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Unified Headquarters (UHQ) meeting

LG Sinha hails JKP, security forces, intel agencies for successful anti-terror operations

Says war against terrorism not over, calls for stringent action against terror ecosystem

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Sept 26: Congratulating the security forces, Jammu and Kashmir Police and intelligence agencies for recent successful anti-terror operations, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday said that war against terrorism is not over yet in the Union Territory.

Chairing the marathon Unified Headquarters (UHQ) meeting which lasted for more than two hours at Raj Bhawan here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) discussed the situation across J&K with the security top brass.

“Threadbare discussions were held on counter



infiltration and counter terrorism operations,” said an official.

The meeting, he said, discussed winter preparedness, recent LoC escalation by Pakistan and other key issues. “War against terrorism

is not over yet. Kinetic and non-kinetic operations must

continue. We must maintain the momentum and take stringent action against terrorism and its entire ecosystem,” LG Sinha told the officers, during the meeting.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the security apparatus to proactively adapt to evolving threats, and called for “Whole

of Government Approach” for effectively tackling radicalisation and drug menace.

The meeting was attended by Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat and General | [More on P6](#)

LG announces reopening of 12 tourist spots

7 in Kashmir, 5 in Jammu

KNO

Srinagar, Sept 26: After chairing the Unified Headquarters (UHQ) meeting here Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday announced reopening of twelve tourist spots across Jammu and Kashmir.

After the meeting ended LG Sinha, according to the news agency Kashmir News Observer (KNO), wrote on X: “After a thorough security review | [More on P6](#)

Sinha launches Lt Governor's Sainik Sahayta Kendra Portal

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Sept 26: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday launched a web portal of Lieutenant Governor's Sainik Sahayta Kendra, at Raj Bhawan.

Lieutenant Governor's Sainik Sahayta Kendra (LGSSK) is a landmark initiative dedicated to the welfare of serving personnel of the Armed Forces and Central Armed Police

Forces (CAPFs).

To further strengthen its functioning, the administration has introduced the portal - lgssk.jk.gov.in. Developed by BISAG-N, the portal is a support tool for the Kendra, designed to log each grievance, record action taken, and provide tracking access to both authorities and applicants. While the Kendra remains the institutional platform for soldier welfare facilitation, | [More on P6](#)

Won't let BJP come to power even if they delay statehood: CM Omar

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Sept 26: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday said they will never let the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) come to power even if they delay the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister was reacting to a query on Leader of Opposition in Legislative Assembly (LA), Sunil Sharma.

Asked about the allegation that the Chief Minister was justifying violence, CM Omar as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said there was no justification for it. “There is no reason to justify violence, but it has become a habit of the LoP to shift blame. He should answer why this situation has arisen. I am neither Ladakh's LG nor do I control the



security apparatus,” he said.

CM Omar also questioned the delay in restoring statehood to Jammu & Kashmir. “Why hasn't statehood been restored? Is it because the LoP is not the Chief Minister? If that's the condition, then they should tell the court clearly that statehood will not be restored until the BJP is out of power. | [More on P6](#)

MEA rejects third-party mediation on Kashmir

» Says Pak's cross-border terrorism 'main problem' » Slams Turkish Prez's UNGA remarks

Sajid Raina

New Delhi, Sept 26: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Friday reiterated New Delhi's position on Jammu and Kashmir, saying the issue is strictly bilateral between India and Pakistan and does not require third-party intervention.

The clarification came after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan referred to Kashmir during the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

In his address at UNGA, Erdogan said Turkey welcomed the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan and called for resolving the



Kashmir matter “on the basis of UN resolutions” through dialogue. India rejected these remarks as interference in its

internal affairs.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, as per the news agency—Kashmir | [More on P6](#)

Sorry State of Education

1,371 schools in J&K run by 'single teachers'

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Sept 26: In Jammu and Kashmir, over 32,000 school students are being taught by single teachers in 1371 educational institutes—thus raising a question on quality of education and availability of staff.

According to the official figures available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Jammu and Kashmir has at least 1371 schools wherein single teachers have been posted or deployed.

On the contrary, the government as well as the management of private schools claim that they have a sufficient availability of human resources and infrastructure but the official figures reveal a different story.

The figures reveal that there is an enrolment of 32,303 students

enrolled in those schools where only single teachers are posted or deployed.

Pertinently, in previous report, the official figures have revealed that in Jammu and Kashmir more than 31,054 students were enrolled in those schools that were functioning with a single teacher.

In the previous report, there were only 1330 schools that were functioning with only a single teacher. However, the recent report suggests that the numbers have increased by at least 41 schools.

In 2024, KNO first broke the news of closure of over 4400 government run schools owing to 'zero or extremely low' enrolment of students.

In July-2024, the news agency reported that there were a total of 23,117 | [More on P6](#)

14 gypsum units asked to stop operations near Lachipora Sanctuary

Waris Fayaz

Baramulla, Sept 26: Acting on Supreme Court (SC) directions to safeguard protected forests, the District Magistrate Baramulla ordered the immediate closure of all gypsum mining operations within one kilometre radius of the Lachipora Wildlife Sanctuary.

In an order issued, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the DM cited the apex court's February 27, 2024 judgment in Civil Appeal Nos. 255-257 of 2023, which prohibits mining activities inside



Eco Sensitive Zones (ESZ) and within a radius of one kilometre from any protected forest.

The order followed a report from the Wildlife Warden North Kashmir Division,

Sopore, confirming that 14 gypsum mines in Uri and Boniyar subdivisions fall inside the prohibited zone.

The affected units include M/s Syed Mohammad Tahir, Jhelum Valley Gypsum, Baba Chemicals, Gee Emm Industries, Kohinoor Gypsum, Tower Chemicals, Snow White Gypsum, Kashmir Mineral Mills, Noor Mohammad Trumboo, Syed Mohammad Irshad, Khyber Industries, New Sigma Industries, Peer Panchal Industries and Raz Chemicals.

Officials including the Senior Superintendent of Police, SDM Uri, Wildlife | [More on P6](#)

From 1971 to Balakot & Op Sindoor, MiG-21 shaped India's military history: Rajnath

IAF retires fighter jet

SAJID RAINA

Chandigarh, Sept 26: As the MiG-21 fighter jet formally retired after nearly six decades of service on Friday, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the aircraft had provided critical strength to the Indian Air Force in conflicts ranging from the 1971 war to ‘Operation Sindoor’.

Speaking at a decommissioning ceremony here, Singh, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said the MiG-21 was not



confined to a single battle or event but had shaped India's military operations across several decades. “For a long time, the MiG-21 has been a witness

to numerous deeds. Its contribution has not been limited to a single war,” he said.

He noted the aircraft's role in the 1971 conflict, recalling the

strike on the Governor's House in Dhaka which, according to him, influenced the outcome of the war. He also referred to its use in the Kargil conflict, the Balakot airstrike, and in Operation Sindoor. “There has not been a moment when the MiG-21 did not provide strength to our armed forces,” Singh said.

The Defence Minister described the farewell as marking not just the end of a fleet but also the closing of a chapter in India's military history. He said the aircraft had repeatedly enhanced the honour of the national flag | [More on P6](#)

Veteran artisan from Budgam to receive Handicrafts Award for 'preserving Kashmiri musical heritage'

65-year-old Khazir Mohammad Dar urges youth to take up dying art
Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Sept 26: Khazir Mohammad Dar, a 65-year-old master artisan from Wandakpora Narbal in central Kashmir's Budgam district, is set to be honoured with an award by the Handicrafts Department for his lifelong contribution to the preservation of traditional Kashmiri

musical instruments.

For more than five decades, Dar has been handcrafting instruments like the Rabab, Santoor, Sarang, and Saitaar, carrying forward a cultural legacy that has been part of Kashmir's identity for centuries. Despite his recognition, the veteran craftsman continues to express concern over the diminishing interest of the younger generation in learning the intricate skills required to keep the art alive.

Dar grew up surrounded by



Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

music—his father, Mohammad Shaban Dar, was a renowned singer who inspired him to explore instrument-making at a young age. “I learned the trade locally and have been associated with it for the last 50 years,” Khazir told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Over the years, he set up his own workshop where dozens of apprentices trained under him. Today, around 10 artisans, including his son Mushtaq Ahmad, work alongside him.

“We have earned a livelihood through this craft, and my children, too are carrying it forward. I always encourage the younger generation to take an interest, and I am ready to teach anyone who wants to learn,” he said.

Even with his long-standing dedication, Dar laments the challenges that threaten this traditional art. The shortage of quality raw materials and the lack of interest among youth remain major hurdles. “This craft requires immense

patience, but sadly, very few young people are willing to invest the time and effort it demands,” he added.

Dar said the Handicrafts Department recently recognised his efforts, but feels other government bodies have not extended adequate backing to artisans. “It often seems that recognition is given to those with influence rather than to people who are actually preserving heritage,” he said.

Despite these challenges, Khazir's | [More on P6](#)

PM Vishwakarma Yojana

Ensure smooth loan sanctions, timely disbursements: CS

Calls for enhanced credit linkage, mass awareness

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 26: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Friday chaired a meeting to review the implementation of PM Vishwakarma Yojana in Jammu and Kashmir, with special focus on enhancing credit linkage for the registered beneficiaries.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce (I&C), Vikramjit Singh; Secretary, Labour & Employment, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan; Executive Director, J&K Bank; Directors, I&C Jammu/Kashmir; and other senior officers.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary emphasized that at least 70,000–80,000 beneficiaries should be brought under the ambit of credit linkage with financial institutions to enable them to expand their enterprises on commercial lines.

He directed the concerned departments and banks to work in close coordination to ensure smooth loan sanctions and timely disbursements.

Highlighting the need for robust outreach, the Chief Secretary instructed the officers to launch a mass awareness campaign across every nook and corner of the UT, educating artisans and craftspeople about the full benefits of the scheme.

He said that Common Service Centres (CSCs) at the block level must be leveraged to organize orientation programmes for those who have received toolkits, ensuring that they



are well-informed about the scheme's potential to help them become successful entrepreneurs.

The Chief Secretary underscored that mere distribution of toolkits and training was not enough, and stressed the need for continuous handholding and motivation of beneficiaries.

He suggested showcasing local success stories to inspire artisans to establish viable business ventures and generate employment for others.

Presenting the progress under the scheme, Commissioner Secretary, I&C, Vikramjit Singh informed that J&K ranks 1st among Union Territories and 9th overall among all States/UTs, with 1,54,881 successful registrations. He further revealed that the UT secured the 8th rank nationally, with 1,42,175 toolkits selected and 64,936 delivered to beneficiaries, equipping artisans with modern tools to enhance their trades.

With respect to Skill Training the Secretary, L&E, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan divulged that the UT ranks 7th in

the country with 1,32,571 completed skill trainings, reflecting a strong skill development ecosystem.

About the credit linkage, the meeting was apprised that J&K ranks 11th nationally in loan sanctions, with 13,787 cases sanctioned and 8,867 cases disbursed, injecting more than Rs 83 Cr into artisan enterprises.

The Chief Secretary lauded these achievements but reiterated the importance of further strengthening credit penetration and ensuring that artisans transition into self-sustaining entrepreneurs.

The PM Vishwakarma Yojana is a flagship Central Sector Scheme designed to provide end-to-end support to artisans and craftspeople working across 18 traditional trades. The scheme offers recognition through a PM Vishwakarma Certificate and ID Card, Skill Upgradation, a Toolkit Incentive of Rs 15,000, and collateral-free credit support of up to Rs 3 lakh to facilitate enterprise establishment and growth.

Decongest City roads, ensure smooth movement: DC Sgr

Chairs meeting to devise action plan in City

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 26: In order to address traffic congestion and ensure smooth movement of traffic in Srinagar City, a meeting was held on Friday under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo here at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

The meeting was attended by Vice Chairman, Srinagar Development Authority (SDA), Mohammad Rafi; Vice Chairman Lake Conservation & Management Authority (LCMA), Mohammad Shahid Saleem; SSP Traffic Police, Aijaz Ahmad; Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz; GM SRTC, Showkat Ahmad; Joint Commissioner SMC, Syed Abul Qasim; Joint Director Tourism, Waseem Raja; Superintending Engineers of R&B & SMC, ARTO Srinagar and concerned.

At the outset, stakeholder departments were brainstormed to come up with the actionable points to decongest the Srinagar City and ensure smooth plying of vehicles and better



traffic management system particularly at heavy traffic junctions to overcome traffic jam on City roads.

A threadbare deliberation was also held with regard to reducing congestion, increasing road capacity and road infrastructure, encroachment removal, tackling instances of wrong parking and addressing bottlenecks at different parts of the City, besides safety and accident reduction measures and enforcement of traffic rules & regulations.

On the occasion, DC sought comprehensive feedback from all stakeholder departments to devise

and develop an effective, practical and sustainable traffic management system for Srinagar City. He asked the Traffic Police, RTO, LCMA, SMC, and SDA to jointly identify congestion points and propose concrete measures for their resolution.

Stressing the need for coordinated efforts, DC asked concerned departments to take all necessary steps to decongest City roads and ensure smooth movement.

DC emphasized the need for adequate parking facilities in busy areas.

