, a 380-fold increase. Similarly, the number of unicorn startups has risen from just 4 in 2014 to over 120 today, with a total valuation exceeding \$350 billion. Shri Shah emphasized that this demonstrates how, by leveraging the ecosystem created by Prime Minister Modi, talent can be harnessed to create unicorn startups. He urged industry stakeholders to collaborate with startups to expand in every dimension.

STARTUP ECOSYSTEM HAS PROVIDED SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT TO 17.9 LAKH PEOPLE

Amit Shah said that India currently has 21,000 startups in the IT sector and 17,000 in healthcare. Moreover, there are 11,000 startups each in agriculture, the service sector, and education. He added that startups have expanded their reach to 770 districts in India, showcasing the strength of India's startup ecosystem. Furthermore, 48% of startups are founded by women, and 900 startups in the Northeast are led by women. Shah stated that the startup ecosystem has provided sustainable employment to 17.9 lakh people so far.

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation said that since 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has created a supporting environment for startups and provided financial, policy, infrastructure, banking, and industry support for their growth. He said that a Fund of Funds of Rs 10,000 crore has been established, a Startup India Seed Fund with a corpus of Rs 945 crore has been launched, the maximum loan limit has been increased from Rs 10 crore to Rs 20 crore, support of up to Rs 20 lakh has been approved for Proof of Concept, and funding of up to Rs 50 lakh has been approved for prototype development. He further said that Prime Minister Modi launched Make in India, introduced PLI schemes in 14 key sectors, removed over 40,000 compliances, and removed more than 3400 laws from the category of criminal laws.

APART FROM PM MODI NO ONE ELSE COULD HAVE SIMPLIFIED, REFORMED GST

Amit Shah said that apart from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, no one else could have simplified and reformed GST. After a long time, the country has seen a leader like Prime Minister Modi in whom both taxpayers and the

public can place their trust.

He noted that Prime Minister Modi, with great courage and by taking all states along, successfully implemented GST.

GST collections began at Rs 80,000 crore and today have crossed over Rs 2 lakh crore.

Shah added that under GST reforms, Prime Minister Modi reduced the prices of many items by half, by one-third, and even to zero in some cases. Through GST reforms, Prime Minister Modi has shown the public that the government's purpose is to raise revenue to run the country, not to exploit the people.

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation said that since India's independence, the public is witnessing such a massive tax reduction for the first time. He stated that GST reform is a bridge of trust between taxpayers and the government.

Shah recalled that when the Modi government came to power, income up to Rs 2.5 lakh was tax-exempt, but today income up to Rs 12 lakh is taxed at zero.

These two examples, he said, demonstrate that the government levies taxes not for exploitation, but for the people, for the country's development, and for self-reliance. Shri Shah said that his move will serve as a bridge of trust between taxpayers and the Government of India for decades to come.

STARTUP CONCLAVE 2025 WILL DELIBERATE ON PM MODI'S MISSION TO ESTABLISH INDIA'S IDENTITY IN STARTUP WORLD

Referring to the objective of the Startup Conclave 2025, Shah said, "It will deliberate on all aspects of Prime Minister Modi's mission to establish India's identity in the startup world and find solutions to challenges."

Pertinently the conclave has been organized on the theme of three mantras: innovate, elevate, and accelerate.

Shah said that over two days, discussions will be held in seven sessions on various topics, providing a significant platform to connect emerging startups with investors and realize Prime Minister Modi's mantra of "mind to market."

He highlighted that the compilation of the Indian Knowledge System was also launched during the event. "This system encompasses the finest knowledge from around the world in fields such as Ayurveda, classical arts, architecture, mathematics, philosophy, science, space, and the environment." (KNO)

India must move

the operation, minimising damage. However, he added that similar results could not be assumed in the future because adversaries would adapt once they understood India's current capabilities.

