

Season's first snowfall turns October into January

Mercury plummets
16°C below normal

Snow drapes Pir
Ki Gali, Gulmarg,
Sinthan Top

Rains lash plains,
chill prevails

Owais Gul

Srinagar, Oct 06: The upper reaches of Jammu and Kashmir recorded season's first snowfall on Monday, while rains lashed the plains, causing temperatures to plummet below normal across the region.

Independent weatherman Faizan Keng while talking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "January like conditions prevailed in Kupwara and Baderwah as temperatures fell 16.0 C below normal."

The maximum temperature settled below normal across Union Territory with Srinagar recording a day temperature of 12.5 degree Celsius | [More on P6](#)



Waris Fayaz (KNO/KT)

October snowfall rekindles hope about tourists returning to Kashmir

Stakeholders hope to see bumper winter tourism season

Over 5.5 lakh tourists visit Pahalgam from Apr to Sept

3000 foreign visitors arrive in valley in last 2 months

Gulmarg gives delightful surprise to tourists

Gandola, chairlift joy rides mesmerize tourists

Rehan Qayyum Mir/
Waris Fayaz

Srinagar, Oct 06: After a subdued summer tourist season following the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which left 26 civilians, mostly tourists dead, October snowfall has rekindled hopes about visitors returning to Kashmir in winter season.

Stakeholders while talking to the news

agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) exuded hope that the early snowfall would pave the way for a bumper winter tourism season and boost arrivals in the coming weeks.

President of the Shikara Association, Wali Mohammad said, "The change in weather has renewed our hopes. The tourist footfall hasn't increased yet, but snowfall in the upper reaches will definitely encourage visitors to return to the Valley. We are hopeful about our industry getting a boost in coming days."

Manzoor Pakhtoon, President of the Houseboat Association, said it is too early to predict the overall impact but remained positive about the coming months. "As the news of snowfall spreads, | [More on P6](#)

Nomination process begins for Rajya Sabha polls

ECI issues 3 separate notifications for 4 seats

NC-led alliance to secure 3 seats; BJP in strong position for 4th

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Oct 06: The nomination process for the Rajya Sabha polls from Jammu & Kashmir began on Monday, with the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Returning Officer issuing three separate notifications for the election to four seats that have remained vacant for more than four and a half years.

The poll body issued the notifications on Monday morning, announcing the schedule for the elections to the four seats. These notifications were issued following the President of

India, through three separate notifications issued by Union Government, called the elected members of the Legislative Assembly of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir to elect members to the Upper House of Parliament.

Three separate elections are being held for the four seats. While two individual elections will be conducted for the first and second seats, a combined election will be held for the remaining two seats.

According to the notifications issued by the Election Commission of India—copies of which are in possession of the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), October 13 is the last date for filing nominations. Scrutiny of nominations will take place on October 14.

Candidates may withdraw their | [More on P6](#)

ECI announces by-elections for Budgam, Nagrota

Voting, counting on Nov 11, 14 respectively

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Oct 06: The crucial by-election for the Budgam and Nagrota seats will take place on November 11, the Election Commission of India (ECI) announced on Monday.

Addressing a press conference, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, according to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), announced that the by-election for the two seats in Jammu & Kashmir will be held on November 11, while counting will take place on November 14. As per the schedule



announced by the poll body, notifications for these two seats will be issued on October 13, and nomination forms can be filed until October 20.

Scrutiny of nominations will be conducted on October 22, the ECI stated, adding that candidates may withdraw their nominations until October 24.

The voting and counting will take place on November 11 and November 14 respectively, the poll-body said.

While Nagrota is likely to witness a direct contest between the BJP and the ruling alliance, the Budgam seat is gearing up for a triangular fight between the National Conference Party (PDP), the People's Democratic Party (PDP), and the People's Alliance for Change (PAC). | [More on P6](#)

Doctors warn against self-medication after tragedies

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Oct 06: Doctors on Monday said all medicines, including cough syrups, are safe for use when taken in appropriate doses under medical supervision, but warned of the risk of self-medication and unregulated sale of drugs.

They said lessons must be remembered in light of past tragedies like the 2020 Udhampur cough syrup incident and recent deaths of children linked to contaminated medicines in Madhya Pradesh and other States. Speaking to the news

agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), doctors said that while there is no need for public panic, strict vigilance and adherence to medical protocols are essential to prevent any recurrence of such incidents. "Medicines are life-saving when used correctly, but can turn fatal if consumed inappropriately," said Dr Showkat Hussain Tali, Head of Department, Paediatrics, at GMC Anantnag. "Cough syrups are not inherently unsafe. The problem arises when they are taken without medical guidance | [More on P6](#)



Rains lashed Kashmir plains on Monday while upper reaches recorded season's first snowfall causing temperatures to plummet below normal. Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

Legacy of copper naqashi fading: Veteran Naqashgeer fears end of 150-year-old family craft

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Oct 06: For over four decades, the rhythmic tapping of tools on copper sheets has echoed through the modest workshop of Manzoor Ahmed Naqashgeer, a 60-year-old artisan, from Teingpora Nawakadal, Srinagar. He has dedicated 45 years of his life to the centuries-old art of copper naqashi — an intricate engraving craft that once symbolized Kashmir's rich cultural heritage.

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Manzoor said, "I inherited this skill from my father, Mohammad Subhan

Naqashgeer, when I was only 10 or 12 years old. This art has been in our family for five generations. I learnt it from my father, who learnt it from his uncle. But sadly, I don't see it continuing beyond me."

Manzoor, who has won multiple awards for his craftsmanship, including one from then J&K Governor N. N. Vohra and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in 2012, said he recently received his fourth major award for his lifelong dedication to the craft. "My work has reached countries across the world, but back home, the art is dying," he said.

According to him, while



Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

simple naqashi on copper utensils is still being practiced, the real and detailed naqashi — the one that earned Kashmiri artisans international recognition — is vanishing due to rising costs and dwindling demand. "Now I make pieces only on order. The cost of such pieces has gone up so much that people prefer cheaper, machine-made products," he said.

Manzoor lamented that the government's revival efforts are not yielding results because the trainers appointed to teach the craft lack expertise. "The people they have hired for training are not well-versed in this art. They are mostly teaching in village

centres, and that too, to females who do it for livelihood without knowing about its background and real things," he said.

Expressing concern about the future of his family legacy, he said his children are not willing to take up the profession. "They have seen me struggling. I haven't received any significant work in the past year. It's not enough to sustain a livelihood anymore," he said.

Manzoor added that machine-made copper items have severely dented the market for hand-engraved products. "This art requires patience and time. Machines can replicate designs in minutes, but they can never

capture the soul of a craftsman's touch," he added.

Reflecting on the irreversible decline, Manzoor said, "The real masters of this art are no more. The tools I used 20 years ago are lying unused now. A single hand-crafted piece made with them costs thousands, but there are no buyers left."

For Manzoor Ahmed Naqashgeer, every engraved motif tells a story of tradition, patience, and fading legacy. But as markets shift toward mass production, he fears that the age-old sound of hammer on copper — once the heartbeat of Srinagar's old city — may soon fall silent. (KNO)

Issue timely advisories to public for safety measures: Dy CM

Assesses snow clearance preparedness of M&HE Deptt



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 06: In order to ensure smooth and uninterrupted delivery of essential services and functioning of vital installations across Kashmir division, Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary Monday chaired a high-level meeting to review overall functioning and preparedness of Mechanical and Hospital Engineering department (M&HE).

During the meeting, the Deputy CM held detailed deliberations on challenges

posed by harsh winter conditions, particularly in the snow-bound zones of Kashmir Valley and high regions of Jammu division.

While assessing the preparedness for the anticipated heavy snowfall, the Deputy CM directed the department to deploy high-tech machinery, underscoring the importance of prompt response in snow-affected regions to maintain seamless mobility and public safety.

He asked for prompt efforts like enhanced coordination between

departments, and preparing public advisories for citizens to ensure their safety. "Timely advisories should be issued to the public regarding safety measures, including avoiding unnecessary travel to higher reaches during heavy snowfall," he added.

Choudhary also directed to safeguard infrastructure and ensure essential services like power, water, and road connectivity remain functional. He emphasised the need for a robust mechanism to minimize public inconvenience during

severe weather conditions.

Deputy CM asked the officials to prioritise timely and effective responses to weather-related challenges, stressing on the importance of keeping men and machinery in a state of readiness to ensure the routine functioning of essential installations.

He instructed the concerned authorities to focus on clearing key routes, including inter-district highways and roads leading to hospitals, power grids, water supply systems, fire and emergency services.

Ensure seamless expansion of e-Office network: CS

Reviews functioning of IT Department, NIC J&K



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 6: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Monday chaired a high-level meeting to review the functioning of the Information Technology (IT) Department and the National Informatics Centre (NIC), J&K. The meeting was attended by Secretary, IT, Dr. Piyush Singla; CEO, JaKeGA, Mahima Madan; State Informatics Officer, NIC, J.S. Modi; and other senior officers of both IT-related establishments.

At the outset, the Chief Secretary underscored the critical importance of cyber security, calling for its strengthening right from the tehsil and block levels.

He directed the IT Department to ensure the seamless expansion of the e-Office network to all tehsil and block offices across Jammu and Kashmir following its successful rollout in district-level offices. He also asked for a detailed status report identifying the offices still outside the e-Office ambit.

The Chief Secretary further instructed the Department to expedite the upgradation of the State Data Centre (SDC) and the establishment of a Mini Security Operations Centre (SoC) in J&K. Stressing the need for capacity-building initiatives, he emphasized the creation of a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Information Technology to nurture skilled manpower aligned with future industry requirements.

He also called for the formulation of a comprehensive proposal for the establishment of a futuristic IT Park in the UT aimed at generating high-end employment opportunities for youth trained in advanced IT domains.

During the meeting, Secretary, IT, Dr. Piyush Singla gave a detailed

overview of the Department's functioning and achievements. He informed that the number of active websites audited by Third-Party Auditors (TPA) had risen from 110 to 206 in the past three months, with over 210 government websites and applications currently accessible to the public.

He also revealed that the State Data Centre (SDC) is in the process of obtaining ISO 27001 and ISO 20001 certifications, underscoring the government's commitment to international standards of information security and service management.

On this occasion the CEO, JaKeGA, Mahima Madan, presented a detailed account of the projects being implemented by the agency. She informed that a CERT-IN empanelled TPA had successfully conducted audits of departmental websites hosted in J&K, and these would soon be migrated to IPv6 for enhanced security, performance, and scalability.