Calling the resolution of this emerging challenge as a multi-agency effort, DC urged the departments including SMC, R&B, ARTO, SRTC, and Traffic Police to work in close coordination and come up with an actionable, practical blueprint to decongest the City and build a reliable and efficient public transport system.

DC directed that the meeting shall be held again soon to finalise the first draft of the actionable points and also suggested that feedback be also sought from common public towards this end.

IPM gets boost through HRD programme

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 26: A Human Resource Development (HRD) programme on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) was held Friday at Budgam by the Central Integrated Pest Management Centre (CIPMC), Srinagar, in collaboration with the Agriculture department, Budgam.

The programme saw active participation from local farmers, agriculture officials, and subject experts, focusing on the promotion of sustainable, eco-friendly pest control practices.

Dr. Mithilesh Kumar Arya, Deputy Director (PP), CIPMC Jammu, in his address stressed the need to adopt IPM techniques to reduce dependence on chemical pesticides, citing

their environmental and health benefits. He urged farmers to embrace biological, mechanical, and cultural pest control methods for sustainable agriculture.

Assistant Plant Protection Officer (PP) presented the features of the National Pest Surveillance System Mobile App, emphasizing its user-friendly design, real-time pest reporting, expert consultations, and timely advisories.

Agriculture Extension Assistant Budgam elaborated on IPM components suited to local agro-climatic conditions.

The event was also attended by DAO (Extension), Assistant Soil Chemist.

The programme concluded with an interactive session where farmers shared insights and queries, making the event highly engaging and impactful.

GOVERNMENT OF UT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER PMGSY (JKRRDA) CIRCLE SRINAGAR KASHMIR

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (NIT)

e-NIT NO:- 21/SE/PMGSY/S/E-TENDERING-OF 2025-26 Dated:- 26-09-2025-2nd Call

Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Srinagar, on behalf of the Lt. Governor of UT of Jammu & Kashmir, invite online percentage rate tenders on e-procurement portal <http://pmgsytendersjk.gov.in> from the Contractors registered in appropriate class/category with State P.W.D. or Contractors of equivalent categories registered with other States/ Central Government, Departments, Institutions, Undertakings and Authorities on standard schedule of rate given below for the packages shown in the column 2 of table, for Initial Rectification (IR) /Periodic Renewal (PR)/ Routine maintenance(RM) of the Rural Roads/ CDs for five years after completion of Renewal Work on roads, constructed under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. Contractors not registered with State PWD will have to get themselves registered with them before signing the agreement.

SOR Applicable :- SOR issued by Jammu & Kashmir State Rural Road Development Authority, (JKRRDA) effective from 2023 and amendments up to issue date of NIT

S. N o.	Package Number	Name of District	Name of PIU	No. of Roads	Total length of Roads (in Km.s.)	Estimated Cost(in Rs.)				Total Estimated Cost (in Rs.)	Completion Period of Initial rectification (IR), Periodic Renewal (PR), Routine Maintenance (RM) and Emergency Repairs (in Days)				Cost of Tender Document including 18% GST	What her First Call?
						Initial Rehabilitation works (IR)	Routine Maintenance	Renewal of Bituminous Surface	Emergency Works							
						Part-I	Part-II	Part -III	Part- IV							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
											IR	PR	RM	Emergency Repairs		
	JK13-136	Srinagar	PIU Ganderbal	LO43-Saidpora Sangam Shingpora,	6.70	48.39	29.63	86.54	-		90 days (3 Months)	2 Years *	5 years(60 months)**	As and when required	2600	2nd

Position of AAA: Accorded, TS Accorded, Funds Available

1. Date of Issue of Notice Inviting Bid , Date-Month-Year

26-09-2025

2. Period of availability

of Bidding Documents on website

www.pmgsytenders.gov.in Date-Month-Year

-Date-Month-Year, Time Upto

3. Time, Date and Place of Pre-bid Meeting, Date-Month-Year

Time-Hours, Place, (If so required)

Srinagar Kashmir, Engineering Complex Rajbagh,

4. Deadline for receiving Bids online, including on line payment of bid, security and

cost of bid document from a scheduled, Date-Month-Year 04-10-2025 Time: 6:55 PM

commercial bank and scanned copy of affidavits.

The on line payment of Bid security and

on e- tendering website along with the submission of Bids

Time-Hours, Place, (If so required)

Circle Srinagar Kashmir, Engineering Complex Rajbagh,

6.2 Date of submission of original affidavit.

(This Date should be no later than three working days after the submission of Technical Qualification part of the bid).The cost of bid document and Bid security is to be paid on line along with bid submission as mentioned in clause 6.1 above. As such no other document is required to be submitted.

Date-Month-Year, 09-10-2025

7. Opening of Bids: The Bids will be opened online by the authorized officer at the appointed time

7.1 Time and Date for opening of Part-I of the

Bid (The Technical Qualification Part)

Date-Month-Year

Date: 06-10-2025 Time: 10:30 AM

Time Hours

SE/PMGSY/S/DB/e-Tendering/ 3890-3919

Dated:- 26-09-2025

DIPK-6565/25

DATED: 26-09-2025

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer
PMGSY Circle Srinagar,
Engineering Complex Rajbagh,
Srinagar Kashmir.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR DIRECTORATE OF HANDICRAFTS & HANDLOOM, KASHMIR KASHMIR HAAT (EXHIBITION GROUND), SRINAGAR

Telefax: 0194-2476025; email: dir.handicraft@jk.gov.in

NOTICE INVITING LIMITED TENDER ENQUIRY (LTE)

Sealed quotations are invited from Branding and Media Agencies, Designing Agencies, or Creative Service Providers for undertaking publicity and creative services aimed at promoting Handicrafts and Handloom products of Kashmir. The scope includes, but is not limited to, GI/ODOP Handicraft and Handloom products. The work will encompass activities across print media, social media, outdoor publicity, electronic media, and other relevant platforms. The scope of work broadly includes design and development of advertisements, brochures, posters, hoardings, social media creatives, reels, documentaries, jingles, podcasts, interviews, and event coverage. The contract period shall be one year (01) year from award of work.

Interested agencies/firms/individuals fulfilling the eligibility criteria may obtain the detailed Limited Tender Enquiry Document (LTE) containing the Scope of Work, Eligibility Criteria, Deliverables, Terms & Conditions, and Bid Formats from the Directorate of Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir, Exhibition Ground, Srinagar on any working day between 10.30 a.m - 4.00 p.m.or download the same from Departments website <https://dohh.jk.gov.in> under Tenders option.

1	Publishing Date	26-09-2025
2	Document download/ Start Date	27-09-2025 from 10.30 AM upto04.10.2025 (4.00 PM)
3	Clarification Seek start Date	29.09.2025 (From 11:00 AM onwards)
4	Clarification Seek end Date	30.09.2025 (Up to 4:00 PM)
5	Quotation submission start date	01.10.2025 from 11.00 AM
6	Quotation submission end date	13.10.2025 upto 4.00 PM
7	Quotation opening date	Technical bid will be opened on 15.10.2025 at 2.30p.m in the office of Director Handicrafts & Handloom Kashmir. The date of opening of financial bid of the technically qualified/ successful bidders shall be declared separately through e-mails.

The quotation in complete form accompanied by a Non -refundable DD of Rs 500 favouring AO DOHHK may be submitted by post or courier or in person, in physical form only (no electronic form shall be entertained) and should be submitted by or before the cutoff date in the Office of Publicity and Exhibition Officer (PEO), Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir Haat, Srinagar, J&K - 190009

The Department reserves the right to reject any or all quotations without assigning any reason thereof.

Further information regarding extension in date of opening quotations, amendments, etc thereof shall be posted on Departments website <https://dohh.jk.gov.in>.

DIPK-6584/25
DATED: 26-09-2025

Sd/-
Director Handicrafts & Handloom
Kashmir

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER ANANTNAG FOREST DIVISION. Re-AUCTION NOTICE

An open Auction of two (02) Confiscated Horses seized in Kuthar Forest Range (lying at Gadol Daksum Range) of Forest Division Anantnag shall be conducted at Forest Division Anantnag on 04/10/2025 at 11:30 AM

Note: -In case the auction is not conducted on fixed date and time due to any reason(s), the Auction shall be conducted on next working day.

TERMS/ CONDITIONS

All the persons interested in the Auction of these animals may participate in the open Auction on the following terms and conditions: -

- The intending bidders shall have to prove his /her identity before participation in the auction.
- No person involved /accused in any Forest offence shall be allowed to participate in the action. All the participants shall affirm their non-involvement in any forest offence, otherwise it shall lead to legal action against the person.
- The interested bidders shall have to deposit an amount of Rs. 5000/= (Rupees Five Thousand only) as security deposit in cash/CDR (pledged to DFO: Forest Division Anantnag) before participating in the auction. The security deposit in case of unsuccessful bidders shall be returned on closure of the auction. In case of successful bidder, the security deposit amount in cash/CDR shall be adjusted towards payment of cost of auctioned Horses.
- The successful bidder shall have to deposit the entire bid amount on spot against proper receipt before taking delivery of the purchased horses on the same day. No delay in deposition of cost and delivery of Horses shall be allowed. In case any bidder fails to deposit the entire cost or fails to take delivery of the Horses on the same day, the auction of the particular Horses shall be deemed as cancelled.
- The Auction committee may reject any offer without assigning any reason thereof.
- The intending bidder shall have to participate personally in the auction and no proxy or Telephonic offer /Internet based offer shall be accepted.
- No offer after the closure of auction shall be entertained under any circumstances.
- The Horses purchased through this auction shall not be utilized for any illegal activity including any Act(s) prohibited under J&K Forest Act. The purchaser shall have to furnish an attested undertaking to this effect. In case of any violation, the purchaser shall be liable for legal action. He/she shall also be debarred from participation in the auctions.
- Any other conditions that the auction committee may deem necessary shall be announced on spot before the commencement of auction.
- No any person falling within the Jurisdiction of Kuthar Range will be allowed to Participate in the said auction.

Sd/- Mohammad Ashraf Katoo Divisional
Forest Officer Anantnag Forest Division

DIPK-6585/25
DATED: 26 /09/2025

No: DFO/Ang/LS/2025-26/728-37

CM Omar inaugurates 3rd junior APSC-2025



KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Sep 26: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Friday officially declared open the 3rd junior Asian Pencak Silat Championship (APSC) 2025 at the Sher-i-Kashmir Indoor Sports Complex, Srinagar.

The championship, which runs from September 25 to 30, 2025, has drawn participation from young athletes representing 11 countries, marking a vibrant celebration of sportsmanship and cultural exchange in Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said it was his first formal introduction to the fast-growing martial art of Pencak Silat, which has witnessed remarkable

progress in Jammu and Kashmir since its introduction a decade ago. "I was told that this discipline is being practiced in 19 out of 20 districts of J&K. I look forward to its introduction in the remaining district so that the entire J&K is covered," he said.

The Chief Minister praised the inclusive spirit of the sport, highlighting that Pencak Silat enjoys equal popularity among both boys and girls. He said, "This game teaches us discipline and respect for our opponents. Your opponent is not your enemy, but an opponent only. That is the true spirit of sportsmanship."

Welcoming the athletes and delegations from India and abroad, Omar Abdullah said,

"We take great pride in hosting you here and choosing Srinagar as venue for this prestigious championship. I hope you not only enjoy the competition but also carry with you fond memories of this place for the rest of your lives."

On the occasion, a march past of participating teams, cultural performances from Jammu and Kashmir, and a Pencak Silat demonstration by athletes enthralled the audience.

Minister for Youth Services and Sports Satish Sharma, MLA Lal Chowk Sheikh Ahsan Ahmed (Pardesi), Secretary J&K Sports Council Nuzhat Gul, besides coaches, officials, and athletes from participating countries were present at the opening ceremony.

Chief Minister meets public delegations at Raabita office

KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Sep 26: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Friday continued his ongoing public outreach initiative, meeting several delegations and individuals at his Public Outreach Office Raabita here, to address and resolve people's issues.

Among the visiting delegations, a team led by the Vice President of Jammu & Kashmir Teachers Forum (JKTF) presented key suggestions on education reforms in J&K, while also highlighting the recent developments and concerns of the teaching community.

A deputation headed by the Chairman of Civil Society Baramulla raised important developmental matters



concerning the welfare and progress of district Baramulla. Similarly, a delegation of SRO-43 candidates of JKPC appraised the Chief Minister of their demands regarding settlement of their pending compassionate appointment cases.

In another interaction, the President of the Jammu &

Kashmir Employees Coordination Committee, along with his team, discussed several issues related to employee welfare, service conditions and broader concerns of the workforce.

They expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister for the pro-employee initiatives undertaken by his government since

assuming office..

The Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to all the deputations and assured them that their genuine grievances and demands would be examined and taken up with the concerned authorities for appropriate redressal.

He reiterated that his government is committed to responsive governance and remains focused on addressing the aspirations of the people across all sectors.

Among others, Deepak Bali, Advisor, Punjab Heritage & Tourism Promotion Board, Department of Tourism & Cultural Affairs, Government of Punjab, called on the Chief Minister and discussed various tourism-related initiatives and avenues of cooperation between the two governments.