He cited examples from the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict and the Russia-Ukraine war, where relatively inexpensive drones had caused significant damage to costly military assets. He said this reflected the cycle of innovation and adaptation in warfare, where the side adapting faster gained an advantage.

He said self-reliance provided not only independence but also the ability to surprise an adversary. Such surprises, he added, could only be used once before the other side learned, requiring continuous innovation.

He said the economic dimension of war also needed to be considered. Drones were now both military and commercial assets, and their wider use would affect security as well as the economy.

General Dwivedi said Mission Sudarshan Chakra would aim to integrate multiple defence layers and advanced systems, keeping India ahead of adversaries while remaining economically viable.

A new portal was launched ahead of the symposium to connect researchers and academic institutes across the country, and the response had been substantial. (KNO)

SC dismisses petition

the exclusion of Kashmiri Pandits from such provisions amounted to discrimination.

The petition claimed that displaced Kashmiri Hindus, who were forced to leave their homes during the unrest in the valley during the late 1980s and early 1990s, continue to face disadvantage in accessing government jobs due to the lack of special consideration in recruitment rules.

The petition also raised the issue of what it called "hostile discrimination" against Kashmiri Pandits, stating that while other riot-affected communities have been granted concessions, similar treatment has not been extended to this group.

It argued that the victims of the Kashmir violence fall within the same class as those affected by other communal disturbances for whom age-relaxation policies have been framed.

The Supreme Court, however, did not accept this line of reasoning, stating that it was not the proper forum to seek such relief. The bench made it clear that such requests involve executive decisions that are within the scope of government policy and must be taken up with the appropriate authorities. (KNO)

Cabinet recommends

now be sent to the LG for formal approval.

This would be the third session of the J&K Union Territory's first Assembly. The last sitting of the J&K Assembly was held on April 29, 2025, when it convened to condemn the dastardly terror attack in Amalgam, in which 26 civilians were killed.

Therefore, the Assembly must meet on or before October 28 to fulfill statutory requirements.

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

"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 the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019.

Given the current scenario, the issues of statehood and reservation are expected to dominate proceedings in the House.

In the last Assembly session, three resolutions on statehood lapsed due to disruptions caused by the National Conference, following the rejection of an adjournment motion brought by its legislators on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

The issue of reservation also surfaced repeatedly during discussions in the House in the last session.

The detention of APP MLA Mehraj Malik and the hindrances in the movement of fruit trucks on the Srinagar-Jammu highway are also expected to come up for discussion. (KNO)

CM chairs cabinet

development were taken.

The meeting was attended by the Council of Ministers, including Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Ministers Sakina Itoo, Javed Ahmed Rana, Javid Ahmed Dar, and Satish Sharma. Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo was also present.

During the session, the Cabinet took up a series of agenda items concerning public welfare, administrative efficiency, and developmental priorities across Jammu and Kashmir.

J&K floods: 150

fully damaged and over 8,600 partially damaged. The data revealed that the worst-hit districts are Udhampur and Jammu.

Besides, 758 were declared unsafe after the government conducted safety audit of 8,800 schools in Jammu division.

It may be recalled that soon after the flash floods and landslides hit Jammu and Kashmir, Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived in Jammu on August 31 and toured the flood-hit Jammu and assured the victims of relief and rehabilitation.

Shah accompanied by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Leader of Opposition in the J&K Assembly Sunil Sharma and other top officials toured different areas in Jammu region to assess the situation.

He met the flood victims at Mangu Chak, one of the worst-hit villages near Jammu Airport, and took the first-hand account of the situation. He interacted with the villagers and assured them proper relief and rehabilitation.

Shah also visited Tawi bridge near Birkam Chowk and inspected the damage along the riverbanks.

Shah during his Jammu visit also chaired a meeting attended by LG Sinha, CM Omar, LoP Sharma, the DGP of police, and several officials of the Centre and the Union Territory administration.