Providing details of the e-Office 2.0 rollout, she stated that 4,056 offices and 21,774 users have been onboarded under the second phase, extending operations to tehsil and block levels. The State Wide Area Network (SWAN) has been expanded to all districts and 167 blocks, ensuring robust connectivity for smooth e-office operations.

She further informed that 127 citizen services, including 15 newly added ones, have been integrated with Digi Locker, making over 8.06 crore records available online. The platform currently has 30.4 lakh registered users in J&K.

Highlighting JaKeGA's ongoing and upcoming initiatives, she mentioned projects such as digitization of government records, software development for multiple departments, Digital Village Centres in 44

panchayats equipped with video-conferencing facilities, Aadhaar-enabled biometric attendance systems, and plans for disaster recovery setups, digital signage solutions, and capacity-building programmes.

Speaking in the meeting State Informatics Officer, NIC, J.S. Modi, informed that the Centre continues to serve as the technological partner of the Government of J&K, providing technical consultancy, support in system design, and guidance in emerging technologies. NIC's infrastructure extends across J&K offering services such as video conferencing, NIC/NKN connectivity, Network Operations Centre management, cyber security initiatives, website and application hosting, and email services for government departments and the J&K Police.

He further divulged that the NIC also supports various public-facing digital platforms including the Shri Amar-nathji Yatra online services, Pension Suvidha Portal, BoPEE services, and Service Plus (JanSugam). Upcoming initiatives include the implementation of NeVA (National e-Vidhan Application), Next Gene Hospital, and online sanctioning of social welfare applications, among others.

Earlier during the meeting, the Chief Secretary launched the E-SAM (Electronic System of Asset Management) Portal, a comprehensive lifecycle management platform designed to optimize asset performance and minimize costs and risks.

The system streamlines operations through workflow management, vendor integration, inventory control, disposal tracking, compliance monitoring, and efficiency enhancement, thereby improving governance and accountability.

Use rational medication for children: Secy Health

"Avoid cough, cold medicines for children below 2 years of age"

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 06: Secretary, Health & Medical Education, Dr Syed Abid Rasheed Shah Monday advised for using rational medication in children. He said this while chairing a meeting at the Civil Secretariat, here.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner, Food & Drugs Administration, J&K, Smita Sethi, along with the Heads of Departments of Paediatrics from all Government Medical Colleges of Jammu and Kashmir and officers from the Divisional and District levels of the Drugs Control Organisation, J&K.

The meeting was held in the context of a recent communication issued by the Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, which advises that cough and cold medications should not be prescribed or dispensed to children below two years of age.

During the meeting, Abid



Rasheed emphasized the urgent need to promote rational drug use and ensure patient safety in paediatric care across Jammu and Kashmir. He directed all medical professionals, pharmaceutical manufacturers, and regulatory authorities to strictly comply with national guidelines and best practices. Secretary Health stressed upon the strict adherence to the advisory and during the discussion, the HODs of the Paediatrics department aware that such medications are

generally not recommended for children below five years, and that for older children, their use should be based on careful clinical evaluation, close supervision, and strict adherence to dosage guidelines, while avoiding multiple drug combinations.

The advisory issued by the Director General of Health Services (DGHS) has also underscored the importance of judicious prescribing and dispensing of cough syrups for children, emphasizing that most acute cough illnesses in children are self-limiting and resolve without pharmacological intervention.

At the outset, Pharmaceutical manufacturers in J&K were instructed to adhere strictly to WHO-GMP standards, carry out complete impurity profiling as per the latest pharmacopeial standards.

Drugs Control Officers were asked to sensitize chemists and pharmacists against the over-the-counter

(OTC) sale of cough and cold syrups without proper prescription and to conduct regular sampling and testing of such products under Section 23 of the Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940, to ensure their safety and quality. They were cautioned that any violation of these provisions will invite strict penal action, including suspension or cancellation of licenses under Rule 66 of the Drugs & Cosmetics Rules.

The general public is strongly advised to refrain from self-medicating children and to always consult Doctors/ Paediatricians, before administering any cough or cold syrup to them.

Secretary further directed all field officers and medical institutions to ensure strict enforcement of these guidelines across the Union Territory to protect child health, prevent misuse of medications, and promote rational and evidence-based paediatric care.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR,
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
R&B DIVISION KRALPORA

Short Term E tendering NIT No 34/RnB/Kralpora of 2025-26 Dated:-03-10-2025

For & on behalf of the Lt. Governor Jammu & Kashmir (UT), e-tenders are being invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with the J&K UT Government, CPWD, Railways, and other State/ Central Governments for the following works

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money Deposit	Time of completion	Date and time of opening	Class of Contractor	Major Head
1.	Upgradation of DFO's Office at Kralpora	21.93	800/-	43860	30days	11-10-2025 (Noon)	Bee/Cee	UT Capex Forset Department

Position of AAA/ TS : Accorded
Position of funds:- Available
No: Div-KRLP/2510-24
Date:03-10-2025
1. The bidding documents, which would include qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications/ drawings, a bill of quantities (B.O.Q), a set of contract terms and conditions, and other details, can be viewed/ downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in on the dates tabulated below:

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	03.10.2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	03.10.2025(9:00 AM) to 10.10.2025 (6:00PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	03.10.2025 (9:00AM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	10.10.2025 (6:00PM)
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	11.10.2025 (12:00Noon) In the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora.

Upload/Disclose the bank account number which is linked with the GSTIN along with proof. No payments shall be released by the department to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder.
2. Bids must be accompanied with Cost of Tender Document in the shape of Treasury Challan (dated between the bid start date and the Bid Submission End date) deposited in M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora (tender inviting authority). Treasury Challan must be writtenboldly and clearly with Name of Work, Name of the Contractor along with Contact No, NIT No and Serial No of Work on NIT(if any).
3. At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/ bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/ FDR pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora. Besides that, the successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 5% of the allotted Cost in the form of CDR/ FDRat the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/ bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 5% of the allotted cost, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/ Maintenance Period.
4. In case ofabnormally low bid price the Circular instructions issued by the Finance Department vide No FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 dated 08-08-2025 regarding seeking of additional performance security from the selected bidder for quoting ALB are as
a. Where the bid price is below 10% but not below 20% of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee/Security percentage shall be incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of bid price below 10% of theproject cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional bid performance guarantee being 0.1% and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on bid price.
b. Where the bid price is below 20% or more below of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee percentage shall be incremented by 0.2% for every percentage of bid price below 20% of the project cost put to bid in addition to 1% of the bid price and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on bid price.
c. The additional performance guarantee percentage shall be rounded off to the next lower percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of the bid price is below 0.5% or next higher percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of the bid price is 0.5% or more.
d. The additional performance security shall be treated as part of the performance security and shall be released after successful completion of DLP.
11 All other Conditions shall remain same as per the DETAILED TENDER NOTICE No 01/ RnB/ Kralpora of 2025-26E-tendering Dated:-16-04-2025issued under No. Div-KRLP/123-37 dated 16-04-2025 and PWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form)
12 Bidders should be fully cognizant that if the documents uploaded/ submitted on the basis of which the contract was awarded are later discovered to be fake/ not genuine, the contract will be cancelled and the Contractor/ bidder will be blacklisted from participating in this Division/ Department for a period of three years, in addition to the performance security deposited for the said work being forfeited.

DIPK-6847/25
DATED: 06-10-2025

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Kralpora

GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPTT.
GROUND WATER DIVISION SRINAGAR BAGHI-ALI-MARDAN, NOWSHARA SRINAGAR.

E-mail:- hakeemmushaq.75316@jk.gov.in
EXTENSION NOTICE 2ND

Subject: 1. Construction of Machine Drilled Hand Pump Operated Bore Well at Ajas Bandipora Near House Of Zahooh Ahmad and Tariq habib and Others in District Bandipora.
Reference: This office e-NIT No. 41-JS-PHE/GWDS/ Mech. of 2025-26, Issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/25-26/ Camp./6291-6304, dated: 02-09-2025. Bearing Tender ID No. 2025_PHE_286817_18.
Due to "NO Response" for the above mentioned works advertised vide e-NIT No. and Tender ID No's under reference. Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 06-08-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM are extended as per the details given below: -

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Period of submission of bids	20-10-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM
2.	Date of opening of tenders	21-10-2025 11.00 AM

NOTE: All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endstt: nos.
DIPK-6860/25
DATED: 06-10-2025
No: -JS-PHE/GWDS/25-26/
Camp./9227-37
Dated: 06-10-2025
Sd/= Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.
Ground Water Division Srinagar.

Kashmir wetlands welcome over 6 lakh migratory birds

SAJID RAINA

Srinagar, Oct 06: Over six lakh migratory birds arrived in the wetlands of Kashmir this season, with more expected to follow in the coming weeks, according to officials from the Jammu and Kashmir Wildlife Protection Department.

While a formal census is yet to be conducted, early reports suggest that this winter could see a substantial influx of avian visitors across key wetlands in the valley.

"These are the initial figures," an official said, adding that migratory birds are still arriving and a comprehensive census is slated to begin shortly.

He added, "The numbers we are seeing right now are encouraging. Over six lakh birds have arrived across major wetlands like Hokersar, Wular, Hygam, Shallabugh, and Chatlam. The formal census will begin



soon as the peak arrival period continues into late October."

Each year, between 5 to 12 lakh birds migrate to Kashmir's wetlands from Siberia, Central Asia, and Northern Europe.

These birds, mostly waterfowl including mallards, gadwalls, common teals, northern pintails, and Eurasian wigeons, arrive between October and December and stay until March or April, depending on weather and habitat conditions.

Hokersar Wetland, located near Srinagar, has already recorded large flocks of mallards and gadwalls, while Wular Lake, recognised as a Ramsar site, has received more than 4 lakh early visitors.

Other wetlands such as Dal Lake, Hygam, Shallabugh, Prichal, and Chatlam are also witnessing steady arrivals.

The J&K Wildlife Protection Department has intensified its conservation efforts this

year. Anti-poaching measures, 24x7 CCTV monitoring, and bird awareness campaigns are being carried out at major wetlands.

Habitat restoration, including water management at Hokersar, has also been prioritised to ensure safe roosting conditions.

"We've increased surveillance to curb illegal activities and ensure the safety of these migratory guests," another official said. "Community participation is key, and we're conducting awareness drives to involve local residents and bird enthusiasts."