Amid cold storage shortage, growers face stark crisis

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Pulwama, Sep 26: Kashmir's apple industry - often described as the backbone of the valley's economy - continues to reel under crisis this year. While highway blockades and low demand have already dented the season, the shortage of cold storage space has now left small and medium-scale growers in despair, forcing many to sell their produce at throwaway prices.

Small growers from Shopian, Pulwama, and adjoining districts said that while the government often advises them to make use of cold storage facilities during market slowdowns, the ground reality is very different.

"Tell us, what is the benefit of cold storage units when we can't even store our produce in them?" asked Abdul Rashid, an orchardist from Pulwama. "We were waiting for better market rates by storing our apples, but when we approached the units, they said all slots were booked months ago. This facility only secures the position of big traders, while small and middle-class growers like us are left helpless."

Another grower, Ghulam Ahmad from Shopian, urged immediate government action. "In every crisis, we are told to rely on cold storage. But capacity is far less than demand. Unless new units are established, this problem will haunt growers every year," he said.

Growers also complained about the skyrocketing freight charges and low demand.

Bashir Ahmad, a dealer at Jabli Pora Mandi, highlighted their dilemma: "Imagine the plight of a grower; he can neither send produce outside due to high freight costs and low demand nor store them in cold storage due to advance bookings. What option is left except to sell apples at a loss?"

"Without immediate intervention, lakhs of families dependent on the apple trade will continue to suffer," he said.

Adding to the discontent, former MLA Zainapora and current DDC member Aijaz Ahmad Mir accused certain cold storage units of mismanagement. "There are growing complaints regarding the functioning of units in Aglar Shopian and Lassipora. I urge the management to address these concerns with fairness. Do not exploit orchardists or cancel agreements that have already been finalised. Our farmers deserve dignity and justice for their toil," he said.

Mir further pointed to chaotic scenes outside units: "Long queues of Tata mobiles loaded with apples can be seen waiting at Lassipora. The mismanagement has created traffic jams and inconvenience for the public. To make matters worse, some units shut down for three days a week. This is unacceptable, and authorities must intervene immediately." Meanwhile, cold storage owners said the

existing infrastructure is far below the valley's actual requirement. "Kashmir produces 22-25 lakh metric tonnes of apples annually. But all 70 cold storage units in Shopian and Pulwama combined have a capacity of only 3 lakh tonnes. People expect us to accommodate everything, which is simply impossible," they said.

They added that an unusual rush this year has worsened the problem. "Normally, produce arrives gradually over two months, but this time bulk quantities came all at once due to highway closures and poor demand outside. Over 50% capacity was filled within just a few days. We are trying our best to accommodate more growers, but we too have limitations," a cold store manager said.

Owners said that while cold storage units are meant for 'A-grade' apples, many growers are now bringing 'B-grade' produce due to weak markets, further adding pressure. "We appeal to growers to cooperate. Every possible effort is being made to maximise capacity use, but unrealistic expectations will only deepen the crisis."

As Kashmir's apple season progresses, growers and traders remain caught between poor market demand, high freight costs, and insufficient storage facilities. Unless immediate measures are taken, experts warn, the valley's fruit economy could face long-term damage—(KNO)

GDA takes over 'Royal Park Hotel'

WARIS FAYAZ

Srinagar, Sep 26: After reclaiming the historic Nedous Hotel in August, the Gulmarg Development Authority (GDA) on Friday took possession of the Royal Park Hotel after the expiry of its rent agreement.

Officials confirming the development said that the GDA-owned property (Royal Park) had been rented out to a local businessman several decades ago, but the lease period ended in June this year and was not renewed.

Following the lapse, the authority moved to reclaim

the hotel to prevent any unauthorised occupation.

The takeover was carried out smoothly in the presence of officials to ensure a peaceful handover.

The action comes close on the heels of GDA's high-profile eviction of the 137-year-old Nedous Hotel earlier on August 04, as part of a wider drive to retrieve government assets in Gulmarg whose leases have expired.

Authorities said the property will remain under the GDA's control until a fresh decision is taken regarding its future use—(KNO)

SKUAST-K takes improved vegetable tech to tribal belts

KNO

Kupwara, Sep 26: The Division of Vegetable Science, Faculty of Horticulture, SKUAST-Kashmir on Friday organized a mega outreach Programme aimed at promoting vegetable cultivation and strengthening community-based seed systems in the tribal belts of district Kupwara.

The programme, as per the statement was held at Hachmarg, Kalaroos Serkauli Mohalla and the Gujjar & Bakarwal Hostel, focusing on improved production techniques, quality seed distribution and sustainable farming models.

The event was graced by DDC Kalaroos Member Mustafa Rahi, who praised SKUAST-K's efforts to extend modern agricultural technologies to the grassroots. Iqbal Choudhary, CEO of Seed Company Shalimar, also



attended and elaborated on various initiatives designed to boost vegetable productivity and quality across the region.

Scientists including Professor Shahnaz Mufti, Dr. Rizwan Rashid, Dr. Asima Amin and Dr. Berjes Zehra, under the leadership of Professor

and Head Dr. Ishfaq Abidi, conducted interactive technical sessions, with farmers receiving guidance on scientific methods of vegetable cultivation, varietal selection, integrated nutrient and pest management and seed production techniques tailored to the local climate. At village

Hachmarg, special emphasis was laid on introducing high-yielding, region-specific vegetable varieties to improve productivity and ensure nutritional security. Farmers were sensitized on the importance of seed sovereignty and the development of community-based seed systems. In

Kalaroos, newly released pea varieties were distributed to tribal farmers along with demonstrations on sustainable farming practices.

The outreach also extended to the Tribal School in Kupwara, where students were educated on nutrition gardening and the role of household-level vegetable production in enhancing dietary diversity and self-reliance.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from over 300 progressive farmers, tribal youth, women self-help groups and local stakeholders, who engaged in demonstrations, knowledge-sharing sessions, and the distribution of quality seed kits. Experts also highlighted market linkages and value addition opportunities to help farmers increase their income—(KNO)

Police arrest 2 drug peddlers

KNO

Srinagar, Sep 26: In ongoing crackdown against the menace of drugs, Police in Shopian and Kulgam on Friday said to have arrested two drug peddlers and recovered huge quantity of contraband substances from their possession.

"Police in Kulgam during checking at a checkpoint established at New Bypass Furrah Crossing intercepted a suspicious vehicle (Swift Dzire) bearing registration number JK03D-9184," a police spokesman said in a statement.

On thorough search of the vehicle, 55.5 kilograms of poppy straw concealed in four bags was recovered by the police team. The driver of the vehicle, identified as Muzaffer Ahmad Bhat, son of Ghulam Nabi Bhat, resident of Doonipora

Bijbehara, Sangam Anantnag, was arrested on the spot, the statement said.

The vehicle used for the transportation of the contraband was also seized. Following the recovery, a case under FIR number 191/2025 under section 8/15 NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Qazigund.

Speaking on the development, SSP Kulgam Sahil Sarangal has said that the fight against drugs is not just a law-enforcement challenge but also a social responsibility.

J&K Police is fully committed to uprooting this menace from society and protecting our youth from the dangers of addiction. We seek active cooperation from the public in this mission so that together, we can build a safe, healthy, and drug-free community,

the statement added.

Meanwhile, acting on specific input, a police team from Police Post Wachi Shopian at a checkpoint established at Darbagh Wachi intercepted a suspicious person identified as Imtiyaz Ahmad Dar son of Ali Mohd Dar resident of Darbagh Wachi.

During the search, 2.4 Kgs of Charas sticks were recovered from his possession. Accordingly, police said that a case under FIR number 75/2025 under relevant sections of the law has been registered at Police Station Zainapora.

"Investigation into both the cases has been taken up to trace the source of the contraband, identify its intended destination, and expose the wider nexus of drug traffickers involved in the illegal trade," police said—(KNO)

ACB chargesheets ex-VC JDA, others

KNO

Jammu, Sep 26: Anti-Corruption Bureau, Jammu & Kashmir, has produced a chargesheet before the Court of Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, Jammu against Vinod Sharma, Ex-Vice Chairman, JDA and others in illegal plot allotment case.

As per a statement, the spokesman said that the ACB has produced a chargesheet in a case under FIR number 18/2014 PS VOJ (now ACB), registered under Section 5(1)(d) read with Section 5(2) of the J&K Prevention of Corruption Act, Svt. 2006, and Section 120-B RPC, before the Hon'ble Court of Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, Jammu. The chargesheet has been filed against Vinod Sharma, Ex-Vice Chairman, JDA, Mamta Sharma wife of Vinod Sharma, Ghany Sham, then Naib Tehsildar, JDA (now retired and expired) and Rishi Kumar, then Patwari, JDA (now retired and expired), the statement added.

The instant case was registered on the basis of a verification conducted by the then Vigilance Organization (now ACB) into allegations of illegal allotment of Plot No. 42, Sector-1A, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, and illegal possession of an additional 4,300 sq. ft. of land by Mamta Sharma, wife of the then Vice Chairman, JDA.

Investigations revealed that the accused persons, in connivance with officers/officials of JDA, by abusing their official position, facilitated the illegal allotment of the plot and encroachment of the adjoining land at Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

The Court has fixed 15.12.2025 as the next date of hearing in the matter—(KNO)

NIA attaches property of HM terror operative

KNO

New Delhi, Sep 26: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday attached the immovable properties of a Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) terror operative involved in the supply of arms and ammunition to active militants of the banned outfit for promoting terrorist activities in Kashmir.

"On the orders of the NIA Special Court, Jammu, the agency has attached the immovable properties of Tariq Ahmad Mir, a charge-sheeted accused who was arrested in April 2025 in the case RC-01/2020/NIA/JMU," a spokesman said in a statement.

The attached properties included a concrete, single-storey residential building built on land

measuring 780 sq. ft. under Survey No. 82 Min, recorded as Shamlat (Khahcharai) in Village Maldera, District Shopian, and a piece of land measuring 08 Marlas, classified as Abi-Soum under Survey No. 74 Min at Village Maldera, District Shopian, UT of J&K, in the form of an orchard.

An associate of HM terrorist Syed Naveed Mushtaq, Tariq was charge-sheeted in October 2024 before the NIA Special Court, Jammu, under various sections of IPC, Arms Act, and UA(P)Act, the statement added.

"Today's property attachment was part of NIA's ongoing action against terror networks operating in Kashmir with the aim of disrupting India's peace, stability and harmony," the spokesman said—(KNO)

NOTICE

I want to change my name of my adhaar card bearing adhaar no 645795770280 from Ghulam Ahmad Bhat to Ama bhat as per my PPO.

In this regard anybody having any objection he/she may contact concern department within 7 seven days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Ama Bhat
S/o Abdul Karim Bhat
R/o Doodh Mohalla
Shalimar

EDITORIAL

Qualification Not Enough, Skill Is The Real Currency

In an increasingly competitive and technology-driven world, academic qualifications alone are no longer sufficient to secure success. While degrees provide foundational knowledge, it is practical skills that truly empower individuals to innovate, adapt, and thrive. This is especially evident in sectors like agriculture, where the integration of modern techniques, soil testing, livestock care, and even artificial intelligence can transform traditional practices into dynamic, profitable

enterprises. For too long, educational systems have prioritised theoretical learning over hands-on competence. The result is a generation of graduates who are qualified on paper but often lack the practical abilities demanded by the economy. This gap is particularly stark in agriculture, a sector that employs millions but remains trapped in outdated methods. By training youth in precision farming, drone technology, data-driven irrigation, and digital market access, we can unleash a revolution

that boosts productivity, sustainability, and income. But the importance of skills extends far beyond farming. In every sphere, from healthcare, manufacturing, services, or governance, competence determines effectiveness. A doctor must not only hold a degree but also master new surgical techniques; an engineer must understand emerging technologies like AI and renewable energy; an artisan must blend traditional craft with digital design. Soft skills such as critical thinking, communication, and

problem-solving are equally vital, enabling individuals to navigate complex challenges and collaborate across domains. Skill development is indispensable in today's era. In a rapidly changing job market, those with versatile, updatable skills are better equipped to pivot during crises, embrace automation, and seize new opportunities. Countries that prioritise vocational training, apprenticeships, and lifelong learning tend to exhibit stronger economic growth and social mobility. It is

time to reimagine education as a continuous journey of skill acquisition rather than a one-time pursuit of degrees. Governments, industries, and educational institutions must collaborate to create accessible, relevant training programmes, from AI literacy for farmers to coding for craftsmen. By valuing skills as the real currency of progress, we can empower our youth not just to seek jobs, but to create them, and to build a future that is innovative, inclusive, and self-reliant.

Farmers' Welfare

World Food India 2025: Where Flavours Meet Global Strategic Partnerships

Press Information Bureau

In line with this vision, MoFPI launched World Food India (WFI), its flagship international event designed to showcase India's rich food culture and attract global investment in 2017. Two more editions were held in 2023 and 2024, and the 4th edition is set to be held from 25th to 28th September 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. The Curtain Raiser for this was held on July 23, 2025 at New Delhi.

Since its inception WFI has grown into a premier platform for global stakeholders to connect, collaborate, and explore opportunities in India's dynamic food processing landscape. Bringing together leading food processing companies, innovators, supply chain stakeholders, and equipment manufacturers, WFI 2025 will serve as a collaborative platform for forging partnerships, fostering innovation, and unlocking new business opportunities between Indian and international players.