Shah also reviewed the damage caused to the border security grid by the flash floods

Before the Home Minister's visit, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visited Jammu on August 24 to take stock of the situation following flash floods triggered by a cloudburst in Chisoti village in Kishtwar district. However, Singh's plan to visit the devastated village couldn't materialize due to inclement weather and the blocking of a road by a landslide in Paddar Sub-division. (KNO)

Jammu celebrates

attending gatherings alongside senior BJP leaders. Family members and political figures added personal touches to the day's observances.

Vikramaditya Singh, grandson of the Maharaja and former Member of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Council, shared on X: "Respectful homage to my grandfather Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu & Kashmir on 130th birth anniversary!"

PDP Youth President Aditya Gupta, however, used the occasion to critique the 2019 abrogation of Article 370, arguing it undermined the State Subject laws introduced by Hari Singh to protect local identities, calling the celebrations "hypocrisy" without restoring those safeguards.

Social media buzzed with heartfelt posts, from videos of rallies to reflective messages on the Maharaja's integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India via the 1947 Instrument of Accession.

One user captured the spirit: "Every caste, every Dogra, every corner of Jammu stood

united... This is the power of Dogra legacy — unity above caste, faith & politics."

Born on September 23, 1895, to Maharaja Amar Singh, Hari Singh ruled from 1925 until the monarchy's end in 1952. His reign modernized the state through reforms like compulsory primary education and anti-untouchability laws, leaving an indelible mark on Dogra heritage. (KNO)

Union Bank of India

concerns raised would be duly examined and appropriate steps taken to ensure balanced development across all regions.

UN chief warns

but isn't coming close to fulfilling it.

"For the most part, all they seem to do is write a really strongly worded letter," and not follow up, he said as he portrayed the UN as an ineffectual institution, from its policies to even its escalators. One of them had stopped unexpectedly as he and first lady Melania Trump were riding it toward the Assembly hall.

The US president's "America First" credo has always been a tricky fit with the UN's commitment to global-scale shared decision-making. Returning to the Assembly rostrum five years after he last addressed the gathering by video during the coronavirus pandemic, Trump also touted his own foreign policy moves and told his peers that "your countries are going to hell" because of "uncontrolled migration."

Israeli-Palestinian conflict takes centre stage

With global support for a Palestinian state growing, Israel's devastating war in Gaza is expected to take centre stage. But humanity's myriad conflicts, rising poverty and heating planet will also be in the spotlight.

The General Assembly's big week of meetings began Monday with events including a conference on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Tuesday kicked off the "General Debate" — more of an agglomeration of speeches — in which presidents, prime ministers, monarchs and cabinet members give their annual take on the state of the world and their own nations.

Besides Trump, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Jordan's King Abdullah II, French President Emmanuel Macron, South Korea's President Lee Jae Myung and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa were among those scheduled to speak Tuesday.

Da Silva — speaking first, under a longtime tradition dating to when Brazil was the only nation that volunteered to lead off — worried aloud that the U.N.'s authority was waning.

"We are witnessing the consolidation of an international order blocked by repeated concessions to power play," he said.

Geopolitical problems keep getting more complex

While the debate's theme is "Better Together," observers can expect a rundown of ways in which the world is falling apart.

Gaza already has seized attention at the General Assembly. Monday's conference, co-chaired by France and Saudi Arabia, focused on garnering support for the longstanding idea of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Almost all UN member nations have signed up to take their turn during the Assembly's six-day-long speechfest. The speakers' list so far includes 89 heads of state, 43 heads of government, 10 people who are vice presidents or deputy prime ministers and 45 foreign ministers and other ministerial-level officials.

Bulldozer verdict gave immense satisfaction as it dealt with human problems: CJI

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 23: Chief Justice of India B R Gavai has said his judgement on bulldozer action gave him "immense satisfaction" as it dealt with "human problems".

A Supreme Court bench of Justices Gavai and K V Viswanathan on November 13, 2024 equated "bulldozer justice" with a lawless state of affairs where might was right and laid down pan-India guidelines.