Meanwhile, Wular Lake is set to host a Mega Bird Festival later this season, aimed at celebrating avian diversity and promoting eco-tourism in the region.

The conservationists are hopeful that stable water levels and better habitat conditions will help attract up to 10 lakh birds this year—(KNO)

CM Omar declares open National School Games

■ Assures comfort, safety of participants

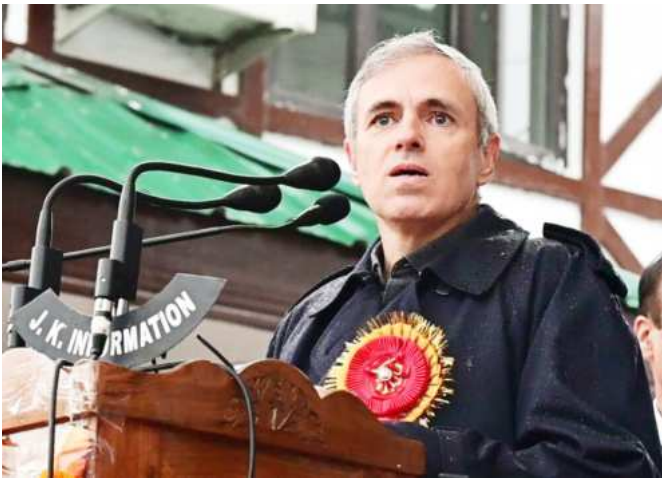
RAJA SYED RATHER

Srinagar, Oct 06: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday declared open the 69th National School Games (NSG) at TRC Football Ground here amid rainfall. He assured all necessary arrangements, including warm clothes, to ensure the comfort and safety of the participants.

"The weather conditions are beyond our control. But, I warmly welcome all the participants to this tournament here on behalf of myself, my colleagues and the people of Jammu and Kashmir," Omar said.

The Chief Minister assured that the participants or the teams, who have not prepared themselves and have not brought warm clothes with them amid the prevailing weather, can directly meet the officials here so that necessary arrangements are made.

He added that the government



and organisers will make every effort to ensure the comfort and safety of the participants.

The CM said that sports play a vital role in fostering unity, friendship and understanding among young people from diverse regions of the country.

Omar cut short his speech on

the occasion and encouraged the athletes to participate with full enthusiasm. "As the saying goes, winning is not as important as taking part. I sincerely appreciate your spirit and enthusiasm in coming here to participate," he said, wishing the players memorable moments and success in

the tournament.

The CM officially declared open the 69th National School Games by ceremonially kicking a football, marking the formal commencement of the national-level sporting event.

The opening ceremony was attended by Minister for Youth Services & Sports Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Lal Chowk Sheikh Ahsan Ahmed (Pardesi), Director General Youth Services & Sports Anuradha Gupta, Secretary J&K Sports Council Nuzhat Gul, and several other dignitaries and officials.

This year's National School Games has drawn participation from 30 teams representing various States and Union Territories across the country, with matches scheduled to be played at six different venues. The events include competitions in Football, Wushu, Taekwondo, and Table Tennis—(KNO)

Kashmir athletes will spread message of peace: Satish Sharma

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Oct 06: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Information Technology, Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma Monday said that the young athletes, participating in 69th National School Games, will give a message of peace from Kashmir to the whole country.

Speaking with reporters, the Minister said that the participants from 30 states and Union Territories are participating in 69th National School Games, which was formally declared open by the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today here at TRC Ground.

"It is a proud moment that such an event



is taking place in Srinagar. Although the weather conditions are not favourable, the Chief Minister has said that we all stand with the participating children in this condition. We hope that everyone stays well and has

memorable moments here," Sharma said.

Pray for the unity of the country, the Minister congratulated and welcomed the participants.

Replying to a query, the Minister said that there will be such events every month. "Thousands of people will come. The children will give a message of peace that everything is good in Kashmir and the people here are unmatched in their hospitality," he said.

He added that these children are fighting against drugs and are learning discipline. "We will try to ensure such events every month and as the winter is approaching, we will prepare for the Winter Games as well," he said—(KNO)

Key PDP figures omitted for upcoming Panchayat, Local Body elections

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 06: Peoples Democratic Party on Monday named several leaders as constituency in-charges in Jammu and Kashmir ahead of the upcoming Panchayat and Local Body elections even as some key figures miss out.

According to an official communique, the PDP president Mehbooba Mufti approved the list to "strengthen party's grassroots structure."

Mehbooba Mufti's daughter Iltija Mufti, who lost the Assembly election from the Srigufwara-Bijbehara last year, has been renamed as the constituency in-charge

Abdul Rehman Veeri has

been assigned Anantnag East-Shangus constituency, Dr Mehboob Beg – Anantnag, Advocate Sheikh Javed – Anantnag West, Dr Shabir Siddiqi – Pahalgam, Chowdhary Talib (ST) – Kokernag and Mohd Ashraf Malik – Dooru.

In Kulgam district, Mohd Sartaj Madani has been named as in-charge of the Devsar constituency, while Gulzar Ahmad Dar has been nominated for DH Pora.

Zahoor Ahmad Mir has been named as the constituency incharge for Pampore, Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra for Pulwama and Rafiq Ahmad Naik for Tral.

For Shopian district, Ajaz Ahmad Mir has been named as the incharge for

Zainapora-Wachi, while Raja Waheed for Shopian. For Ganderbal district, Bashir Ahmad Mir has been named as the incharge for Ganderbal and Jamaat Ali Shaheen for Kangan.

For Bandipora district, Nayeem Akhtar has been named as the incharge for Bandipora and Yasir Reshi for Sonawari. For Rajouri district, Advocate Asif Iqbal Chowdhary has nominated as the constituency incharge.

However, the absence of several key figures like Peerzada Mansoor Hussain, Yawar Bandy, and Gaffar Sofi have missed out from the list. Interestingly, former MLA Ajaz Ahmad Mir has retained his traditional stronghold Wachi (Zainapora)—(KNO)

KPDCL assures improved power supply

RIYAZ BHAT

Srinagar, Oct 06: Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) on Monday said the Discom is trying hard to improve and supply uninterrupted power supply this winter.

Managing Director (MD) Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL), Mahmood Ahmad Shah said, "This year so far, KPDCL has provided improved power supply to consumers. A lot of improvement has been made in the discom in comparison to the previous year."

About the smart meters installation, Shah said, "We installed 3 lakh smart metres last year and this year, we have added over 1.25

lakh smart meters across rural and urban areas of the Kashmir region. The process continues."

The MD said the goal is to achieve 100% coverage. "Despite disruptions caused by floods and the war-like situation, we are working to install more smart meters," he said.

Shah further informed that KPDCL installed insulated cables across the valley this year. "The Low Capacity Power (LCP) system is running, but sometimes we face fault issues due to rain. However, till today, we have been providing normal supply to our consumers," he said.

Given the orange warning issued in view of the bad weather predictions, the MD KPDCL assured that the department's staff is ready to repair any disruptions—(KNO)



Er. Rashid to file affidavit declaring no pending cases: Delhi HC

WARIS FAYAZ

Srinagar, Oct 06: The Delhi High Court on Monday directed Member of Parliament (MP) from Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency, Engineer Abdul Rashid Sheikh to file an affidavit, declaring that no other criminal cases are pending against him while hearing his regular bail plea.

A party spokesperson said that they remain optimistic about a fair outcome. "We are hopeful that justice will prevail. We have full faith in the constitution and the judiciary. Er. Rashid is innocent and was subjected to political victimization in 2019," the spokesperson said.

He confirmed that the next date of hearing in the matter has been scheduled for October 15.

It is pertinent to mention that the regular bail plea was moved before the Delhi High Court after the National Investigation Agency (NIA) court rejected Er. Rashid's bail application earlier.

Er Rashid, who won the Baramulla Lok Sabha seat as an independent candidate, has been in Tihar Jail since 2019, following his arrest by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) in a terror-funding case—(KNO)



RS Polls...

Congress approached NC over seat-sharing: Tanvir Sadiq

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 06: National Conference on Monday said that Congress has approached the party over the seat-sharing for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections and that the high command will soon take a call.

Speaking with reporters, party spokesperson, Tanvir Sadiq said that the candidates for the Rajya Sabha would be decided by the party's high command.

"Candidates won't be outsiders. The Congress has approached the party to discuss the seat-sharing and the discussion is going on. Candidates will be announced soon by the leadership," he said.

The nomination process for four Rajya Sabha seats from Jammu & Kashmir commenced today after the Election Commission of India (ECI) issued separate notifications, outlining the timetable for the polls.

The Poll Body has fixed October 24 as the date for polls, if necessary, with counting of votes on the same day.

Tanvir Sadiq also said that the statehood must be restored to Jammu & Kashmir to respect the people's verdict in the Assembly elections. "We have been promised statehood restoration after delimitation and elections. It is time for the statehood restoration now," he said—(KNO)



Bukhari calls on LG, discusses current political scenario

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 06: Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari called on Lieutenant Governor (LG) Manoj Sinha Monday at Raj Bhavan in Srinagar. They discussed the current political and security situation in Jammu and Kashmir, while Apni Party President Bukhari brought a range of pressing public issues to the notice of LG Sinha.

According to a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), "During the meeting, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari apprised LG Manoj Sinha of several pressing public issues and grievances, and held discussions with him on the prevailing political and security situation in Jammu and Kashmir," the press release said.

"On this occasion, the Apni Party leader applauded the administration's announcement of providing 5 marlas of land to flood-affected homeless and landless

families, enabling them to construct their dwelling units on the allotted plots. Furthermore, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari urged LG Manoj Sinha to ensure adequate compensation for those affected in the fruit industry," the press release added.

He said that the recent natural calamity and the closure of NH-44 have inflicted huge losses on the fruit industry, and that the affected people are in desperate need of compensation from the government—(KNO)

Police register case against FB page administrator

KNO

Budgam, Oct 06: Police have registered an FIR against an administrator of a Facebook page titled "Kashmir Speaks" for spreading false and misleading information on social media in central Kashmir's Budgam district.

In a statement, a spokesperson said that Police Station Khansahib had registered FIR No. 165/2025 under Section 325 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) regarding the killing of a horse Rakhai village. "Investigation revealed that the

incident had occurred due to a personal dispute between the parties involved. On 05/10/2025, it came to notice that the Facebook page had published false information alleging that the horse was killed for selling its meat in the market in Arizal, thereby creating unnecessary fear and panic among the local population," reads the statement.