Government Initiatives to Promote India's Food Processing Industries

India's food processing industry has seen a remarkable growth over the past 11 years, shaped by its strong farm base, growing demand, and supportive government policies. The country is set to become a global leader in this sector, with steady growth ahead. India's strong agricultural base, especially its position as the world's second-largest producer of fruits and vegetables, has driven rapid transformation in food processing. The sector has become vital to the economy, contributing significantly to GDP, employment, and exports. Agricultural and processed food exports touched USD 49.4 billion in 2024-25, with processed food accounting for 20.4% of the share, up from 13.7% in 2014-15. Employment is also significant, with about 2.23 million workers in registered units and 4.68 million in the unregistered sector, according to official surveys.

The Government of India has been actively promoting the food processing sector through targeted schemes and reforms, recognizing its potential as a global leader in value-added agriculture. The number of registered food business operators has expanded from 25 lakh to 64 lakh, reflecting growing formalisation. Infrastructure has also strengthened with establishing 24 mega food parks, 22 agro-processing clusters and completing 289 cold chain projects

and 305 processing and preservation units, creating significant additional capacity. Further, 10 projects under Operation Greens have enhanced value addition, while 225 R&D projects have yielded 20 patents and 52 commercialised technologies.

The MoFPI is implementing the Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry (PLISFPI) with an outlay of Rs 10,900 crore (2021-22 to 2026-27) to build global champions and boost Indian brands in international markets. Further, a Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Millet-based Products (PLISMBP) has been launched to encourage Ready-to-Eat (RTE) and Ready-to-Cook (RTC) millet products, promoting value addition and expanding millet consumption.

To further attract investment and strengthen infrastructure, the government has undertaken several measures under the Make in India campaign. These include permitting 100% FDI in food processing, establishing a Rs 2,000 crore NABARD fund for affordable credit in Food Parks, and improving ease of doing business through online scheme management. Flagship schemes like Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY) are creating modern infrastructure and efficient supply chains, while the PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme (PMFME) supports micro-units with technical, financial, and business assistance. Together, these initiatives aim to reduce wastage, enhance processing capacity, generate employment, and position India as a global food processing hub.

World Food India (WFI) 2025

WFI 2025 will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, on September 25, 2025 at 6:00 PM at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. Building on the success of its previous editions, this edition is set to be the largest edition yet, with participation expected from over 90 countries, 2,000+ exhibitors, and tens of thousands of stakeholders spanning the entire food value chain from farm to fork.

Objective of WFI 2025

The objective of the World Food India 2025 is to showcase India as the 'Global Food Hub' for food processing as well as food supply. The mega event is being planned as one of the biggest ever congregation of senior government dignitaries, investors, business leaders of major global and domestic food companies and all relevant stakeholders.

There will be opportunity for all relevant stakeholders such as producers, food processors, equipment manufacturers, logistics players, cold chain players, technology providers, start-up & innovators, food retailers etc., from all over the globe to highlight their strengths in one single platform.

Key Features

High-level knowledge sessions and panel discussions with global thought leaders, policymakers, and industry experts.

Sectoral exhibitions spotlighting innovations in food processing, packaging, machinery, cold chain, and allied industries.

B2B and B2C networking opportunities aimed at forging strategic partnerships and collaborations.

Culinary experiences and chef competitions, showcasing India's diverse food heritage alongside global trends in healthy, sustainable, and futuristic foods.

In addition, two prestigious international events will be held alongside WFI 2025:

3rd Global Food Regulators Summit by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) - providing a unique platform for global regulators to deliberate on harmonization of food safety standards and strengthen international regulatory cooperation.

24th India International Seafood Show (IIS) by the Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI) - focusing on India's growing seafood export potential and global market linkages.

Viksit Bharat 2047 envisions India as a developed, inclusive, and globally competitive nation, and WFI 2025 plays a crucial role in this roadmap by advancing the food processing sector. The event brings together technology, investment, and innovation to boost rural prosperity, enhance farmer incomes, reduce post-harvest losses, and create jobs in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. Anchored on five strategic pillars - sustainability, infrastructure, entrepreneurship, global leadership, and innovation - WFI 2025 emphasizes climate-smart technologies, nutrition-focused products, advanced food-tech, and global market integration while supporting micro-enterprises, capacity building, and Make in India, marking a key milestone toward Vision 2047.

Partner & Focus Countries

This year's edition will see New Zealand and Saudi Arabia as Partner Countries, while Japan, UAE, Vietnam, and Russia will participate as Focus Countries, reflecting India's

growing international cooperation in the food sector. Their presence will contribute to strengthening bilateral relations, enhancing knowledge exchange, and creating fresh opportunities for trade and investment.

Key Events of WFI 2025

Below are the Event Components and Key Highlights:

Startup Grand Challenge: Innovation showcase, Mentorship opportunity, Funding connections

High-Level CEO Round Table Meeting: Dialogue between industry and policy makers, Government policy framework, Taxation and trade dynamics, Navigating regulatory challenges

B2B/B2C/G2G Meetings: Direct business connections, Government partnerships, International collaborations, Strategic alliances

Exhibitions: Showcasing opportunities: State & UT, country, ministry-wise pavilions, Product-wise pavilions, Specialised zones for pet food, HoReCa (Hotels, Restaurants, and Cafés/Catering), alcoholic beverages, and post-harvest machinery

Conference and Knowledge Sessions: Industry insights, Knowledge sharing sessions, Latest trends and innovations, Technical workshops

Digital Showcase: Digital product displays, Interactive presentations, Immersive tech zones, Smart supply chains

Great Indian Food Street: Flavours of India, Regional Culinary Showcase, Live Cooking Experiences, Fusion Food Innovation

World Food India 2024

The 3rd edition of World Food India was organized by the MoFPI from September 19-22, 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. WFI 2024 had strong institutional backing with support from 9 Ministries, 8 bodies, and 26 States. It featured 1,557 exhibitors, 20 country pavilions, 809 buyers from 108 nations and 2,390 foreign delegates. Spread across 70,000 sq. meters in nine halls, the exhibition showcased 100+ ODOF items, with Japan as Partner Country and Iran and Vietnam as Focus Countries.

During this event, the following milestones were achieved:

67 food processing units were inaugurated under PLISFPI and PMKSY, with a total investment of Rs 5,135 crores.

25,000 beneficiaries received credit-linked support for micro projects worth Rs 2,351 crores under the PMFME Scheme.

Rs 245 crores seed capital sanctioned to 70,000 SHG members under PMFME.

Conclusion

World Food India (WFI) 2025 is not merely a platform for showcasing India's food sector - it is an open invitation to the world to co-create the future of food with India. The event positions India not only as a market but as a trusted partner that combines scale, innovation, affordability, and sustainability. From ancient grains like millets to emerging categories such as plant-based proteins, India offers unmatched diversity across ingredients, consumer segments, and the value chain.

With its status as the world's largest producer of milk, the second largest producer of fruits and vegetables, and a rapidly growing hub for processed food exports, India has established itself as a global food processing powerhouse. Pro-business policies, enabling infrastructure, and ease-of-doing-business reforms further strengthen this ecosystem.

At a time when the world is grappling with food security, supply chain disruptions, and climate challenges, India stands out as a reliable partner offering stability, trust, and collaboration. WFI 2025 is envisioned as a platform not only to drive investments but also to forge lasting partnerships that address global challenges in nutrition, sustainability, and inclusive growth. Together, with global leaders and stakeholders, India seeks to shape a resilient, innovative, and sustainable food future for the world.

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H1B Changes Alone Can't Secure India's AI Future

Amit Kapoor and Mohammad Saad

One of the most contentious policies of the Trump administration was just announced: a \$100,000 fee to apply for an H1B visa. Naturally, the announcement unsettled the Indian diaspora and many prospective Green Card applicants in India, since over 70 per cent of H1B visa holders are Indian, with many of the brightest among them likely contributing to the development of foreign AI systems and large language model companies.

The White House promptly reassured existing H1B visa holders, though, by making it clear that the \$100,000 fee would only be charged to new applicants, not to those who already had one. Since then, the action has generated discussion about its possible advantages and disadvantages for national interests, with some applauding it as a step to stop the long-standing "brain drain" phenomenon. While preventing brain drain is directly relevant to the global AI race, retaining domestic talent alone does not fully address India's AI challenges.

From an objective standpoint, Trump's decision to significantly raise H1B visa costs will inadvertently slow down the flow of some of India's most talented individuals to the West, something India has long failed to stop. The large immigration to the United States was driven because of what America

could provide but India was unable to - merit recognition, better infrastructure, better education, and cleaner air. The numbers speak for themselves. Consider for instance that at the national level, India's Central Sector Scheme of Scholarships for College and University Students awards a maximum of 82,000 scholarships annually for graduate and postgraduate studies.

In contrast, the United States awards more than 1.7 million private scholarships and fellowships annually, valued at over \$7.4 billion as of 2020. Now consider infrastructure, education, and pollution: In the 2024 infrastructure rankings by the World Population Review, the U.S. was ranked seventh, while India ranked 28th. According to the latest QS World University Rankings, the US has 192 ranked universities, including 44 in the top 100, whereas India has only 54 ranked universities and none in the top 100. Last year, India's capital was ranked the most polluted city in the world.

Collectively, these factors have incentivized India's most talented workers to contribute to the U.S. economy, rather than to India's own development. In light of the AI revolution, which makes it crucial for countries to protect their interests and seize new opportunities - something that is impossible without the right human resources - the loss of India's brightest minds becomes

even more pressing. Naturally, a lack of talent could further disadvantage India, which was already far behind in the global AI race.

Inadvertently, Trump's move could allow India to keep more of its skilled workforce, which could lead to a chance to take a more active role in the AI race. However, this must definitely not invite unwarranted optimism as India's capacity to take full advantage of this opportunity is still constrained by the same elements that drove talented people to relocate to the United States: infrastructure, funding for research, and a favourable business environment. To make the point clear, one must first realize that creating AI systems necessitates a large investment in R&D.

Regrettably, neither the public nor private sector of India invest much in research and development. The private sector makes significant investments in countries that have successfully developed AI systems, but the government cannot be held entirely responsible. As a percentage of GDP, India's R&D spending has stayed between 0.6 and 0.7 per cent, which is less than the global average and less than that of nations like the U.S., China, and South Korea. Furthermore, only roughly 36 per cent of India's total R&D expenditure comes from the private sector, compared to over 70 per cent in these other countries. Low R&D investment in India

means that retaining talented individuals does not automatically translate into the creation of AI systems.

The fact that AI innovations typically originate from start-up ecosystems that promote entrepreneurship is another crucial point. India has yet to establish such an environment. For instance, take the corporate tax system in both countries: The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 established the 21 per cent flat rate in the United States. All corporate income brackets are subject to the same rate. In contrast, corporate taxes in India range from 25 to 30 per cent plus surcharges. Businesses are further burdened by the intricacy and ambiguity of India's tax laws, especially smaller ones that cannot afford professional advice. Delays and a lack of transparency in tax administration are examples of inefficiencies that can increase mistrust and encourage tax evasion.

The favourable business climate in California undoubtedly aided the Indian talent who migrated there and established their businesses, but it looks unlikely that India would provide similar opportunities for some time to come. Another possible effect of Trump's decision is that India could experience a temporary decline in wages instead of seeing an increase in domestic AI job creation. This is because workers who may have migrated to the United States will now

stay here, boosting competition in terms of both quantity and calibre. The fact that AI is now performing tasks like homework and assignments that are typically used to indicate proficiency, undermining the legitimacy of degrees and causing information asymmetry, complicates this situation.

Short-term wage pressure is likely to continue, and it might only subside if some of this talent moves abroad, perhaps to Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, or Germany, where there may be a greater influx of Indian professionals. Ultimately, retaining talent within India alone will not be sufficient. The country will continue to face the persistent challenges that have long been part of public discourse, and these issues may now become even more pressing. It is time for policymakers to decide how best to leverage the current situation. The problems are well understood, and many of the potential solutions are already clear, including higher R&D spending, greater domestic AI job creation, easier business conditions, and broader improvements in India's standard of living, among others. Therefore, what is now required is decisive action.

The writers are, respectively, Chair and a Researcher at the Institute for Competitiveness.
Source: The Statesman

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

Strengthen professional education ecosystem: Sakeena to BOPEE Chairperson

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 26: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Friday held a brief meeting with Chairperson Jammu and Kashmir Board of Professional Entrance Examination (JKBOPEE), Prof. Minu Mahajan to discuss ways and means for strengthening of professional education opportunities across J&K.

During the interaction, the Education Minister took detailed appraisal from the Chairperson about the functioning and other related aspects of the JKBOPEE. She also took stock of the functioning of Composite Regional Centre (CRC) Srinagar.

The Minister directed the Chairperson to study the feasibility for creating additional seats at CRC in special B.Ed course as there has been significant demand for trained special educators in J&K both in main stream and specialized



institutions who can cater to the requirements of specially enabled students.

While discussing other issues of JKBOSE, the Education Minister directed

ensuring transparent and merit-based admissions. She assured the Chairperson full support from the Government in creating more opportunities for students from J&K to pursue professional and technical education at par with the rest of the country.