Speaking at a felicitation event organised by an academic group of Supreme Court advocates on September 19, CJI Gavai said he got the opportunity to share the bench with Justice Viswanathan for approximately six months.

"One of the judgments, I think, which gave immense satisfaction to both of us was the bulldozer judgment. What was at the heart of the



judgment was the human problems and the problems faced by human beings. The family being harassed only because they were part of the family of one of the members was either a criminal or an alleged criminal."

The CJI said though he was largely credited for it, equal credit in authoring the verdict should go to Justice Viswanathan.

He said the tenure of the

CJI has no bearing on the administration of justice.

"I don't think the tenure of the Chief Justice has a direct relationship with the efficiency of the administration of the justice. We have had the best of the chief justices like Justice Lalit for two and a half months and Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who proved their imprint and they are known for their contribution to the distribution and

administration of justice," he said.

Gavai said he did his best for the betterment of justice and to bring improvements in the infrastructure of the judiciary throughout the country. "I have tried every moment for the betterment of the administration of justice and for bringing in improvement in the judicial infrastructure throughout the country and ensuring that the appointments to the high courts are taken to the logical end with expedition," the CJI said.

According to CJI Gavai the endeavour in the last couple of years was to give "good representation" to young lawyers practising in the Supreme Court.

"We are all sure that the rich experience that they gather in the Supreme Court really helps in bringing out the efficiency or enhancing the efficiency at the high court level," he added.

Air India Express to operate 20 daily flights to 15 cities from Navi Mumbai Int'l Airport

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 23: Air India group on Tuesday said it will commence commercial flights from the upcoming Navi Mumbai International Airport with its low-cost arm, Air India Express, operating 20 daily departures to over 15 cities in the first phase of operations.

This will be scaled up to 55 daily departures, including five international, by mid-2026, Air India said in a statement.

Jointly owned by Adani Group and Maharashtra's town development authority CIDCO, Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) is set for inauguration later this month.

"We look forward to commencing operations at Navi Mumbai International Airport. We are happy to work with Adani Airports to build NMIA not only as a point that connects to the rest of India, but also as one of the country's key global transit hubs for both



-- passengers and cargo -- given its strategic geographical location," said Campbell Wilson, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Air India.

In the initial phase of the new airport's operations, Air India Express will operate 20 daily departures or 40 Air Traffic Movements (ATMs) to and from the new airport, connecting 15 Indian cities.

By winter 2026, the Air India group aims to further expand its operations to 60

daily departures (120 ATMs) from the facility, seamlessly connecting passengers to key domestic and international destinations.

Air India Express' planned operations at Navi Mumbai International Airport will significantly enhance connectivity to and from the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) to destinations within and outside India, while facilitating seamless international transit through the new airport, it said.

"This partnership will redefine Mumbai's connectivity landscape and strengthen India's twin-airport strategy. NMIA's adoption of technology for enhancing efficiency and best-in-class experience for passengers will play a pivotal role in delivering seamless and superior passenger journeys for decades to come," said Arun Bansal, Chief Executive Officer, Adani Airport Holdings Ltd.

The greenfield airport in Navi Mumbai International is being built in five phases, with the launch phase expected to accommodate 20 million passengers per annum (MPPA) and handle 0.5 million metric tons (MMT) of cargo.

Upon full completion, NMIA will have the capacity to serve 90 MPPA and handle 3.2 MMT of cargo annually, Air India said.

Except for the headline, this story has not been edited by The Telegraph Online staff and has been published from a syndicated feed.

US authorities seize illicit electronics in New York area during UNGA



REUTERS

New York, Sept 23: The US Secret Service said on Tuesday it had dismantled a network of sophisticated electronic devices in the New York area that had been used to threaten US government officials as foreign leaders gather this week for the UN General Assembly.