It reads that accordingly, FIR No. 187/2025 under Section 353(2) of BNS was registered at Police Station Khansahib, and investigation has been initiated.—(KNO)

Govt attaches CEO Baramulla to DSEK KNO

Srinagar, Oct 06: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has attached the Chief Education Officer (CEO) of Baramulla on a circular warning government employees against the misuse of social media.

According to an official order, the School Education Department has attached the CEO, Baramulla.

"Pending inquiry, Mr. Bashir Ahmad Shah, in-charge Chief Education Officer, Baramulla, is hereby attached to the Directorate of School Education Kashmir with immediate effect. Further, the Chief Education Officer, Bandipora, shall hold the charge of the post of Chief Education Officer, Baramulla, and Principal DIET till further orders," reads the order issued by the Secretary, School Education Department. Citing circular instructions issued by the government in 2023 and 2017, the CEO had directed employees of the School Education Department, Baramulla, to strictly adhere to guidelines and legal principles, and refrain from indulging in unwarranted debates, discussions, and sharing/commenting/posting inappropriate content on social media platforms to avoid unfavourable circumstances.

The attachment order has been issued under the directions of the Minister for School Education, Sakina Ilttoo—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Ensure Health Ministry Guidelines For Child Safety

The high-level meeting chaired by the Union Health Secretary to address the quality and rational use of cough syrups could not have come at a more critical time. The tragic incidents in Madhya Pradesh, where contaminated cough syrups allegedly led to child fatalities, serve as a stark reminder of the grave consequences of pharmaceutical negligence and irrational drug administration. For Jammu and Kashmir, where healthcare accessibility remains challenging in remote areas, this national directive holds particular significance. The Union Health Ministry's

emphasis on strict compliance with Schedule M standards for drug manufacturing must be implemented rigorously in J&K. Our pharmaceutical units, though limited, must adhere to Good Manufacturing Practices without exception. The administration should initiate immediate risk-based inspections of all local manufacturing and repackaging units to ensure they meet revised quality parameters. The robust surveillance system under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme must be strengthened across all districts, with special focus on real-time reporting of adverse drug reactions.

Of equal importance is the directive regarding the rational use of cough syrups in children. The health experts have rightly highlighted that most childhood coughs are self-limiting and do not require pharmacological intervention. J&K's healthcare providers - from tertiary hospitals in Srinagar and Jammu to primary health centres in remote areas - must be sensitised about the risks of irrational prescriptions. The proposed guidelines for parents, pharmacists, and doctors should be disseminated widely in local languages to build community awareness. The administration should also strengthen

the regulation of retail pharmacies, particularly in tourist areas where over-the-counter sales of cough syrups are common. Random checks and strict penalties for violations can deter malpractice. J&K has made significant strides in healthcare delivery in recent years. By implementing these national directives with urgency and precision, we can protect our most vulnerable citizens, especially our children, from preventable harm. The health of our future generation is a collective responsibility that demands nothing less than zero tolerance for compromise.

Building The Workforce: India Adds 17 Crore Jobs In 6 Years

As India continues to modernize and grow, aligning workforce development with industry needs will remain a critical pillar for sustainable and inclusive economic progress

■ Press Information Bureau

Employment- Driving India's Growth

One of the fastest-growing economies, a digitised, automated, and sustainable economy, a booming global powerhouse- India is set to be a primary engine of growth in the coming years. Owing to its demographic dividend, India is amongst countries that will supply nearly two-thirds of new workforce entrants in the coming year. (World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025).

As per the Ministry of Labour & Employment, employment in India rose to 64.33 crore in 2023-24 compared to 47.5 crore in 2017-18: a net addition of 16.83 crore jobs over six years, reflecting the government's focus on youth-centric policies and its Viksit Bharat vision. This growth is specially significant because from an economic standpoint, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) alone cannot fully capture a nation's true development. A more accurate picture emerges when multiple macroeconomic indicators are considered- with employment being one of the most critical. Employment carries both economic and social weight: higher job levels signal a stronger economy, stimulate consumption, and fuel sustained growth. For development to be meaningful, economic expansion must translate into the creation of productive, well-paying jobs that enhance livelihoods and social stability.

India's Workforce On The Move

The Indian government measures employment regularly to track workforce trends, guide policymaking, and address job market challenges. To achieve this, the National Statistics Office launched the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), which provides timely estimates of key indicators like the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR), and Unemployment Rate (UR).

According to the recent PLFS, August 2025 monthly estimates were based on data collected from 3.77 lakh individuals- with 2.16 lakh surveyed in rural areas and 1.61 lakh in urban areas. At the all-India level, both key indicators of employment showed improvement between June and August 2025: LFPR which measures the share of people aged 15+ who are working or seeking work- rose from 54.2% in June to 55% in August 2025. WPR- which reflects the share of employed persons in the population, also increased from 51.2% in June to 52.2% in August 2025.

The rise in WPR was observed in both rural and urban areas, contributing to the overall national improvement. Together, these trends highlight a healthier and more active labour market. On a broader level, LFPR for individuals aged 15 years and above rose from 49.8% in 2017-18 to 60.1% in 2023-24 and WPR increased from 46.8% to 58.2%.

Looking at sectoral trends, in the April-June 2025 quarter, the agriculture sector engaged the majority of rural workers (44.6% of men and 70.9% of women), while the tertiary sector was the largest source of employment in urban areas (60.6% of men and 64.9% of women). On average, 56.4 crore persons (aged 15 years and above) were employed in the country during this quarter, of which 39.7 crore were men and 16.7 crore were women.

Formal employment on the rise

In 2024-25, over 1.29 crore net subscribers were added to the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), up from 61.12 lakh in 2018-19. Since the launch of the tracking system in September 2017, over 7.73 crore net subscribers have joined, including 21.04 lakh in July 2025 alone, indicating growing formalisation and enhanced social security coverage. 9.79 lakh new subscribers were added in July 2025 (60% in the 18-25 age group alone), owing to growing employment opportunities, increased awareness of employee benefits, and EPFO's successful outreach programs.

Besides, there has been a clear shift in employment patterns-self-employment rose from 52.2% in 2017-18 to 58.4% in 2023-24, while casual labour fell from 24.9% to 19.8%, indicating a move toward entrepreneurial and independent work, supported by government initiatives.

Increase in wages of casual labourers & salaried workers

The average daily wage for casual labourers (excluding public works) rose from 294 in July-September 2017 to 433 in April-June 2024. Similarly, average monthly earnings of regular salaried workers increased from 16,538 to 21,103 over the same period. These gains point to higher income levels, improved job stability, and enhanced job quality.

Unemployment

Another positive sign has been the impressive decline in the UR, that dipped sharply from 6.0% in 2017-18 to 3.2% in 2023-24. This indicates stronger workforce absorption into productive employment. In the same time frame, youth unemployment rate declined from 17.8% to 10.2%, placing it below the global average of 13.3%, as reported in the ILO's World Employment and Social Outlook 2024.

Unemployment among men (15+ years) fell to 5% in August 2025, the lowest since April. This drop was driven by a decline in urban male unemployment from 6.6% in July to 5.9% in August, while rural male unemployment eased to 4.5%- the lowest in four months. Overall, the rural unemployment rate has declined steadily for three consecutive months, from 5.1% in May to 4.3% in August 2025.

From Margins to Mainstream: Women Leading Workforce

One of the key pillars for achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047 is ensuring 70% women workforce participation in India. Today, major global institutions are praising India, as it paves its way up in the list of top countries with the highest equality. Women employment rate nearly doubled between 2017-18 to 2023-24. Data from The Ministry of Labour and Employment states that female LFPR increased from 23.3% in 2017-18 to 41.7% in 2023-24.

WPR for women aged 15 years and above rose from 22% in 2017-18 to 40.3% in 2023-24, LFPR increased from 23.3% to 41.7%.

More recently, Female WPR rose to 32.0% in August 2025 from 31.6% in July 2025 and 30.2% in June 2025 and Female LFPR increased to 33.7% in August 2025 from 33.3% in July 2025 and 32.0% in June 2025.

Besides, latest EPFO payroll data highlights a growing trend of formal employment among women. During 2024-25, 26.9 lakh net female subscribers were added to EPFO. In July 2025, ~2.80 lakh new female subscribers joined and the net female payroll addition stood at ~4.42 lakh, asserting today's more inclusive and diverse workforce.

KEY DYNAMICS BEHIND EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

New industries, employment domains

At present, India is witnessing the rapid emergence of new industries and employment domains, driven by technological innovation, globalization, and evolving consumer behaviour.

Sectors such as healthcare technology, e-commerce logistics, financial technology, and ed-tech are growing at an unprecedented pace.

These industries are not only reshaping the nature of work but also generating new and diverse employment opportunities, particularly for the youth and digitally skilled workers.

Growing digital economy and renewal energy sector are providing enhanced opportunities for job creation.

Both these sectors offer immense potential to increase employment, especially opening opportunities for the women and thereby leading to their financial independence and empowerment.

Gig Economy

A defining feature of India's evolving job market is the rise of gig economy, which has redefined traditional employment norms. With the spread of digital platforms offering freelance and project-based work, a growing number of Indians, especially millennials and Gen Z, are opting for flexible, non-traditional work arrangements in areas such as content creation, graphic design, marketing, software development, and consulting.

India's gig workforce is estimated to grow from 1 crore in 2024-25 to 2.35 crore by 2029-30

Through measures such as the Code on Social Security (2020) and the e-Shram portal, the government is actively working to recognise, safeguard, and empower gig and platform workers. As of 30 September 2025, more than 31.20 crore workers have registered, suggesting a broader global trend toward flexible work, work-life balance, and digital livelihoods.

Startups and Global Capability Centres (GCCs)

India's demographic dividend is being actively cultivated through targeted initiatives, which aim to bridge the gap between education and employment. The economy is also witnessing job growth in emerging sectors such as startups

and global capability centres (GCCs), creating new and diverse employment opportunities for the youth. India's start-up ecosystem boasts 1.9 lakh DPIIT-recognized startups- the world's 3rd largest, creating over 17 lakh jobs and 118 unicorns as of 2025.

Below are some interesting facts which give a clear understanding of the sectoral growth of India's employment landscape-

Key Government Initiatives Strengthening India's Employment

By creating a skilling ecosystem with a high-quality, globally competitive workforce, India can enhance employability for youth in global job markets. The government's persistent efforts through diverse initiatives have led to higher workforce participation, reduced unemployment, improved incomes, and broader opportunities spanning traditional as well as new-age sectors.