The Minister asked the Chairperson to keep working on various initiatives which will strengthen professional education ecosystem and ensure that the desiring students of J&K have access to quality, diverse and career oriented opportunities.

During the interaction, the Chairperson JKBOPEE expressed gratitude to Education Minister for securing additional 290 MBBS seats for students of J&K, highlighting that this significant step will provide aspiring students a greater opportunity to shine in the field of medicine and strengthen the collective resolve of Omar Abdullah led Government to establish J&K as a hub of academic excellence.

the Chairperson to establish a standard grievance redressal mechanism for the facilitation of students and applicants.

Minister Sakeena also appreciated the role of JKBOPEE in

Sewa Parv: DCPU B'pora organises community outreach prog



KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 26: As part of Sewa Parv campaign, District Child Protection Unit (DCPU), Mission Vatsalya Bandipora on Friday conducted a community outreach programme at multiple locations, including the Main Market, Nasoo Bus Stand, and Kaloosa Bus Stand, Bandipora.

During the programme,

traders, drivers associations, and the general public were sensitized and provided awareness about child rights and the role of different stakeholders in ensuring a safe and secure environment for children in vulnerable situations.

Officials from DCPU, CWC, JJB, CHL, and CHD actively participated in the event and distributed IEC material among the participants.

Committee on Privileges discusses legislators' privileges, protocols

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 26: The Committee on Privileges of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Friday convened a meeting at the Assembly Complex, Srinagar, to deliberate on matters related to the constitutional privileges and entitlements of legislators.

The meeting was chaired by Committee Chairman, Nizam-ud-Din Bhat, and attended by members Riyaz Ahmad Khan, Salman Sagar, Javid Riyaz (Bedar), Javid Iqbal, and Bharat Bhushan.

Also present were Commissioner Secretary GAD, M Raju; Secretary Hospitality & Protocol, Bhupinder Kumar; Secretary Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, Achal Sethi; and Secretary Legislative Assembly, Manoj Kumar Pandita.

The Committee emphasized the need to ensure proper protocol and privileges to legislators and directed for greater cooperation to facilitate the



smooth functioning of the legislature.

At the outset, the Chairman underscored the importance of legislators asserting their constitutional rights and privileges on all appropriate platforms. He expressed confidence in the collective commitment of members to uphold the integrity of the institution and assured that the Committee would continue to perform within its mandate in the

larger interest of public welfare.

Members also offered valuable suggestions and stressed maintaining protocols to safeguard the dignity, autonomy, and effective functioning of elected representatives.

The Committee resolved to compile a detailed report on issues related to privileges and protocols of legislators and submit the same to the concerned quarters for appropriate action.

Sewa Parv: Multi-sectoral outreach initiatives held at Shopian

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, SEPTEMBER 26: Sewa Parv campaign in district Shopian Friday achieved another milestone with a wide spectrum of activities focused on education, cleanliness, livelihood support, and social welfare.

The day was marked by community-driven initiatives that reinforced the values of service, responsibility, and collective participation.

Education department spearheaded a donation drive of books and clothes across the schools of the district, benefiting more than 700 students, encouraging a culture of sharing and compassion.



Agriculture department facilitated interactions with successful entrepreneurs, inspiring farmers and youth to adopt innovative practices in line with today's Sewa Parv theme of entrepreneurship

and self-reliance. Horticulture department provided technical guidance to orchardists at Imamsahib and Hermain and distributed plant protection machinery in Zone Keller, helping farmers adopt modern and

sustainable practices.

Rural Development Department mobilized community participation by encouraging eco-friendly practices during festivals, promoting Swachh Bharat Mission branding and strengthening Reduce-Reuse-Recycle (RRR) centers. Municipal Council Shopian, under Swachhata Hi Seva and Sewa Parv, organized an intensive cleanliness drive at Natoo and Sangloo Nallah, which saw the active involvement of ULB staff, Swachhata Executives, volunteers, and sanitary workers.

CAHO Shopian, along with field officers and scheme beneficiaries, emphasized awareness about departmental schemes,

online application handholding, technical support, and the benefits of establishing self-employment units in livestock and poultry sectors.

Forest Department, Forest Protection Force and Social Forestry, in collaboration with Sunrise Public School Sedow, carried out a plantation drive at Ladigasana, engaging students in green activities.

District Social Welfare office organized an awareness-cum-registration camp at Darbagh Zainapora, covering pension schemes, senior citizen programmes, marriage assistance, OSC services, child helpline, women helpline, and Poshan initiatives.

District NCORD meeting reviews drug control measures

KT News Desk

DODA, SEPTEMBER 26: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Doda Anil Kumar Thakur Friday chaired a meeting of the District Level Narco Coordination (NCORD) Committee in the VC Room, DC Office Complex.

The meeting, convened under the directions of the District Magistrate reviewed the ongoing and future strategy to curb the menace of drug abuse and trafficking. The session was attended by ASP Mohammad Aslam; ACD Din Mohammad Afaqi; District Social Welfare Officer Tariq Qazi; Chief Prosecuting Officer Kishore Kumar Bhandral; Principal GDC Dr Javid Ahmed Zargar; officers from the Agriculture and Forest Departments, representatives of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force

(ANTF) and members of NGOs.

The discussions centred on formulation of a multi-pronged action plan to track down the traffickers, identify hotspots, installation of CCTV cameras near schools and colleges and strict monitoring of drug de-addiction centres.

The ADC directed the Heads of Educational Institutions to keep close watch in and around the schools and colleges and immediately inform the Police administration about any suspicious activity.

Tehsildars and BDOs were asked to inspect educational institutions and other sensitive locations while SDMs were instructed to ensure all departments initiate field activities, supported by photographic evidence. The misuse of prescription drugs was also highlighted, with directions to enforce

computer-based billing and 100% CCTV coverage in pharmacies.

The ADC called for intensifying Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns by involving religious leaders, civil society and NGOs. He underlined the importance of declaring more panchayats as "Nasha Mukti" and ordered destruction of wild narcotic weeds. The heads of departments shared their experiences in tackling substance abuse seeking special focus on engaging youth and students in awareness programmes, including debates, rallies and cultural activities to build resilience against drugs.

To ensure accountability, the ADC directed the enforcement agencies to share monthly progress reports on NDPS cases with the Home Department and the Crime Branch.

CS reviews progress of Single Window Portal

Directs to make it fully faceless, seamless by Oct 31

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 26: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Friday chaired a meeting to review the functioning and progress of the Single Window Portal of the Industries & Commerce Department, aimed at providing time-bound, transparent, and hassle-free services to entrepreneurs and businesses across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Vikramjit Singh; Secretary, IT, Dr. Piyush Singla; MD, JaKeGA; State Informatics Officer, NIC; and other concerned officers.

At the outset, the Chief Secretary stressed upon the need to make the Single Window Portal a completely faceless and seamless mechanism, ensuring that applicants can obtain all permissions and NoCs without physically visiting any government office. He directed the NIC to extend all necessary support to plug



existing gaps and set October 31, 2025, as the deadline for achieving this goal. He also underlined that his office will independently verify the system's effectiveness on ground.

Commissioner Secretary, I&C, Vikramjit Singh, informed the meeting that 185 services from 21 departments have already been onboarded onto the portal. He further highlighted that the platform has been integrated with Digilocker, e-Abgari, Auto-Appeal, e-Unnat, and UMANG, NGDRS to enhance

transparency, accountability, and user convenience.

Secretary IT, Dr. Piyush Singla, apprised the Chief Secretary that the portal has successfully migrated to the State Data Centre (SDC) and will be made fully functional and live shortly as the mandatory security audit has been completed. He also shared a roadmap for transitioning the portal into a total faceless system, including the development of revised workflows with departments to enable desk-wise monitoring of applications.

DLSA Budgam organizes awareness programme



KT News Desk

BUDGAM, SEPTEMBER 26: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Budgam, under the aegis of the Jammu & Kashmir Legal Services Authority (JKLSA), organized an awareness programme on drug abuse and solid waste management (SWM) in collaboration with TLSC Chadoora at Sogam Chadoora.

The programme was conducted under the supervision of O.P. Bhagat, Chairman, DLSA Budgam, and the active guidance of Nusrat Ali Hakak, Secretary, DLSA Budgam.

The awareness programme was aimed at sensitizing the public about two critical issues viz. drug abuse and solid waste management.

The objective of solid waste management is to protect public health and the environment by ensuring scientific and systematic waste disposal, while promoting reduction, reuse, and recycling to conserve resources and minimize pollution.

Similarly, the drug abuse awareness component sought to educate people about the dangers of substance abuse, its social consequences, harmful effects of different drugs, and the legal framework governing them.

Deputy LADC Budgam, Nazir Ahmad Wagay, deputized by DLSA Budgam as the resource person delivered an insightful presentation,

raising awareness among participants.

Wagay highlighted the legal protections available to minors, harmful consequences of drug abuse, and its alarming impact on society, particularly on the younger generation. He emphasized the urgent need for vigilance to prevent children and youth from falling prey to this menace.

He also spoke extensively on solid waste management, underlining its direct impact on public health and the environment. He highlighted the importance of proper waste segregation, disposal, and recycling practices, stressing that reduction, reuse, and recycling are key to sustainable waste management.

He further elaborated on the legal framework and regulations related to waste management that must be followed by all stakeholders.

Wagay urged everyone to adopt responsible practices, including segregation of waste at the source, minimizing waste generation, maximizing resource recovery through recycling and composting, and ensuring safe disposal of residual waste. The ultimate goal, he said, is to safeguard natural resources, improve public health, and enhance the quality of life for both present and future generations.

The programme witnessed active and enthusiastic participation from marginalized communities.

NCW holds special workshop on YASHODA AI

KT News Desk

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 26: In a continuing effort to bridge the gap between technology and education, YASHODA AI, a flagship programme of the National Commission for Women (NCW) in collaboration with Future Shift Labs (FSL) today organised a special workshop at Central University, Jammu.

NCW Chairperson, Vijaya Rahatkar was Chief guest on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the NCW Chairperson said that the true measure of progress is not only in the advancement of technology but in our ability to harness it with responsibility and purpose. "By preparing students to engage thoughtfully with Artificial Intelligence, we are nurturing a generation that will safeguard rights, strengthen justice, and uphold

the values of an informed and equitable society", she said.

Speaking on the occasion, Nitin Narang, Director of Future Shift Labs, stated that YASHODA AI is not merely a programme but a national mission to build digital capacity and ethical awareness among India's youth. "By integrating knowledge of Artificial Intelligence with principles of responsibility and safety, we seek to empower students to become leaders who can shape an inclusive digital future", he added.

This event marked a vital step in sensitizing future social workers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers to the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the justice system and society at large.

The workshop highlighted how Artificial Intelligence (AI)

is transforming learning, communication and employment, while also raising new challenges such as misinformation, cybercrime, and online safety. By engaging directly with students, the workshop aimed to build a generation that is not only digitally skilled but also socially responsible in its use of technology.

The session brought together students from across the university, providing them with an opportunity to understand how Artificial Intelligence is shaping learning, work, and society. It also highlighted the risks of misuse, ranging from online harassment to the spread of misinformation and the importance of using technology responsibly.

The workshop covered four core themes like AI in Education and Careers, Cyber Law & Women's Safety, Ethics

of AI and Practical Exposure with Hands-on training on tools like ChatGPT, Cyber Dost, the NCW Women Safety App, and other emerging platforms.

Unlike conventional lectures, the workshop emphasised interactive participation. Students engaged in live demonstrations, scenario-based discussions, and real-world case analysis to better understand the opportunities and risks of AI in everyday life.

This was YASHODA AI's first programme in Jammu, extending its mission to make digital literacy and cyber safety accessible to students and communities across India.

Pertinently, YASHODA AI is NCW's flagship campaign on digital literacy and cyber safety, designed to equip students and communities with the skills to navigate the digital age safely and responsibly.

KVIC organizes various progs under Seva Parv



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Sept 26: As part of the ongoing Sewa Parv 2025, a series of impactful activities were organised by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) on Friday at its training centre, PMTC KVIC Pampore.

At the forefront of the program, Anil Kumar Sharma, Principal of PMTC KVIC Pampore, delivered the welcome address to all participants. The celebrations began with a plantation drive in collaboration with the Forest Department, during which a large number of trees were planted within the campus of PMTC Pampore, promoting greenery and environmental awareness. The event was attended by State Director KVIC J&K, Shri Rajesh Kumar, officials from the Forest Department, school children, and staff of PMTC Pampore.

Following the plantation drive, PMTC Pampore, along with the Municipal Committee Pampore, organized a cleanliness campaign under the "Ek Din, Ek Ghanta, Ek Saath" initiative, encouraging public participation for a cleaner environment.

The activities also included a drawing competition for school children, with winners awarded trophies for their creative efforts. Additionally, a yoga session was organised, in which school children, KVIC employees, and Forest Department officials participated.

To promote dialogue and awareness, a debate competition was held where students discussed various topics.

At the conclusion of the program, Shri Anil Kumar Sharma expressed his gratitude to all participants and thanked everyone involved in making the events successful.

It is pertinent to mention that the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, is celebrating Sewa Parv 2025 from September 17 to October 2, 2025, as a nationwide festival of service, creativity, and cultural pride. Guided by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of a Viksit Bharat (Developed India) by 2047, Sewa Parv aims to unite communities, institutions, and individuals in a collective movement of service, creativity, and cultural pride.