The agency said the devices were concentrated within 35 miles (56 km) of the global meeting of the 193-member assembly, where US President Donald Trump was due to deliver a speech on Tuesday.

"Early analysis indicates cellular communications between nation-state threat actors and individuals that are known to federal law enforcement," the Secret Service said in a statement.

Authorities seized more than 300 SIM servers and 100,000 SIM cards across multiple sites in an operation the agency said represented an imminent threat to its protective operations. The hardware was used to "conduct multiple telecommunications-related threats directed toward senior US government officials," the Secret Service said.

It said the devices discovered could be used to conduct a range of telecommunications attacks including "disabling cell phone towers, enabling denial of services attacks and facilitating anonymous, encrypted communication between potential threat actors and criminal enterprises."

The tri-state area where the network was located includes New York, Connecticut and New Jersey.

Armed forces to test capabilities of drones, counter-drone systems during exercise in Oct

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 23: The armed forces will test the capabilities of some of its drones and counter-drone systems during an exercise by the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) in the first week of October, a senior official said on Tuesday.

The exercise will be held somewhere in Madhya Pradesh from October 6-10, sources said.

In his address at a conference on air defence systems here, Air Marshal Rakesh Sinha, Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (OPS) at HQ IDS, also spoke of the lessons drawn from Operation Sindoor and the need to "stay ahead" of the adversary in military thinking and planning.

The conference hosted in Delhi was themed on 'Counter UAVs & Air Defence Systems: The Future of Modern Warfare' and saw participation of senior military officers, representatives of various firms in the defence industry and domain experts.

A senior official of the HQ IDS said the exercise is named 'Cold Start'.

Later, interacting with PTI on the sidelines of the event, Air Marshal Sinha said the exercise will be held in the Central Sector and will see participation of all three services.

Besides, industry partners, research and development partners, academia and others will be taking



part in the upcoming exercise.

"We will be testing some of our drones and counter-drone systems during this exercise... with an aim to have an air defence system and Counter-UAS that is more robust," Air Marshal Sinha said.

Counter-UAS refers to Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems.

The exercise comes a little over a month after 'Ran Samwad' -- a first-of-its-kind tri-service seminar on war, warfare and warfighting was held at the Army War College in Mhow in Madhya Pradesh.

Delivering the plenary address at the military seminar on August 27, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh emphasised the need to remain prepared for new innovations and

unforeseen challenges while mastering existing technologies to stay ahead of the curve.

He dubbed the fusion of technology and surprise as the main reason behind the growing complexity and unpredictability of modern-day warfare.

"Future wars will not merely be battles of weapons; they will be a combined play of technology, intelligence, economy and diplomacy. The nation which masters the triangle of technology, strategy and adaptability will emerge as the true global power.

"This is the moment to learn from history and write a new one. This is the moment to anticipate the future and shape one," Singh said.

India emerges as top destination for global corporate: Report

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 23: India is emerging as the leading market of interest for companies looking to realign their trade and manufacturing activities, a report said on Tuesday.

India is the leading market of interest, where almost half of the respondents are looking to ramp up or maintain trade activities with the world's fastest-growing major economy, while two in five intend to ramp up or continue manufacturing activities, Standard Chartered said in a report.

In particular, more than 60 per cent of corporates from the US, the UK, Mainland China and Hong Kong are looking to increase trade with India, the report titled 'Future of Trade: Resilience' said.

The report presents inputs from 1,200 C-suite and senior leaders at multinational corporations based in 17 key markets across four industries, on their views for global trade and their strategies over the next three to five years.

While trade tariffs are top of mind, emerging technologies and global economic growth are equally critical factors, with 53 per cent of corporates respectively ranking those as the top strategic drivers shaping the future of global trade, it said.

Corporate leaders believe that Asia will continue to drive trade growth in the next three to five years, with rising prominence from the Middle East and the US remaining as a heavyweight, it said.