Skill India

Under the Skill India Mission, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) provides skill, re-skill, and up-skill training through a nationwide network of centres. Key schemes include the following

Rozgar Mela

The government has been organizing Rozgar Melas to boost employment initiatives in the country through the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), under the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE). These events aim to connect unemployed youth with suitable job opportunities in the private sector. It is a half-day event where employers and job seekers gather to apply for and interview for job positions. Notably, over 11 lakh aspirants got jobs in the last 16 months under the Rozgar Mela.

PM Vishwakarma

This scheme aims to provide holistic support to artisans and craftspeople in scaling up their conventional products and services. As on 30 September 2025, there were ~30 lakhs registered artisans and craftsmen, with skill verification completed for 26 Lakhs+ beneficiaries.

ITI upgradation Scheme

Approved in May 2025, the scheme envisages upgradation of 1000 Govt. ITIs in a hub and spoke model as state-led, industry-managed skilling institutions. 200 ITIs will function as hub institutions and 800 as spokes. Besides, 20 lakh youth are aimed to be skilled over a five year period.

The Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme

It seeks to support job creation, enhance employability, and expand social security coverage, with focus on manufacturing sector. It aims to create 3.5 crore+ jobs in two years with an outlay of 1 lakh crore.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

It aims to enhance livelihood security by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment to rural households whose adult members are willing to undertake unskilled manual work. Rs 86,000 crore has been allocated for MGNREGA in FY 2025-26, the highest since the scheme's inception in 2005.

Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana

Launched in August 2025, aims to boost job creation by supporting both employers and employees through incentives. The scheme runs from August 2025 to July 2027, with a total budget of 99,446 crore covering FY 2025-26 to FY 2031-32. It has two parts- Part A offers incentives for hiring 1.92 crore new eligible employees. Part B incentivizes employers to create around 2.59 crore additional jobs.

Additionally, for creating industry-ready workforce, initiatives like internships in companies (PM Internship Scheme) and public-private partnership for skill development and vocational training are poised to go a long way. Besides, the Make In India initiative seeks to revitalize manufacturing, generate large-scale employment especially for semi-skilled and unskilled workers.

Initiatives Specifically for Women

Specific initiatives aim to empower women through skills, employment, and entrepreneurship. Below mentioned are some of the key government initiatives that are strengthening Indian women employment landscape, resulting in women's economic empowerment.

Namo Drone Didi: A central sector scheme, it aims to empower women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) by equipping them with drone technology to provide agricultural services. The scheme aims to provide 15,000 drones to selected Women SHGs (2024-25 to 2025-2026) for providing rental services to farmers for agriculture purpose (application of liquid fertilizers and pesticides for the present). This initiative is likely to generate an additional income of at least Rs. 1 lakh per year for each SHG, contributing to economic empowerment, sustainable livelihood generation.

Mission Shakti: By promoting awareness, creating a secure environment, and offering workshops and training, Mission Shakti seeks to transform women's lives and foster an inclusive and empowered society. The Ministry of Women and Child Development is also implementing the 'Palna' component under Mission Shakti, aimed at providing daycare services and child protection.

Lakhpati Didi Scheme: A Lakhpati Didi is a SHG member with an annual household income of 1,00,000 or more. This income is calculated for at least four agricultural seasons and/or business cycles, with an average monthly income exceeding 10,000, so that it is sustainable. India aims to create 3 crore Lakhpati Didis, and 2 crore women have already achieved this milestone.

Besides, various other schemes like Bank Sakhi, Bima Sakhi, Krishi Sakhi, and Pashu Sakhi have enabled women to find sustainable employment. To garner women entrepreneurship, the government has launched several initiatives in terms of easier access to credit, marketing support, skill development, support to women start-ups, etc. Schemes and initiatives such as the PM Employment Guarantee Programme, SANKALP, PM Micro Food Processing Scheme, Adivasi Mahila Sashaktikaran Yojana, Swayam Shakti Sahakar Yojna, DAY-NRLM, and others are fostering women-led enterprises by providing financial assistance, skill training, and mentorship. These measures are empowering women entrepreneurs to launch and expand their businesses.

To further enhance women's participation in the workforce, the government is implementing several programmes like Women in Science and Engineering (WISE-KIRAN) and SERB-POWER, which promote women in research and development.

Employment Outlook

To thrive in a rapidly evolving landscape, three key questions emerge- How do we develop a digitally proficient workforce equipped to navigate an increasingly tech-driven job market? What strategies can we employ to build a truly inclusive workforce, where diversity is valued, and everyone is given equal opportunities? Additionally, as industries prioritize environmental sustainability, how can we integrate eco-friendly practices and values into our workforce culture?

Notably, India has well equipped answers to all three above as the government's initiatives to enhance skill development and focus towards technological upskilling is in full swing. The government has been fostering public-private partnerships for inclusive growth and promoting digital literacy and eco-friendly workforce values. Besides, it is prioritizing inclusivity and sustainability in workforce development.

Another interesting fact are GCCs, which are at the forefront of adopting emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, data analytics, robotic process automation, digital commerce, cybersecurity, blockchain, augmented reality, and virtual reality. Notably, India is poised to become the "GCC Capital of the World," with 1,700 Global Capability Centres (GCCs) employing over two million people—a number projected to grow significantly by 2030.

Conclusion

As statistics prove, India's economic trajectory reflects consistent job creation across key sectors, reinforcing its position as one of the world's fastest-growing economies. Backed by a vibrant democracy, a resilient and dynamic economy, and a culture rooted in unity in diversity, the nation is steadily advancing on its path to becoming a global powerhouse.

India's medium-term growth trajectory is rooted in a decade of robust economic performance, with labour market reforms being integral along with other macroeconomic fundamentals and sustained structural and governance reforms. As India continues to modernize and grow, aligning workforce development with industry needs will remain a critical pillar for sustainable and inclusive economic progress.

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

Govt committed to make J&K a prosperous state: Javid Dar

Reviews progress of ongoing projects in MC Watergam

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 6: Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, chaired a review meeting on progress of ongoing projects and works in Municipal Committee Watergam at civil secretariat here on Monday.

During the meeting, the Minister stressed on the importance of expediting ongoing projects in various sectors, increasing transparency and accountability to ensure optimal use of resources. He urged officials to utilize unused funds for development works, as per given guidelines, to benefit the people.



Javid Dar emphasized on the J&K Government's commitment towards making Jammu and Kashmir a prosperous state under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

During the meeting, Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, Manddeep Kaur briefed

the Minister on a spectrum of pivotal developments and upcoming initiatives aimed at transforming the urban landscape of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting discussed about ongoing and new works undertaken under the Capex Budget 2025-26

(regular) in MC Watergam, including, Construction of Office Complex Near Town Hall Watergam, Open Air Gym Park at Gund Mulraj Ward No. 11, Development of Footpaths, Tiling and cobblestone work at various spots, Parking Place and Transport

Yard at MC Watergam, Inner Link Development, at different wards of MC Watergam and Macadamization of Inner Links at MC Watergam.

The meeting was informed that Drainage Sector D/S Gund Kareem Khan Watergam (SASCI Project) and Construction of Deep Drain at Ward No. 1 & 3 is in progress.

The Minister advised officials to work in coordination with each other to achieve the goal of all-round development in MC Watergam.

The meeting was also attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Sopore, Deputy Director (E&S) Urban Local Bodies Kashmir, Executive Engineer PWD(R&B), Executive Officer MC Waterrgam, and others concerned officers.

H.Rajesh Prasad get warm send-off



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 06: Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCL) Monday organized a farewell ceremony in honour of outgoing Principal Secretary PDD, H. Rajesh Prasad, who has been elevated and posted as Chief Secretary of Union Territory of Chandigarh.

MD KPDCL, Mehmood Ahmad Shah; Special Secretary, PDD, Younis Malik; Chief Engineer Distribution/Planning & Procurement/ Transmission/ Generation/ Projects-Kashmir, Director Finance JKPDD and other senior officers of PDD and KPDCL.

Speaking on the occasion, MD KPDCL and senior officers of PDD lauded Rajesh Prasad's visionary leadership and transformative contributions towards the power sector

in Jammu & Kashmir. Under his dynamic stewardship, the department witnessed substantial progress in operational performance and financial discipline, he said.

He added that the initiatives formulated by Rajesh Prasad led to historic gains in billing and collection efficiency, alongside a notable reduction in Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses.

The officers further said that H.Rajesh Prasad's tenure was marked by significant infrastructure modernization, including the widespread installation of smart meters, strengthening of grid stations, and enhancement of power reliability across the region.

The officers of JKPDD extended their heartfelt wishes for his continued success in his new role as Chief Secretary, Chandigarh UT.

DC Kupwara reviews measures of curbing drug abuse



KT News Desk

KUPWARA, OCTOBER 6: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Shrikant Suse Monday chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee under Narco Coordination (NCORD) to review various measures put in place to curb drug abuse in the district.

Threadbare discussion was held in the meeting on issues related to the agenda. The officers presented detailed reports on the work done as per their respective roles and responsibilities.

The Deputy Commissioner impressed upon all officers to put in extra efforts aimed at eradicating the drug menace in the district, mainly focusing on conducting special awareness camps for vulnerable segments of society such as transport workers, street vendors, and youth.

He directed the Tehsil-level machinery to gear up for the identification of hotspots with immediate destruction of wild bhang and poppy cultivation wherever reported and to initiate legal action against the culprits.

It was informed that all medical shops in the district have installed CCTV cameras, with

95 percent computerized billing systems already in place.

The Assistant Drug Controller was directed to ensure 100 percent mandatory computerized billing as a means to break the supply chain.

Highlighting the role of parents in safeguarding the future of their children, the DC emphasized organizing monthly Parent-Teacher Meetings (PTMs) in all government and private schools to discuss the menace of drug abuse along with other related issues.

He also directed the concerned authorities to ensure that no sale or consumption of tobacco or related substances takes place within 100 meters of any school premises.

It was further impressed upon the participants to work towards the declaration of "Nasha Mukht Panchayat" to encourage healthy competition among panchayats in making Kupwara a drug-free district.

SSP Kupwara, Gulam Jeelani; ADC Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad; ACR, CMO, CEO, DFO and other concerned officers attended the meeting. SSP Handwara, SDM Lolab and all Tehsildars attended the meeting virtually.