Rupee rises 4 paise to close at 88.72 against US dollar

PTI

Mumbai, Sept 26: The rupee rebounded from its all-time low to close 4 paise higher at 88.72 against the US dollar on Friday, tracking a weak greenback against major currencies overseas and a drop in global crude oil prices.

Unabated foreign capital outflows and risk-off sentiment in the domestic equity market prevented a sharp rise in the local unit, while hopes of a breakthrough in the India-US trade talks supported the domestic currency, according to forex traders.

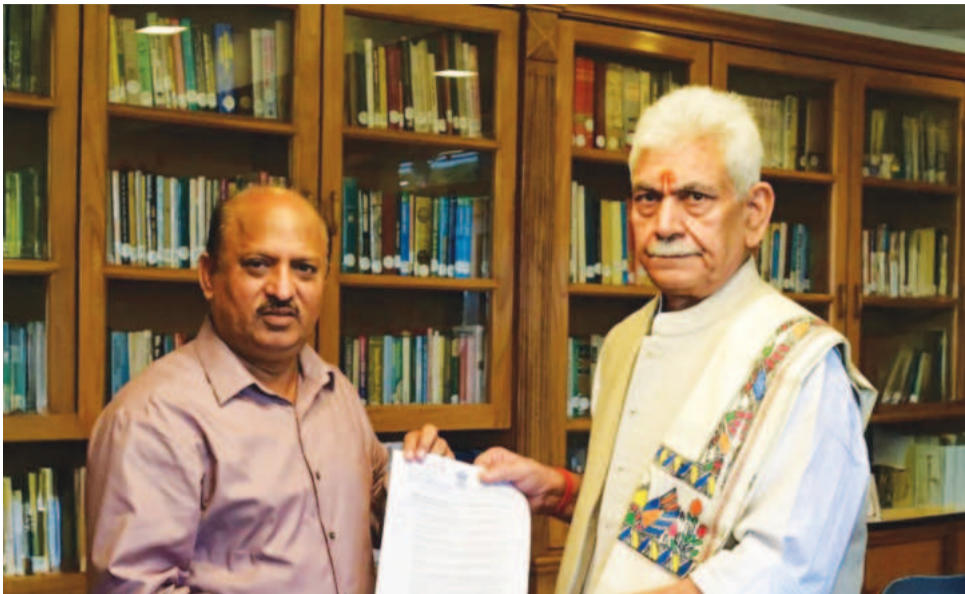
At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 88.72 and traded in a narrow range of 88.67-88.74 before settling at 88.72, 4 paise higher than its previous close.

The rupee had slipped 1 paisa to close at a fresh lifetime low of 88.76 against the American currency on Thursday.

"The Reserve Bank of India seems to have intervened heavily in the morning, allowing an opening of 88.68 for the rupee... Tariffs have been responsible for the constant fall in indices and rupee with Trump imposing 100 per cent tariffs on pharma, furniture and trucks," Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP, said.

The rupee is expected to remain in the range of 88.50-89.00 on Monday, he added.

Meanwhile, India and the US have decided to continue their engagements to achieve an early conclusion of a mutually beneficial trade pact, according to the Commerce Ministry.



Dr Devinder Kumar Manyal, Member of Legislative Assembly from Ramgarh called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday

RBI streamlines norms for claims settlement related to deceased bank customers

PTI

Mumbai, Sept 26: The Reserve Bank on Friday issued revised norms for the settlement of claims on deceased customers' bank accounts and lockers within a 15-day timeframe and prescribed compensation to nominees for delays in the settlement.

The revised instructions are aimed at streamlining the divergent practices followed by banks in the settlement of claims in respect of deceased customers. It has also standardised the documentation to bring improvement in the quality of customer service.

The central banks said the 'Reserve Bank of India (Settlement of Claims in respect of Deceased Customers of Banks) Directions, 2025' revised instructions will be implemented as expeditiously as possible, but not later than March 31, 2026.

The directions are related to the settlement of claims in the deposit accounts of a deceased customer, safe deposit locker and articles in safe custody by the deceased customer.

A deposit account where a depositor had made a nomination or where the account was opened with a survivorship

clause, the payment of the outstanding balance upon the death of the depositor(s) to the nominee(s)/ survivor(s) shall be considered a valid discharge of a bank's liability, the RBI said.

In cases where accounts are without a nominee/survivorship clause, banks have been asked to adopt a simplified procedure for settlement of claims in cases where the aggregate amount payable is less than the threshold limit.

Threshold limit means Rs 5 lakh in case of a co-operative bank and Rs 15 lakh in case of any other bank or such higher limit as may be fixed by the bank, including a co-operative bank.

In cases where the amount is above the threshold limit, the bank may ask for additional documents like a succession certificate or a legal heir certificate.

The RBI's latest directions also prescribe norms for the settlement of claims not falling under the simplified procedure.

It also details norms to be followed for the settlement of claims in a safe deposit locker and articles in safe custody by a deceased customer.

On the time limit for settlement of claims, the RBI said a bank shall settle a claim in

respect of deposit accounts of a deceased customer within a period not exceeding 15 calendar days from the date of receipt of all the required documents associated with the claim.

"In case of safe deposit locker/ articles in safe custody, the bank shall, within 15 calendar days of receipt of all the required documents, process the claim and communicate with the claimant(s) for fixing the date for making inventory of the locker/articles in safe custody," the central bank said.

If any deposit-related claim is not settled within the timeframe stipulated, the RBI said, then the bank will communicate the reasons for such delay to the claimant(s).

"Further, in cases of delay attributable to the bank, compensation shall be paid by the bank in the form of interest, at a rate not less than the prevailing Bank Rate + 4 per cent per annum, on the settlement amount due for the period of delay," it said.

For claims related to safe deposit locker/ articles in safe custody, the bank will be required to pay compensation to the claimant(s) at the rate of Rs 5,000 for each day of delay, in cases where it doesn't adhere to the timeline.

Kharge, Rahul pay tribute to Manmohan Singh on his birth anniversary



PTI

New Delhi, Sept 26: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chief Rahul Gandhi on Friday paid homage to former prime minister Manmohan Singh on his birth anniversary.

They remembered him as a man of humility and wisdom, and for his historic contribution to building a strong economy.

In a post on X, Kharge said they remember the contribution of Singh in nation-building. He was a gentle architect of India's economic transformation.

"A man of humility and wisdom, he carried himself with quiet dignity, letting his actions speak louder than his words. His vision of economic reforms opened new doors of opportunity, creating a thriving middle class and lifting countless families out of poverty," the Congress chief said.

He said Singh believed deeply in fairness and inclusivity, ensuring that growth went hand in hand with compassion through welfare measures that touched the lives of millions.

His leadership showed us that integrity in public life is not just possible, but powerful, Kharge noted in his post.

"For generations of Indians, he will remain an enduring symbol of honesty, intellect, and selfless service to the

nation. His legacy will live on in the aspirations of a stronger, more inclusive India. Our humble homage on his birth anniversary," Kharge said.

Rahul Gandhi, in a separate post on X, said on the birth anniversary of former prime minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, he pays his humble respects to him.

"His unwavering commitment to nation-building, his bold decisions for the poor and marginalised, and his historic contribution to building a strong economy will continue to guide us," Gandhi said in his post.

"His simplicity, humility, and honesty are a source of inspiration for all of us," Gandhi added.

Singh was the country's prime minister from 2004 to 2014, when he headed the Congress-led UPA government and was considered the architect of economic reforms in the country.

Singh was the finance minister in the P V Narasimha Rao government between 1991 and 1996, during whose tenure large-scale economic reforms were initiated and the state's control on the economy was loosened.

Born in 1932 in Gah of Punjab, now in Pakistan, Singh rose from a humble background to become a distinguished economist and entered public life later. He died in December last year.

Amit Shah discusses poll strategy with BJP leaders in Bihar

PTI

Patna, Sept 26: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday instructed BJP leaders in Bihar to get-battle ready for the assembly elections which are likely to be announced in a few days from now.

The former BJP president gave a pep talk to party workers here, in presence of top leaders including Dharmendra Pradhan, a Union minister who

has been named the in charge for the assembly polls, besides national general secretary in charge for the state Vinod Tawde and national secretary (organisation) B L Santhosh.

The meeting was held at the party's Bihar headquarters situated on Birchand Patel Marg, which was adorned with posters of Shah, widely regarded as the BJP's principal strategist.

Shah is likely to spend the night in before leaving on

Saturday for Sarai Ranjan in Samastipur and Forbesganj in Araria, to hold deliberations with party cadres in the two north Bihar districts.

Notably, this is the second Bihar tour, in about a week, of Shah who had on September 19 addressed BJP workers in Rohtas and Begusarai districts.

Earlier in the day, the Union home minister had met party workers in Bettiah, the headquarters of West Champaran

district.

Sharing photographs of the meeting on his X handle, Shah said, "Met senior party workers of Saran and Champaran regions and gave instructions for the upcoming assembly polls. The area, which has 45 assembly segments, will play a major role in ensuring a thumping majority for the NDA".

The BJP has an alliance in Bihar with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U), besides smaller

parties like Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) and Hindustani Awam Morcha, headed by Union ministers Chirag Paswan and Jitan Ram Manjhi respectively, and Rajya Sabha MP Upendra Kushwaha's Rashtriya Lok Morcha.

Having ruled the state for two decades, the NDA hopes to surmount the incumbency factor and defeat the INDIA bloc, comprising Congress, RJD and three Left parties.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

LG Sinha hails JKP

Officer Commanding (GoC) 15 Corps Lieutenant General Prashant Srivastava. GoC 16 Corps Lieutenant General P K Mishra, GoC 9 Corps Lieutenant General Rajan Sharawat, Air Vice Marshal Vikas Sharma, Army Ordnance Corps, Jammu and Kashmir, S J M Gillani, Special Director General Coordination PHQ, Principal Secretary Home Chandraker Bharti and Additional DGP CID Nitish Kumar were also among other officers present.

Pertinently LG Sinha had chaired the last UHQ meeting in May this year after the success of 'Operation Sindoor'. During that meeting LG Sinha had directed the security agencies to conduct "precise, intelligence-led operations" in order to neutralise terrorists and dismantle their "support cells." (KNO)

LG announces

and discussion in today's UHQ Meeting, I've ordered reopening of more tourist spots in Kashmir and Jammu Divisions, which were temporarily closed as precautionary measures. Seven tourist spots in Kashmir Division including Aru Valley, Rafting Point Yanner, Akkaid Park, Padshahi Park, Kaman Post and five in Jammu Division including Dagan Top, Ramban, Dhaggar in Kathua, Shiv Cave in Salal, Reasi to be reopened from Monday, 29th September."

Pertinently, the government had ordered the closure of sensitive tourist spots in J&K after the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which left 26 civilians, mostly tourists dead. Since the government has reopened the tourist spots in a phased manner.

Sinha launches

the portal ensures structured follow-up and transparent monitoring of every case.

Lieutenant Governor's Sainik Sahayta Kendra is a bridge between serving personnel and the civil administration, ensuring that

matters submitted are taken up promptly, guided through the right channels, and resolved in a time-bound manner. By coordinating directly with government offices, arranging facilitation where required, and monitoring progress, the Kendra assures soldiers that their families' needs will be looked after while they focus fully on their duty to the nation.

With its offices now functional at the Civil Secretariats in Jammu and Srinagar, the Kendra will serve as a single-window facilitation centre to resolve civil issues of all serving personnel belonging to J&K, as well as those currently deployed in the Union Territory.

Prasanna Ramaswamy G, Secretary, Tribal Affairs Department, and In-charge Lieutenant Governor's Sainik Sahayta Kendra, under the supervision of J&K Home Department, gave a detailed presentation on the Sainik Sahayta Kendra.

Applications to the Kendra will be accepted only when routed through the respective Commanding Officers, in order to maintain authenticity and integrity. Submissions may be made via email at lg-ssk-jk@gov.in, or by post to:

LG's Sainik Sahayta Kendra, Room No. 56, Ground Floor, Civil Secretariat, Srinagar - 190001

LG's Sainik Sahayta Kendra, Near Secretariat Treasury, Civil Secretariat, Jammu - 180001

Won't let BJP

But we won't let them come to power. Even if they delay statehood restoration, we will continue to run the government in the current setup," he said

He also said that the arrest of activist Sonam Wangchuk in Leh is unfortunate.

Notably, Wangchuk was arrested today two days after violent protests in the Leh city, in which four people died and several others injured.

The Chief Minister while speaking to

the reporters said it was unfortunate that Wangchuk has been arrested, but the way the Centre has been targeting him over the past few days made it seem inevitable.

He also said that the Centre had made promises to the people of Jammu & Kashmir but failed to fulfill them. "I don't know what compulsion the Centre has that it keeps making promises but never fulfills them," he said.

He said that the people of Ladakh had decided to boycott the elections, but after Union Minister's visit and fresh assurances, they not only participated in the polls but also helped the BJP win. (KNO)

MEA rejects

News Observer (KNO), said India's stance on Kashmir remains unchanged. "Our stand on the Kashmir issue is very clear; there has been no change in it. As far as mediation is concerned, there is no need for any third party to mediate on the bilateral issues between India and Pakistan," he said.