The report also revealed corridors that will see increased trade and manufacturing activities, it said.

Lancet study outlines trends in HMPV outbreak early this year, children most affected

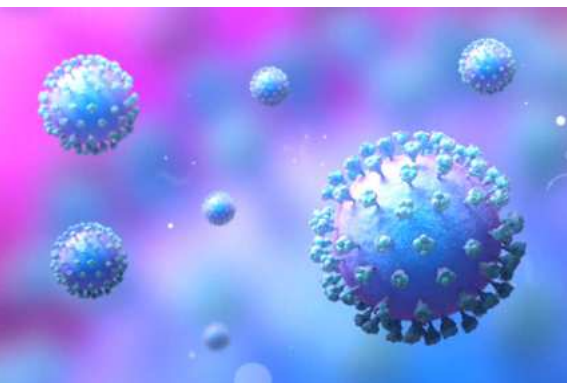
PTI

New Delhi, Sept 23: A study that looked into trends of the respiratory infection HMPV that broke out in India early this year has found that children were the most affected, with highest diagnoses among those aged 1-2.

Published in The Lancet Regional Health Southeast Asia journal, the study also found most HMPV-positive cases presented with symptoms similar to those of acute respiratory illness or influenza, with fever and cough being the most common.

However, researchers from Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) institutes and the Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Government of Tamil Nadu, noted no "recent change in the epidemiological features of HMPV".

The outbreak in India was linked to seasonal one in China triggered in late 2024, attracting significant attention due to an increase in



cases and potential impact.

Studies estimate the Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) was responsible for over six per cent of respiratory illnesses and five per cent of hospitalisations in China. Cases started to emerge in India during second week of January in states, including Gujarat and Puducherry.

The researchers stressed that strengthening surveillance continues to be critical to understand emerging disease-causing viruses and guiding public health policies.

Data collected during 2019-2023 and in

2024-2025 under the Model for Integrated Influenza Surveillance in Tamil Nadu was analysed.

Diagnostic tests were conducted by labs forming the Virus Research and Diagnostic Laboratory Network, established in 2014 under the Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Between 2019-2023, over 20,000 were tested for HMPV, of whom 1,030 (3.2 per cent) were positive, and more than 11,100 in 2024, of whom 367 (3.3 per cent) were positive. The authors said, "Majority of tests were

conducted among children." "The highest positivity was observed in those aged 1-2, with 4.5 per cent (128/2864) testing positive in 2019-2023 and 4.6 per cent (70/1508) in 2024," they wrote.

Further, "fever and cough were the most common symptoms, reported in 70.3 per cent of cases from 2019 to 2023 and 79.6 per cent (292/8398) in 2024, and in 60.5 per cent (401/12,059) and 60.8 per cent (223/5977) of cases, respectively," the team said.

Duration of sickness was found to typically last for 11 days, with a typical hospital stay of seven days.

The researchers said that the higher testing and positives seen in 2024 highlight that HMPV is being increasingly recognised as a significant respiratory pathogen in India.

"Strengthening surveillance networks remains critical to understanding the burden of such emerging viral pathogens and guiding public health policies," they said.

COURT ROOM

JOLLY LLB 3

JOLLY LLB 3 (UA16+)

HINDI - 10:40 AM, 05:15 PM

HINDI ATMOS - 12:00 PM, 03:15 PM, 06:30 PM

THE CONJURING LAST RITES

THE CONJURING LAST RITES (A)

ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

06:00 PM

BAAGHI 4

BAAGHI 4 (A)

HINDI - 02:45 PM

DEMON SLAYER INFINITY CASTLE

DEMON SLAYER INFINITY CASTLE (UA13+)

JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

11:00 AM, 01:50 PM

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Empowerment On Wheels

Director General (DG) CRPF, GP Singh on Tuesday flagged off the third edition of the Mahila High-Altitude Bike Expedition from the historic Lal Chowk in Srinagar

Pics: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