Govt's focus on promoting green energy, sustainability: Satish

Visits Kulgam, chairs district review meeting

KT News Desk

KULGAM, OCTOBER 06: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science & Technology, Youth Services & Sports, and ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma, who is also the Minister in-charge for Kulgam district, Monday visited the district and chaired a comprehensive district review meeting at Mini Secretariat here.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Education, Health & Social Welfare and MLA D.H Pora, Sakeena Itoo; MLA Kulgam M.Y. Tarigami, MLA Devsar Peerzada Feroz Ahmad Shah; Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Amir Khan; Director Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Owais Ahmed besides Directors from various departments, Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineers, and other district officers.

Emphasizing on better coordination, effective implementation, and close monitoring of developmental works, the Minister directed officers to ensure timely completion of projects nearing final stages and dedicate them to the public at the earliest.

He instructed departments to expedite solar rooftop installations on shrines and government buildings, stressing that the government's focus is on promoting green energy, sustainability, and organic development across sectors.

The Minister also reviewed the status of sports infrastructure and called for enhanced facilities to engage youth in sports and recreational activities.



Reviewing winter preparedness, Minister Satish Sharma took stock of the availability of essential supplies and directed KPDCL to ensure uninterrupted and scheduled power supply during the winter season. He instructed the department to maintain an adequate buffer stock of transformers and transformer oil to meet seasonal demands.

During the meeting, Minister Sakeena Itoo directed concerned departments to intensify enforcement drives to curb the sale of spurious fertilizers and pesticides, and to commence work on all approved roads before the onset of winter.

During the deliberations, the MLAs urged for regular and quality water supply to the people and called for the early completion of the Brazloo Bridge to improve connectivity in the district.

They also raised the demand for an increase in AAY and BPL ration cards to benefit more deserving families and pressed for the establishment of a Controlled Atmosphere (CA) store for crop preservation.

MLA Kulgam, M.Y. Tarigami, urged SKUAST-K and the Horticulture Department to take immediate measures to control leaf miner infestation, ensuring that farmers do not suffer losses in next season. Addressing concerns

regarding the leaf miner disease affecting crops, Minister Satish Sharma instructed the concerned departments to provide timely assistance, technical guidance, and preventive support to farmers.

Reiterating the government's commitment to sustainable and inclusive development, Minister Satish Sharma said the government is committed to ensure that all people-centric schemes are implemented effectively, with a strong focus on green energy, organic growth, and transparency at the grassroots level.

During the meeting Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan gave a detailed Power Point presentation on the developmental profile of the district and briefed meeting about the implementation status of key schemes and programmes including District Capex, PMAY-U, PMAY-G, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), ISSS, RDSS, PM Surya Ghar, and other flagship initiatives.

The DC informed that the Veshow River, being a ferocious river, has caused erosion and inundation in several areas during recent floods, resulting in extensive damage to agricultural and horticultural crops.

He also apprised the Ministers about measures taken for restoration of damaged roads and bridges.

DC Bandipora reviews functioning of RDD

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 6: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Monday chaired a comprehensive review meeting of the Rural Development Department (RDD) to assess the progress and performance of various schemes being implemented across the district, including all three subdivisions- Bandipora, Sumbal, and Gurez.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD), Assistant Commissioner Panchayats (ACP), Executive Engineer REW Bandipora, Executive Engineer R&B SSD Gurez, and all Block Development Officers (BDOs) of the district.

The meeting undertook a block-wise review of major schemes, including District Capex, MGNREGA, PMAY-G (1.0 & 2.0), SBM-G, RGSA, and the Panchayat Advancement Index, besides UT Capex, ABDP, APDP, MPLADS, and CDF.

During the review, the DC took a detailed appraisal of the MGNREGA performance



indicators, including e-KYC completion, delayed compensation (R14.1) and social audit pendency for FY 2025-26. She impressed upon officers to ensure timely completion of works, clearing of pending payments, and transparency in wage disbursement for public satisfaction.

It was informed that several community-oriented works are under execution, including plantation drives at Madwan, construction of roads with drains in Panchayat Chanpora Nadihal, besides other rural infrastructure projects across blocks.

The DC issued directions for prioritizing completion of ongoing works, especially those with direct community benefit, and instructed officers to regularly update progress on the district monitoring dashboard.

She further directed concerned engineers and BDOs to ensure proper technical supervision of all the completed assets.

The DC also reviewed progress under Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM-G) and emphasized the maintenance of cleanliness assets in every Panchayat with active involvement of PRIs in their upkeep and monitoring.

Under PMAY-G, the department reported ongoing progress in construction of houses for eligible beneficiaries with focus on 100 percent geo-tagging and timely completion.

While reviewing progress under District Capex, UT Capex, ABDP and CDF, the DC directed officers to accelerate execution to achieve both physical and financial targets within set deadlines.

SKUAST-K carries out awareness prog in Baduab-Tulail



KT News Desk

GUREZ, OCTOBER 6: A one-day awareness-cum-seed distribution programme was organized under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Project No. 15 (Rainfed Area Development), by DARS-Rangreth, SKUAST-K, at Baduab, Tulail, in collaboration with MARES/KVK-Gurez.

During the programme, seeds of fodder oats were distributed among 60- farmers to promote sustainable fodder production in the region.

During the event, Head of KVK/MAR&S-Gurez, Dr. Hilal Ahmad Malik highlighted various initiatives undertaken by

KVK-Gurez and emphasized its role in uplifting the farming community of the region.

Dr. Ajaz Ahmad Lone, Professor at DARS-Rangreth, SKUAST-K, sensitized farmers with an updated package of practices for oats cultivation, tailored specifically to the agro-ecological conditions of Tulail.

The programme aimed to promote climate-resilient and region-specific agricultural practices to ensure fodder security in remote areas like Tulail. The farmers appreciated the initiative and showed enthusiasm towards adopting improved varieties and technologies for better productivity and livelihood enhancement.

KVK Budgam concludes workshops under JKCIP

KT News Desk

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 06: Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Budgam, SKUAST-Kashmir Monday concluded a series of Kisan Sampark Abhiyan Rural Credit Workshops under the Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture & Allied Projects (JKCIP).

The workshops were organized across eight identified blocks of the district viz. Beerwah, Khag, Khanshab, Budgam, Chadoora, Nagam, Charishareef and BK Pora.

Commencing from 12th August 2025, the campaign comprised 35 workshops, covering 178 villages, 8 blocks, more than 150 Panchayat Halqas of the district and more than 3600 farmers participated in these workshops from across the district.

Each programme witnessed enthusiastic participation of farmers, entrepreneurs, Self Help Group (SHG) and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)

representatives, taking the total outreach to diverse groups of stakeholders. The events also witnessed the participation of MLAs and DDCs, ensuring strong community linkage and policy-level support.

During the workshops, scientists of KVK-Budgam, officers from Agriculture and allied departments, and officials from J&K Bank delivered detailed lectures on schemes and programmes under JKCIP. The participants were sensitized about the 50% subsidy available on every scheme enlisted under JKCIP, motivating them to avail benefits for strengthening farming systems, establishing enterprises, and boosting rural livelihoods.

These schemes will provide direct livelihood support to rural communities, strengthen the agriculture and allied sectors which are vital to Budgam's rural economy. JKCIP project will also nurture young talent and support the establishment of agri-entrepreneurs.

Bukhari, PEMA delegations call on LG Sinha



KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Oct 06: Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, President, J&K Apni Party called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday.

A delegation of Pashmeena Entrepreneurs Makers and Artisans (PEMA) Foundation, led by its president Tariq Dar, also called on LG Sinha. The members of the delegation apprised

the Lieutenant Governor on the endeavours of their foundation dedicated to cultural preservation, welfare of artisans and craftspeople, and promotion of Kashmir's Geographical Indication (GI) registered products. They also discussed the upcoming PEMA Foundation 2025 Artisan Award Ceremony, designed to recognize, incentivize, and elevate master craftspeople across Jammu Kashmir.

History will never forget it was SEALs who put a bullet in bin Laden's head: Trump

PTI

Washington, Oct 06: History will never forget that it were the US Navy Seals that stormed Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden's compound and put a bullet in his head, US President Donald Trump said.

Trump also repeated his claim that a year before Al Qaeda terrorists attacked the World Trade Centre twin towers in September 2001, he had warned about bin Laden.

"History will never forget that it was the SEALs who stormed the compound (of) Osama bin Laden and put a bullet in his head. Remember that," Trump said in a speech at Norfolk, Virginia Sunday during a special celebration to mark the US Navy's 250th birthday. Trump said that he had asked authorities to keep track of bin Laden a year before the 9/11 attack, and went on to add that the "fake news would never let me get away with that statement unless it was true".

"Please remember I wrote about Osama bin Laden exactly one year before he blew up the World Trade Center. And I said, 'You got to watch Osama bin Laden,'" he said. "But I said one year before... that I saw somebody named Osama bin Laden and I didn't like it. And you got

to take care of him."

"They didn't do it. A year later, he blew up the World Trade Center," the US president said. "So got to take a little credit, because nobody else is going to give it to me. You know the old story, they don't give you credit. Just take it yourself."

Trump said that it was the US Navy that "dumped" bin Laden's "wretched corpse off the decks" of aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson "to sink into the dark abyss".

In May 2011, US Navy Seals carried out an operation that killed bin Laden, who was hiding in a house in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

The raid was carried out after it was authorised by then US President Barack Obama.

Obama, in a special address from the East Room in the White House, had declared, "I can report to the American people and to the world that the United States has conducted an operation that killed Osama bin Laden, the leader of Al Qaeda, and a terrorist who's responsible for the murder of thousands of innocent men, women, and children."

Trump, who has been critical of the US exit from Afghanistan under former President Joe Biden's leadership, also said that the US would have "won Afghanistan easy. Would have won every war easy."

EC unrolls 17 new initiatives in Bihar, to be implemented in other states subsequently

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 06: The Election Commission (EC) on Monday announced 17 new initiatives that will be unrolled during the Bihar Assembly polls, including compulsory webcasting and mobile phone-deposit facilities at all polling stations.



At a press conference here, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar announced the "Bihar First Initiatives", which will be unrolled at all stages -- from preparing for the polls to the counting of the votes. These initiatives will be launched in all states during subsequent elections, he said.

Representation of the People Act, 1950.

More than 7,000 booth-level officers (BLOs) and BLO supervisors from across the country, including Bihar, were trained at the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM), New Delhi. Besides, special sessions were conducted for the Bihar Police for preparedness during the election.

For the first time, counters will be available outside all polling stations for the voters to deposit their mobile phones. The number of electors per polling station has also been limited to 1,200 to avoid crowding.

The penultimate round of EVM/VVPAT counting will be taken up only after the counting of the postal ballots, the CEC said.