"We reject such objectionable comments on matters that are internal to India. We have lodged a strong protest with the Turkish ambassador. Such statements on India's territorial integrity and sovereignty are unacceptable," he added.

Jaiswal said the main problem in Jammu and Kashmir stems from Pakistan's actions. "It would have been appropriate if Pakistan's policy of using cross-border terrorism against India, which remains the biggest threat to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, had been addressed," he said.

The MEA further said that over 2,400 Indian citizens have been sent back from the United States since January. Jaiswal said India does not support unauthorised migration while encouraging lawful movement abroad. He explained that when individuals lacking proper legal status in foreign countries are referred to Indian authorities, their nationality is verified before

arrangements are made for their return.

"We verify the citizenship of any person without legal status and facilitate their repatriation once confirmed. This process has been applied in cases involving Indian nationals in the US," Jaiswal said.

The MEA spokesperson added that authorities are coordinating with state governments to tackle visa fraud and other irregularities connected to unlawful migration.

"Strengthening legal pathways while checking illegal migration is part of the government's approach," Jaiswal said, adding that these steps help safeguard the credibility of lawful international mobility for Indian citizens. (KNO)

1,371 schools

government run schools in Jammu and Kashmir out of which 4394 have been deleted from the UDISE data.

Principal Secretary, School Education Department and Project Director of Jammu and Kashmir Samagra Shiksha were not available to comment on the issue. (KNO)

14 gypsum units

Warden Sopore and mineral authorities have been directed to ensure immediate enforcement of the closure order and prevent any further mining in violation of the Supreme Court mandate. (KNO)

From 1971 to Balakot

during historic missions, and its record represented a story of courage, sacrifice and professionalism.

Tracing its history, Singh said the MiG-21 was inducted in 1962 and went on to become India's first supersonic fighter. For over sixty years, it shaped operational confidence and strategy, he said, and contributed to India's standing on the global stage. "For all of us, this is not just a fighter jet but something we have had a deep association with," Singh said.

Bihar's women must ensure RJD, its allies never return to power: Modi

Patna, Sept 26: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday launched a scathing attack on the RJD, stating that under its rule, women of Bihar suffered immensely, while calling upon them to ensure that the Lalu Prasad-led party and its allies never returned to power in the eastern state.

Modi was virtually addressing Bihar's women after launching through video conference from Delhi the Mukhyamantri Mahila Rojgar Yojana, under which 75 lakh women of the state received Rs 10,000 each for livelihood activities. "Women of Bihar suffered a lot under the RJD rule... There were no roads, law and order was pathetic... but now women feel safe and secure under the Nitish Kumar government as the rule of law prevails. Hence, they must ensure that RJD and its allies never return to power," Modi said.

Stressing that the NDA government in Bihar was



working for women empowerment, he said that the state would soon have the maximum number of 'Lakshpati Didis' in the country.

He said that the 75 lakh beneficiaries of the scheme would receive an additional Rs 2 lakh and training for improvement in entrepreneurial skills.

"Bihar's women now have two brothers, Nitish and Modi, who are working tirelessly for their

betterment," he said.

Modi said that initiatives such as Ujjwala Yojana, free ration to 8.5 crore people of Bihar and Ayushman Bharat have improved the lives of residents of the state.

The launch of the new scheme ahead of the assembly polls in Bihar gains significance as women form a sizeable chunk of the electorate. Assembly elections in the state are due later this year.

Pharma stocks lead market fall; Sensex declines 329 pts, Nifty below 24,800

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 26: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early trade on Friday dragged by pharma stocks and relentless foreign fund outflows. US H-1B visa fee concerns and a weak trend in global markets also added to the bearish trend in domestic equities.

"Investor attention will squarely be on the

domestic pharma sector after the Trump Administration announced a 100 per cent tariff on imports of branded or patented pharmaceutical products effective October 1. This tariff action comes close on the heels of the steep hike in US H-1B visa fees, which has already triggered heavy selling in IT sector stocks over the past few sessions," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

One-third of Indian children age 5-9 have high triglycerides: Report

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 26: Over a third of India's children aged 5-9 could be having high triglycerides, with Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal and northeastern states showing highest prevalence, according to a government report.

Over 67 per cent of children in West Bengal, 64 per cent in Sikkim, 55 per cent in Nagaland, 57 per cent in Assam and 50 per cent in Jammu Kashmir were estimated to have high levels of triglycerides -- a type of blood fat that is known to increase risk of heart disease in later life.

Kerala and Maharashtra were among the states showing lowest prevalence at 16.6 per cent and 19.1 per cent, respectively. "Children in India 2025" -- the fourth edition since its start in 2008 -- was released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme



Implementation during the 29th Conference of Central and State Statistical Organisations (CoSSO) on September 25 in Chandigarh.

The report "provides a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the well-being of children in the country," the ministry said in a statement.

Data gathered via government's ministries and departments, such as National Family Health Survey 2019-21 and Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey 2016-18,

were compiled.

Prematurity and a low weight at birth was found to be the most common cause of death among newborns in the first 29 days of life -- national prevalence estimated at 48 per cent. Birth asphyxia (not getting enough oxygen) and trauma during birth, and pneumonia were second and third most common reasons, with a prevalence of 16 per cent and nine per cent. Authors of the report also classified about five per cent of the country's

teenagers as hypertensive -- highest prevalence of 10 per cent seen in Delhi, followed by Uttar Pradesh (8.6 per cent), Manipur (8.3 per cent) and Chhattisgarh (seven per cent).

Over 16 per cent of adolescents in India were estimated to have high triglycerides. 'Education and development', and 'crimes involving children and child protection' were among other aspects that the report compiled data on. Overall, 63.1 per cent of India's children and adolescents are literate, with 73.1 per cent of those aged seven and above being literate, the report said.

Over 80 per cent of boys aged 7-9, 92 per cent of those aged 10-14 and 91 per cent of those aged 15-19 are literate, while 81.2 per cent of girls aged 7-9, 90 per cent of those aged 10-14 and 86.2 per cent of girls aged 15-19 are literate, it said.

From fennel to flaxseeds: Beat acidity, bloating, and constipation natural way

TOI HEALTH

New Delhi, Sept 26: Digestive problems like bloating, gas and constipation are becoming more prevalent due to junk food diets and lack of exercise. Irregular diet, processed foods and fiber deficiency all cause havoc in the digestive system and gut.

Medications can provide relief in the short run but more long-term solution to all these lies close to our heels. Fennel, ajwain and bananas are just a few kitchen staples and simple ingredients that have been employed for centuries in old systems of medicine like Ayurveda to enhance digestion and avoid gastrointestinal discomfort.

Let us see how a particular food may address these common digestive issues naturally

Recurring acidity: Fennel seeds, ginger and banana

If there is frequent burning in the chest or particularly after eating, it may be caused by acid reflux or hyperacidity. Fennel seeds are perhaps the best natural treatment. Fennel seeds contain volatile oils and antioxidants, which reduce inflammation of the stomach lining, aid digestion,



and prevent the accumulation of excess stomach acid. Swallowing a teaspoon of fennel seeds after meals can solve the problem. Ginger: A strong digestive herb that assists in calming down the muscle groups in the gastrointestinal tract and decreases acid from moving back into the esophagus. Sipping warm ginger tea, incorporating a new piece of grated ginger with meals can significantly relieve acidity and nausea symptoms.

Bananas: Rich in alkaline naturally and packed with potassium. They line the acidic stomach lining and helps neutralise the acid, making a soothing, fruit for anyone suffering from a reflux.

Bloating and gas: Ajwain and raisins

Bloating and gas can be painful and humiliating at times. Tendancy to be caused by weak and poor

digestion or high fermentation in the gut. All these problems can be relieved with some easy home remedies.

Carom seeds (ajwain): An extremely stimulating gut digestive enzyme, a pinch of ajwain in warm water can ease gas, ease heaviness and bloating.

Raisins: Soaked overnight and consumed on an empty stomach in the morning, they work as a mild laxative. They also supply major minerals such as potassium and magnesium

Constipation: Flaxseeds, oats and ghee

Constipation occurs frequently due to inadequate fiber consumption, lack of fluid or sedentary lifestyle, adding fiber-rich foods to diet can be a game changer.

Flaxseeds: Both soluble and insoluble fiber content is high in flaxseeds, adding bulk to stool and regular bowel movements. Soaking flaxseeds overnight then grinding them into smoothies and adding them to yogurt bowls is an excellent option to add them to our diet.

Oats: Daily use of oats encourage healthy digestion and facilitates softening of stool, making elimination easier

MiG-21 flies through Indian skies for last time

Rajnath Singh terms it 'national pride'

PTI

Chandigarh, Sept 26: The legendary Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-21 fighter jets, the backbone of the Indian Air Force's combat fleet for more than six decades, streaked through Indian skies for the last time on Friday -- its final adieu threaded through history and many a remembrance.

The sun shone bright, the skies were cloudless and a brilliant blue, providing a picture perfect setting for the elaborate farewell to the Russian origin warhorse that was inducted into the IAF in the 1960s.

Describing the MiG-21 as a mighty machine and a national pride, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said there is deep attachment to the aircraft that shaped our confidence.

"MiG-21 is not only an aircraft or machine but also proof of deep India-Russia ties," the minister said.

"The history of military aviation is incredible. The MiG 21 added many proud moments in our military aviation journey," Singh told the gathering. There has been no fighter jet in the history of global military aviation made in such big numbers, the minister said. More than 11,500 MiG 21 aircraft were made. Of them, 850 fighter jets remained part of the IAF,



he added.

"This number is the testimony of this aircraft's popularity, credibility and multi-dimensional capability," Singh said while pointing out that its contribution was not been limited to one incident or a war.

He also recalled its role in the 1971 war with Pakistan, the 1999 Kargil conflict as well as the 2019 Balakot air strikes. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on the occasion of the decommissioning ceremony of the Russian-origin MiG-21 at the Chandigarh Air Force Station here. Besides him, former IAF chiefs AY Tipnis, S P Tyagi and B S Dhanoa, Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, India's first man on the International Space Station, and scores of veterans, many who had piloted the aircraft, were present on the occasion.

Air Chief Marshal A P Singh flew the sortie of the MiG-21 Bison aircraft with call sign

Badal 3. Dilbagh Singh, who became the IAF chief in 1981, led the first MiG-21 Squadron here in 1963.

The culmination of MiG-21 operations took place with a ceremonial flypast and decommissioning event, marking the closure of a historic chapter in India's air power.

The country's first supersonic fighter and interceptor aircraft were retired at the decommissioning event in Chandigarh, where it was first inducted.

The ceremony began with the arrival of the minister, the chief guest at the occasion, followed by a spectacular display by IAF's elite skydiving team 'Akash Ganga', which skydived from a height of 8,000 feet.

This was followed by a majestic flypast of the MiG-21 aircraft accompanied by precision of the air warrior drill team and an aerial salute.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER SUB TRANSMISSION DIVISION-IIND, RAJBAGH, SRINAGAR

Extension Notice 1

Due to poor response, the date of submission of bids in respect of below mentioned e-NITs is hereby extended with the details enumerated below:

SNO	E.NIT No.	Name of the work	Tender ID	Cost tender document (In Rs)	EMD Cost (In Rs)
1	eNIT No STD-II / 34 of 2025-26 Dated 01-09-2025	Augmentation of 33 KV Lines of STD 2nd to overcome LCP Constraints by way of Augmentation of 33kV Bakshipora Tap line from 50sqmm to 100sqmm for Jehlum River Crossing.	2025_PDD_2865 69_1	Rs 200.00	Rs 8961.00
2	eNIT No STD-II / 35 of 2025-26 Dated 01-09-2025	Construction of Additional Bay for Receiving Station Wanganpora (Electrical part).	2025_PDD_2865 98_1	Rs 500.00	Rs 15160.00
3	eNIT No STD-II / 38 of 2025-26 Dated 13-09-2025	Consultancy services for design, Estimation, Drawings including soil investigation, topographical Survey, Geo technical investigation, Report, Vetting of Design by DIQC/NIT/ IIT etc., for the construction of Control Room Building for Receiving Station MR Gunj and dismantling of existing structure as per rough sketch of the architectural plan with its front and side elevations uploaded.	2025_PDD_2882 08_1	Rs 200.00	Rs 1700.00

Last Date of Bid Submission extended up to	03-10-2025; 4.30pm
Bid Opening Date	04-10-2025; 2.30pm

DIPK-NB-2039/25

DATED: 26-09-2025

Sd/-
Executive Engineer, Sub Transmission Division-II, Rajbagh, Srinagar.

No.: STD-II/7164-66/Ts
Dated: -24-09-2025

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, ELECTRIC DIVISION- IST, SRINAGAR.

TEL NO. 0194-2452079 FAX NO.0194-2452079

e-TENDER ABBREVIATED NOTICE

e-NIT No. 036/EDI, dt:24.09.2024

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Electric Division-1st, Srinagar invites online e-bids from registered A-Class Electrical Contractors/firms for as under:

S.No	Particulars	Estimated Cost (In Lacs)
1	Maintenance and repairs of LT ABC system for ED-I.	43.07

The complete tender document is available at website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested bidder/tenderers may view, download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e-Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below. Bidding Documents contain Qualifying Criteria for Bidders, Specifications, Bill of Quantities, Terms and Conditions of Contract and other details.

i)	Date and Time of downloading/ Sale (Start) of Tender Document	24.09.2025; 16:00 Hrs
ii)	Date & Time of Download/ Sale (End) of Tender Document	15.10.2025; 16:00 Hrs
iii)	Date and time of bidding queries/clarifications	24.09.2025; 16:00 Hrs to 26.09.2025; 16:00 Hrs
iv)	Date & Time of Bid Uploading (Start/End)	24.09.2025; 16:00 Hrs to 15.10.2025; 16:00 Hrs
v)	Commercial/Technical Bid Opening Date & Time	16.10.2025 at 13:00 Hrs
vi)	Financial Bid Opening	Shall be declared later on for the technically qualified bidders
vii)	Venue of Commercial/ Technical Bid Opening	Electronically on J&K Government e-Procurement System website http://jktenders.gov.in
viii)	Cost of e-Bid document	Rs.1000.00 (Rupees One Thousand Only) (Non-refundable)
ix)	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit	[Treasury Receipt Only] Rs.86200/- (Rupees Eighty Six Thousand Two Hundred Only)

DIPK-NB-2040/25

DATED: 26-09-2025

Sd/-
Executive Engineer Electric Division 1st, Srinagar

UN cuts for 2026 mostly spare its elite, draft budget shows

REUTERS

Geneva, Sept 26: UN cost savings plans for next year envisage far smaller cuts to senior staff than to lower ranks, a draft budget document shows, a contrast likely to fuel division just as financial support for the institution is slipping.

Secretary General Antonio Guterres wants to shrink the regular budget by 15 percent to improve efficiency and cut costs as the United Nations runs into a cash crisis as it turns 80.

A copy of the revised 2026 budget showed just two of 58 department head posts in the layer of under-secretaries-general beneath Guterres, or 3 percent, will go. That compares with around 19 percent across the board and up to 28 percent for one lower-ranking category, according to Reuters calculations based on the UN document.

Criticism of top-heavy UN structure barely addressed

Ian Richards, president of the



UN Geneva Staff Union, said Guterres' proposals "will make the global body more top-heavy and bureaucratic."

UN humanitarian agencies with their own budgets are set to shed more than a quarter of jobs.

UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said it was "inevitable" that the biggest reductions were where the workforce of more than 14,000 was

largest. "The timing of the UN80 revised estimates precluded more significant organizational restructuring that could reduce senior-level posts," he said.

But he added that there was potential for further reductions in the future, including at senior levels. The US and China are the two biggest contributors, together making up 40 percent of the regular budget, and both are in

arrears.

US President Donald Trump, who is skeptical of multilateral institutions, slammed the UN this week at its headquarters, though he later told Guterres he backs it "100 percent."

The number of senior posts has swollen over the decades – something that a UN internal memo this year sought to address through a major overhaul.

Countries guard prestigious UN positions

A non-American under-secretary-general in New York with no dependents earns a tax-free net salary of nearly \$270,000, a UN website showed. Extra grants and allowances are given for relocation costs, a non-working spouse and children.

UN officials say these cabinet-rank posts are the toughest to eliminate, partly because countries view them as sources of prestige and influence. Unwritten rules reserve some for specific states. Ronny Patz, an expert in UN financing, said

Guterres appeared to have tried to avoid a backlash by sparing posts at the top. "It's definitely not a bold proposal. He's left out some of the hardest choices."

The proposals are not final and require approval by the General Assembly's 'Fifth Committee' in December after consultations with countries.

Dujarric said reducing senior posts meant structural changes, which would require member states' approval.

Under the proposed budget, the under-secretary-general roles to be trimmed are one for policy and the special adviser on Cyprus. In the next layer down, six assistant secretary-general posts will be cut, or 11 percent.

Doubts about the UN's future abound internally; in a survey of employees in August, less than a fifth voiced confidence in Guterres' leadership.

Less than 10 percent said they thought UN job reforms to date were based on a sound rationale.

Trump says 2026 World Cup venues could change if cities deemed 'unsafe'

REUTERS

Washington, Sept 26: President Donald Trump would look to move matches for the 2026 World Cup if he deems any of the U.S. cities planning to serve as hosts to be unsafe.

Speaking Thursday about the event, which will be co-hosted by the U.S., Canada and Mexico from June 11 to July 19, Trump was asked by reporters in the Oval Office specifically about games in Seattle and San Francisco.

"Well, that's an interesting question ... but we're going to make sure they're safe," he said. "(Seattle and San Francisco are) run by radical left lunatics who don't know what they're doing."

Six matches are scheduled to be played at Seattle's Lumen Field and six are set for Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, Calif., about an hour's drive from San Francisco.

World Cup matters are overseen by FIFA, which determined the game sites and would figure to be in charge of any changes. However, Trump has a close working relationship with FIFA president Gianni Infantino.

Trump cited his policies as helping make the country safer ahead of the World Cup. He sent the National Guard into Washington, D.C., last

month to deal with what he called a "crime emergency," and he subsequently said that the move resulted in the city having "no crime."

He said Thursday, "As you probably know, we're going into Memphis and we're going into some other cities. Very soon we're going into Chicago. It will be safe for the World Cup. If I think it isn't safe, we'll move into a different city, absolutely. It's actually a very fair question."



"If I think it's not safe, we're going to move it out of that city. So if any city we think is going to be even a little bit dangerous for the World Cup, or for the (2028) Olympics, you know where they have Olympic overthrow right, but for the World Cup in particular, because they're playing in so many cities, we won't allow it. We'll move it around a little bit. But I hope that's not going to happen."

The draw for the World Cup, which will feature 48 teams, is scheduled for Dec. 5 in Washington, D.C.

Tehran, Moscow sign \$25bn deal to build nuclear plants in Iran: state media

AFP

Tehran, Sept 26: Iran and Russia signed a \$25 billion deal to build nuclear power plants in the Islamic republic, Iranian state media reported Friday, just hours ahead of the likely return of sweeping UN sanctions on Iran.

"A deal for the construction of four nuclear power plants with a value of \$25 billion in Sirik, Hormozgan was signed between the Iran Hormoz company and Rosatom," state television said.

Iran has just one operational nuclear power plant in Bushehr in the south, with a capacity of 1,000 megawatts — just a fraction of the country's energy needs.

According to state news agency IRNA, each plant will have a capacity of 1,255 megawatts, though no details were provided on the timeline.

The move comes as so-called snapback sanctions triggered by the European parties to a landmark 2015 nuclear deal with Iran are set to return by the end of Saturday.

Britain, France and Germany triggered the



sanctions last month, accusing Iran of failing to adhere to its commitments under the agreement.

At a Security Council session on Friday, China and Russia put forward a draft resolution to allow another half year for talks, but it is unlikely to garner enough support to pass.

Western countries have long accused Iran of seeking an atomic bomb — a charge Tehran vehemently denies, defending its right to a civilian nuclear program.

The United States in 2018 unilaterally pulled out of the nuclear accord with

Iran, prompting Tehran to begin walking back its commitments.

Talks between Washington and Tehran to strike a new deal were underway, before being derailed by unprecedented Israeli strikes on Iran in June that began a 12-day war briefly joined by the United States.

Iran had previously signed with Russia a nuclear energy deal in 1993 allowing for the construction of the Bushehr plant, after Germany had abandoned it in the wake of the Islamic revolution of 1979.

Asia Cup 2025

Haris Rauf fined 30% for aggressive behaviour; Farhan let off with warning

Indian captain Suryakumar Yadav also fined 30 pc of match fee



Match referee Richie Richardson had completed his hearing on Friday afternoon at the team hotel. Hars Rauf has been fined 30 percent of his match fees for aggressive behaviour and Farhan has been let off with a warning

PTI

Dubai, Sept 26: Pakistan fast bowler Haris Rauf was on Friday fined 30 per cent of his match fees for rude and aggressive behaviour during the Asia Cup Super 4s match against India last Sunday. His teammate Sahibzada Farhan, however, escaped with a warning without any financial penalty for his open air gun-shot celebration after completion of his half century in the same match.

"Match referee Richie Richardson had completed his hearing on Friday afternoon at the team hotel. Hars Rauf has been fined 30 percent of his match fees for aggressive behaviour and Farhan has been let off with a warning," a tournament source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

Earlier, Rauf and Farhan had pleaded not guilty during their ICC hearing for allegedly provocative actions in the match against India, according to tournament sources.

The hearing was conducted by match referee Richie Richardson at the Pakistan team hotel here. Both the players appeared before him in person even though the responses given by them were in writing. They were accompanied by team manager Naveed Akram Cheema.

The two were accused of making provocative gestures by the BCCI in a formal complaint on Wednesday. The bitter neighbours are due to

clash in the final of the regional showcase on Sunday.

While Rauf had mocked the Indian fans in the stands by gesturing about falling planes, Farhan's celebration after his half century in the game was also seen as offensive by the Indian side.

Surya fined too

Indian captain Suryakumar Yadav has also been fined 30 per cent of his match fee for his comments after the Asia Cup group league match against Pakistan when he alluded to the military skirmish between the two countries in May, the tournament organisers said on Friday.

Pakistan had filed a complaint against Suryakumar with the ICC for making political comments after he dedicated his team's win over the arch foes on September 14 to the victims of Pahalgalam terror attack and the Indian armed forces.

Suryakumar pleaded not guilty to the charge and was apparently told not to make any statement that could be construed as political in the remainder of the tournament.

The India skipper's hearing was conducted by ICC match referee Richie Richardson.

Tensions between the two sides have been running high starting with India's refusal to do a traditional handshake with Pakistani players at the time of toss and after the games as a gesture of solidarity with the Pahalgalam victims.

Yemen's Houthis claim missile attack on Israel

IANS

Sanaa, Sept 26: Yemen's Houthi group said Friday that it had launched a missile at Israel.

In a televised statement aired by Houthi-run al-Masirah TV, Yahya Sarea, the Houthi military spokesman, said that the group launched a "hypersonic ballistic missile" toward a "sensitive target" in the Jaffa area in southern Tel Aviv on Thursday night.

He said the missile forced a temporary halt of air traffic in the Ben Gurion Airport and caused thousands of Israeli residents to flee to shelters.

Sarea said the missile attack was in response to what he called "Israeli aggression" on the Palestinian territory of the Gaza Strip, as well as to the Israeli airstrikes that occurred hours earlier on Yemen's capital Sanaa.

Also in the statement, Sarea warned that all commercial and military ships and vessels transiting the narrow waters of the Bab al-Mandeb Strait and the Red Sea should identify themselves to the Houthi forces, otherwise they would be attacked, Xinhua news agency reported.

Rahul, Sudharsan slam centuries as India A beat Australia A by 5 wickets to seal series

PTI

Lucknow, Sept 26: KL Rahul and B Sai Sudharsan struck sublime hundreds as India A registered a stunning five-wicket win over Australia A while hunting down a target of 413 to seal the two-match unofficial Test series 1-0 here on Friday.

It was the sixth highest successful run chase in the country's first-class history, and Rahul's form (176 not out, 210 balls, 16x4, 4x6) is an ominous sign for the West Indians ahead of the two-match Test series, starting next month.

The highest chase remains in the name of West Zone when they overhauled South Zone's target of 536 in the 2010 Duleep Trophy final.

Starting the fourth and final day from their overnight 169 for two, India lost Manav Suthar at the total of 189. But Sudharsan (100, 172 balls) and skipper Dhruv Jurel (56) added 78 runs for the fourth wicket to keep India A in the chase of a daunting 412.

Sudharsan fetched his eighth first-class hundred



in 170 balls, vindicating his call-up for the upcoming home Tests against the West Indies.

However, the 23-year-old was dismissed two balls after going past the landmark by Australia off-spinner Corey Rocchiccioli.

But it brought together Rahul and Jurel at the crease and the former pumelled the Aussie bowlers mercilessly in their stand of 115 runs for the fifth wicket.

Rahul, who had retired hurt on 74 on Thursday, brought up his 22nd first-class hundred in 136 balls,

and the next 76 runs cascaded in a mere 74 balls as India A closed in on the target briskly.

It was a continuation of the fine form that Rahul displayed against England in the recent five-match Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy while amassing 532 runs at an average of 53.20 with two centuries.

Jurel departed with the team score at 382, but by then the home side was well within sight of a fantastic win, which was completed by Rahul and Nitish Kumar Reddy (16 not out) a few minutes before tea.

INOX

SRINAGAR

Saturday, 27th Sept.

Movies

SCHEDULE

COURT ROOM

JOLLY LLB 3

JOLLY LLB 3 (UA16+)

HINDI - 10:45 AM, 05:20 PM

HINDI ATMOS - 12:00 PM, 03:20 PM, 06:45 PM

BAAGHI 4

BAAGHI 4 (A)

HINDI - 02:00 PM

CHAINS AW MAN

CHAINS AW MAN - THE MOVIE: REZE ARC (A)

JAPANESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES - 04:00 PM

HINDI - 11:00 AM

ONE BATTLE AFTER ANOTHER

ONE BATTLE AFTER ANOTHER (A)

ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

01:20 PM, 06:55 PM

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