The poll panel will issue voter-information slips with serial and part numbers (details of the polling station) displayed prominently for easier verification of voters.

A one-stop digital platform -- ECINet -- will provide real-time voter-turnout updates and the presiding officers will upload the turnout data on the app every two hours on the polling day to reduce the time lag.

There will be 100 per cent webcasting at all polling stations and candidate booths will be allowed just outside 100 metres of the polling stations.

The EC has also revised the

guidelines to make EVM ballot papers more readable and the electronic voting machines will have colour photographs of the candidates for the first time.

The counting of VVPAT (voter-verifiable paper audit trail) slips will be mandatory in case of a mismatch between the form 17C and the EVM data, and wherever the mock poll data was not erased erroneously.

A technology-driven system to promote accessibility of election-related data at the constituency level for all stakeholders will also be available, with the EC introducing digital index cards and reports.

Trade calculations being overturned by tariff volatility, says EAM Jaishankar

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 06: Trade calculations are being overturned by "tariff volatility" globally, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Monday against the backdrop of economic disruptions triggered by Washington's policy on trade tariffs.

In an address at an event, Jaishankar delved into the "strategic consequences" of profound changes being witnessed in the geopolitical landscape, including the shifting of



one-third of global manufacturing to a single geography, in an apparent reference to China.

"Consider the global landscape now and let us reflect on the intensity of the transformation and their implications. A third of global manufacturing has moved to a single geography, with attendant consequences for supply chains," he said.

"There is rising anti-globalisation sentiment in many societies. Trade calculations are being overturned by tariff volatility," he said, in an oblique

reference to Washington's policy on tariffs.

Jaishankar was speaking at the first Aravali Summit hosted by Jawaharlal Nehru University's

Sensex rises 171 points in early trade, Nifty nears 24,945 on bank stock buying



PTI

Mumbai, Oct 06: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty were trading in the positive territory in early trade on Monday, propelled by buying in bank stocks.

Japan's Nikkei 225 index traded sharply higher, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index quoted lower.

US markets ended on a mixed note on Friday.

"The positive sentiments triggered by the growth-stimulating monetary policy face headwinds from the continuing FII selling, but can be sustained by positive news on growth and corporate earnings for FY27," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 1.44 per cent to USD 65.46 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,583.37 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark gauge quoted 170.85 points higher at 81,376.75, and the Nifty traded 50.40 points up at 24,944.30.

From the Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Axis Bank, Tata Consultancy Services, HCL Tech, HDFC Bank and Eternal were among the major gainers.

However, Power Grid, Adani Ports, Tata Steel and Tata Motors were among the laggards. In Asian markets,

the Nifty edged higher by 57.95 points or 0.23 per cent to 24,894.25.

School of International Studies.

The external affairs minister's remarks on tariff volatility come amid a downturn in ties between New Delhi and Washington after US President Donald Trump doubled tariffs on Indian goods to a whopping 50 per cent, including a 25 per cent additional duty for India's purchase of Russian crude oil.

"The global energy scenario has changed profoundly with the US becoming a major fossil fuel exporter and China a key renewable one. There are competing models on the harnessing of

data and evolution of Artificial Intelligence which jostle with each other," he said.

Big Tech has become a significant player in itself. New routes of connectivity are emerging, some of them with a strategic purpose. The mobility debate seeks to reconcile skills, demand and social reactions to them, he added.

The external affairs minister also listed the application of sanctions, the "seizure" of assets and the advent of crypto as elements changing the face of global finance.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Season's first

(13.0 degree Celsius below normal).

Kupwara recorded 10.8 degree Celsius (16.0 degree Celsius) while Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, recorded 13.5 degree Celsius (10.6 degree Celsius below normal). Pahalgam recorded a day temperature of 9.2 degree Celsius (13.2 degree Celsius below normal) and Kokernag recorded 12.1 degree Celsius (11.7 degree Celsius below normal). Gulmarg, famous ski-resort, recorded a maximum temperature of 4.4 degree Celsius (12.1 degree Celsius below normal).

IN Jammu division, Banihal recorded a maximum temperature of 11.2 degree Celsius (15.3 degree Celsius below normal) while Jammu recorded 21.3 degree Celsius (11.1 degree Celsius below normal). In Bhaderwah, the temperature settled at 10.0 degree Celsius (16.1 degree Celsius below normal). Batote recorded 12.6 degree Celsius (12.5 degree Celsius below normal) & Katra recorded 18.0 degree Celsius (11.1 degree Celsius below normal).

According to details available with the KNO, the fresh snowfall was recorded in Pir ki Gali, Razdan Top, Sadhna Pass, Sinthan Top, Daksum, Kongdori Gulmarg, Minimarg and other parts of the region.

The rains lashed the plains including Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir.

Meanwhile, the weatherman said that there is a forecast of light to moderate rain (light snow over higher reaches) till Tuesday forenoon or afternoon and improvement thereafter.

"On October 8, a brief spell of light rain is expected at a few places while generally dry weather is expected from October 9 to October 16," the MeT said.

The MeT has advised the farmers to suspend all activities between October 6 and 7. "There is a possibility of landslides, shooting stones at vulnerable places with a possibility of light to moderate snow over higher reaches of Kashmir, Chenab valley and Pir Panjal range and possibility of moderate to heavy snow over few higher reaches of South Kashmir and Chenab Valley," it said. (KNO)

October snowfall

tourists will start planning their trips. It will take around a month to see how the season shapes up," he said.

Houseboat owners along the Dal and Nigeen lakes too are hopeful. "We have started receiving inquiries from domestic tourists, especially families and newly-wed couples, who want

to experience Kashmir's winter beauty," said Ghulam Rasool, a houseboat owner in Dal Lake.

He added once the snowfall intensifies, bookings are expected to rise.

Tour and travel operators said that a there is a little uptick in demand, with many expecting an increase in bookings once the weather stabilizes. "We have seen little increase in inquiries from states like Gujarat, Maharashtra and West Bengal in the last few days. Many tourists are waiting for updates on snowfall before finalizing their plans," said Altaf Ahmad, a Srinagar-based travel agent.

He shared if conditions remain favourable, this winter could turn out to be the good seasons again.

Hoteliers too are hopeful about a busy season ahead. "Winter is a special time for Kashmir tourism and early snowfall is always a good sign. Our bookings for December and January are empty as-off now but expect occupancy to rise steadily once snow reaches lower areas," said another hotelier from Srinagar.

FROM APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 5,64039 TOURISTS VISIT PAHALGAM

Meanwhile, an official told KNO that from April to September this year as many as 5,64039 tourists visited Pahalgam. "The numbers declined after the April 22 terror attack but increased gradually," he said.

While giving the breakup the official said, 2,08122 domestic, 2864 foreign and 3,53053 tourists visited Pahalgam in the past six months.

Officials said, "August and September months saw a positive trend as more than 3000 foreign tourists arrived in the Valley."

They said that Jammu and Kashmir recorded 19,570 foreign tourist visits between January-June 2025 and over 95 lakh domestic visits in the same period. "The fresh inflow of foreign tourists comes months after the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which had dealt a severe blow to Kashmir's tourism industry. The attack led to widespread cancellations, emergency return flights, and a short-term collapse in bookings for outdoor sites closely associated with the incident," the officials added.

SNOWFALL IN GULMARG PLEASANT SURPRISE FOR TOURISTS

The early snowfall came as a delightful surprise for tourists from across the country, many of whom were first-time visitors to Gulmarg. They expressed joy at seeing the famous ski resort blanketed in snow, transforming it into a breathtaking white wonderland. "We

weren't expecting snowfall in October. It feels magical -- I'm so lucky to witness it", said an elated tourist while enjoying the snow-covered slopes.

A couple from Kolkata, visiting Kashmir for the first time, while sharing their excitement told KNO that they had visited Pahalgam and Sonamarg earlier during their trip but found Gulmarg to be unmatched in its charm and beauty. "The scenic beauty is breathtaking. People here are warm and cooperative. It's our fourth day in Kashmir, and we haven't felt any security concerns. Everything is well-organized", said Yashfi.

Praising the world-famous Gondola services, the duo said the experience was beyond words. "The view from Phase II is absolutely mesmerizing. There are no words to describe it. We wish everyone to visit and experience this beauty", they added.

Similarly, a tourist, Arun Kumar from Haryana, said the experience lived up to Kashmir's reputation.

"We always heard people call Kashmir 'Paradise on Earth'. Today, we truly witnessed it. The unexpected snowfall made our trip unforgettable", he said.

Tourists at Gulmarg widely hailed the hospitality, administration and security arrangements, describing their stay as "safe, smooth and heartwarming".

Besides hundreds of tourists enjoying the Gondola rides, an official of the Jammu and Kashmir Cable Car Corporation (JKCCC) said, the chairlift joyride added to the attraction with over 400 visitors availing the service on Sunday alone, following successful safety trials.

"We are witnessing an encouraging response from tourists. All safety protocols are in place, and our staff is working round the clock to ensure a comfortable experience for visitors. The snowfall has brought a positive boost to tourism in Gulmarg and we expect the flow to increase further in the coming weeks", a senior JKCCC official told KNO. (KNO)

Power demand

be seen that contracted capacity (present and planned) is unable to meet the demand."

"It can be seen that during the high demand of winter months, the proportion of unserved energy is high," reads the study.

Besides, the report further reveals that the surplus capacity is available with states due to RE availability, demand variation etc. (KNO)

Bihar assembly polls: Voting in two phases on Nov 6, 11; counting on Nov 14



PTI

New Delhi, Oct 06: The assembly elections in Bihar will be held in two phases, polling for which will be held on November 6 and 11 while the counting of votes will be done on November 14, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar announced on Monday.

The entire election process will be concluded by November 16.

"Bihar elections will be held in two phases on November 6 and 11. Counting of votes will be done on

November 14," Kumar said at a press conference.

"It is mandatory to complete counting of postal ballots before the last two rounds of counting of votes," he added.

While 121 assembly constituencies will go to the polls in the first phase, voting will be held in 122 assembly constituencies in the second phase.

Kumar termed the Bihar elections as "mother of all elections".

For the first phase, the last date of filing nominations is October 17 while the scrutiny will be held on

October 18. The last date of withdrawal of candidature for first phase elections is October 20.

Similarly, for the second phase, the last date of filing nominations is October 20 while scrutiny will be held on October 21. The last date of withdrawal of candidature for the second phase elections is October 23.

The term of the current Assembly ends on November 22. Bihar has 243 constituencies, including two reserved for Scheduled Tribes and 38 for Scheduled Castes.

Lawyer tries to hurl shoe towards CJI in courtroom



PTI

New Delhi, Oct 06: A lawyer allegedly tried to hurl a shoe towards Chief Justice of India BR Gavai during proceedings in the Supreme Court on Monday, according to lawyers. The incident occurred when a Bench led by the CJI was hearing the mentioning of cases by lawyers.

The lawyer approached the dais, removed his shoe, and tried to throw it towards the judge. Alert security personnel present inside the courtroom immediately intervened and prevented the attack. The lawyer was swiftly escorted out of the court premises.

As he was being taken away, the lawyer was heard shouting, "Sanatan ka apman nahi sahenge" (We will not tolerate insult of Sanatan Dharma). The CJI remained composed and urged lawyers present in the courtroom to continue with their arguments. "Don't get distracted by all this. We are not distracted. These things do not affect me," the Chief Justice remarked.

The apex court's security unit has initiated an inquiry into the incident.

Toxic cough syrup case

SIT to probe 14 child deaths in MP; doctor held, pharma firm booked

PTI

Bhopal, Oct 06: The Madhya Pradesh police have formed a special investigation team (SIT) to probe the death of 14 children in Chhindwara due to suspected renal failure, linked to the consumption of a "toxic" cough syrup, officials said.

Dr Praveen Soni from Chhindwara has been arrested for alleged negligence in connection with the child deaths, while a case has been registered against the Coldrif cough syrup manufacturing company, the officials said on Sunday.

The body of the last victim was exhumed on Sunday for a post-mortem. Chhindwara Additional Collector Dharendra Singh said that ex gratia of Rs 4 lakh each, announced by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, has been transferred to the bank accounts of the victims' families.

Eight children are being treated in Nagpur -- four in a government hospital, one at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and three in private facilities, he said. Meanwhile, two children in MP's Betul district have died allegedly after taking Coldrif cough syrup, health officials said on Sunday.

Upset by the arrest of Dr Soni, who was also practising at a private clinic and had prescribed the syrup even after its adverse effects on children for nearly a month, his colleagues have threatened to strike work from Monday.

The Opposition Congress has also announced



a protest from Monday to highlight the "BJP government's failure" in handling the crisis and seek more financial relief for the families of the children.

The MP government has banned the sale of Coldrif cough syrup, manufactured by Sresan Pharmaceutical, Kancheepuram (Tamil Nadu), with officials saying the drug samples have been found to contain a highly toxic substance.

Of the children who died, 11 were from Parasia sub-division, two from Chhindwara city and one from Chaurai tehsil.

A 12-member SIT, led by Parasia Sub Divisional Officer of Police Jitendra Singh Jat, has been set up, and it will visit the pharma company in Tamil Nadu, said additional collector Singh.

Meanwhile, the body of two-year-old Yogita Thakre, the last victim, was exhumed for post-mortem as demanded by her family, Singh said. He said that samples of 1,102 children have been collected so far. A total of 5,657 tests have been conducted, of which the results of 4,868 have been received. The

government on Sunday also suspended Dr Soni from service, a day after CM Yadav said that strict action would be taken against those responsible.

Chhindwara unit president of the Indian Medical Association, Kalpana Shukla, said if Dr Soni is not released, all doctors will launch an indefinite strike from Monday.

The Congress in a statement said its workers will hold a sit-in fast at Fawara Chowk in the district headquarters on Monday to protest against the government's "apathy", alleged delay in action over the rising deaths of children, and "inadequate" compensation to victims' families.

Dr Soni and the cough syrup manufacturing company have been charged under sections 105 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and 276 (adulteration of drugs) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. They have also been booked under Section 27A of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, which prescribes over 10 years' imprisonment or a life term, according to Superintendent of Police Ajay Pandey. The Tamil Nadu

drug control authorities, in their report of October 2, declared the Coldrif syrup sample (Batch No SR-13; Mfg: May 2025; Exp: April 2027) manufactured by Sresan Pharmaceuticals, Kancheepuram, as adulterated because it contained diethylene glycol (48.6% w/v), a poisonous substance "which may render the contents injurious to health".

Following the report, the Madhya Pradesh Food and Drug Administration issued instructions to stop further sale and distribution of Coldrif statewide and immediately seize any available stock for investigation under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. It also ordered that other products manufactured by Sresan Pharmaceuticals be removed from sale pending testing.

The Tamil Nadu government on Friday banned Coldrif following reports of deaths in Madhya Pradesh and at least three similar fatalities in Rajasthan due to suspected kidney infections.

Samples from the affected children have been sent to the National Institute of Virology in Pune, while further tests on the syrup's adulteration and contamination are underway.

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has also initiated risk-based inspections at the manufacturing units of 19 drugs, including cough syrups and antibiotics, across six states, the Union health ministry said on Saturday.

Gold price soars Rs 9,700 to storm past Rs 1.3 lakh/10 g in Delhi

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 06: Gold prices skyrocketed by Rs 9,700 to scale a fresh peak of Rs 1,30,300 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday, lifted by safe-haven buying in the overseas markets and depreciation in the Indian rupee.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 1,20,600 per 10 grams on Friday.

In the local bullion market, gold of 99.5 per cent purity jumped by Rs 2,700 to hit a record high of Rs 1,22,700 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) on Monday. It had settled at Rs 1,20,000 per 10 grams in the previous market session.

Traders said the fall in the rupee against the US dollar added to the rally of the precious metal.

"Gold reached a new record high on Monday as investors still prefer bullion despite this record high price. They are anticipating further gains in bullion backed by favourable fundamentals and strong bullish momentum," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst



- Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

Gandhi noted that concerns about a prolonged US government shutdown potentially impacting economic performance are supporting the demand for safe-haven metal. So far in this year, gold prices have added Rs 51,350 or 65.04 per cent, rallying from Rs 78,950 per 10 grams on December 31, 2024.

Silver prices also witnessed robust gains. The white metal bounced by Rs 7,400 to hit a new peak of Rs 1,57,400 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes).

It had ended at Rs 1,50,000 per kg on Friday, as per the association.

Silver prices have soared by Rs 67,700 or 75.47 per cent in the current calendar year, rallying from Rs 89,700 per kg on December 31, 2024.

In the international markets, spot gold rose nearly 2 per cent to touch an all-time high of USD 3,949.58 per ounce, while silver went up over 1 per cent to hit a high of USD 48.75 per ounce.

"Spot gold extended gains and surged above USD 3,940 per ounce for the first time ever as the US government

shutdown enters its sixth day, following the Senate's failure to pass funding bills on Friday," Kaynat Chainwala, AVP Commodity Research at Kotak Securities, said.

Meanwhile, gold and silver futures also hit their fresh peaks in the domestic futures market on Monday.

The yellow metal futures for December delivery jumped by Rs 1,962 or 1.66 per cent to hit a record high of Rs 1,20,075 per 10 grams on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX).

The February 2026 contract for gold futures appreciated by Rs 2,047 or 1.71 per cent to touch a fresh peak of Rs 1,21,380 per 10 grams.

"Gold traded positively with sharp gains to hit a record Rs 1,20,000 per 10 grams-mark, as Comex gold extended its rally above USD 3,900 per ounce. The ongoing festive demand and global sentiment-driven rally continue to support prices, while rupee weakness adds domestic strength," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

White House says layoffs will start if Trump sees shutdown talks 'going nowhere'

REUTERS

Washington, Oct 06: The Trump administration will start mass layoffs of federal workers if President Donald Trump decides negotiations with congressional Democrats to end a partial government shutdown are "absolutely going nowhere," a senior White House official said on Sunday.

As the shutdown entered its fifth day, White House National Economic Council Director Kevin Hassett told CNN's "State of the Union" program he still saw a chance that Democrats would back down, averting a costly shutdown and federal employee layoffs that have been threatened by White House budget director Russell Vought. "President Trump and Russ Vought are lining things up and getting ready to act if they have to, but hoping that they don't," Hassett said.

Later on Sunday, Trump was asked by reporters when the administration would begin laying off federal workers. Trump responded, without elaborating: "It's taking place right now." The White House's Office of Management and Budget, which has played a key role in Trump's campaign to sharply scale back the size of the federal government, did not immediately respond to a request for



comment.

NO SIGN OF TALKS

No tangible signs of negotiations have emerged between congressional leaders since Trump met with them last week. The shutdown began on October 1, the start of federal fiscal 2026, after Senate Democrats rejected a short-term funding measure that would keep federal agencies open through November 21.

"They've refused to talk with us," Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer told CBS' "Face the Nation" program, saying the impasse could be solved only by further talks between Trump and the four congressional leaders.

Democrats are demanding a permanent extension of enhanced premium

tax credits to help Americans purchase private health insurance through the Affordable Care Act and assurances that the White House will not try to unilaterally cancel spending agreed to in any deal.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune has said he is willing to address Democrats' concerns but that they must first agree to reopen the federal government.

Trump also expressed an interest in the healthcare question while emphasizing Republican interests in reforming the ACA, also known as Obamacare.

"We want to fix it so it works. Obamacare has been a disaster for the people, so we want to have it fixed so it works," the president said.

Over 200 climbers stranded after blizzard on Tibetan slopes of Mt. Everest, 350 rescued

PTI

Beijing, Oct 06: Over 200 hikers are stranded after a blizzard on the Tibetan slopes of Mt. Everest, while 350 others have been led to safety by villagers and rescue teams.

Conditions for the climbers stranded at the campsites worsened on Sunday (October 5, 2025). Hundreds of local villagers and rescue teams rushed with essential supplies to the spot, which has been receiving snowfall since Friday (October 3, 2025).

Almost 1,000 trapped on Tibetan side of Mount Everest by blizzard

More than 200 hikers remained trapped in the blizzard, BBC reported on Monday (October 6,



2025), quoting a state-run CCTV report. Rescue teams guided around 350 climbers to safety, it said.

Show TIMINGS

TUESDAY, 7TH OCTOBER

Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari (UA13+)
Hindi - 12:15 PM, 03:20 PM, 06:30 PM

Kantara A Legend: Chapter 1 (UA16+)
Hindi Atmos - 11:00 AM, 02:30 PM, 06:00 PM

Jolly LLB 3 (UA16+)
Hindi - 10:40 AM, 02:00 PM, 05:30 PM

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Tourists Revel In The Season's First Snowfall At Gulmarg

Pics: Jahangir Shah
(KNO/KT)

