

High-level security meet in Delhi

Modi Govt committed to make J&K terrorism-free: HM Amit Shah

Vows to cripple terror ecosystem, says security forces have full freedom to crush those threatening UT's peace & security

Sajid Raina

New Delhi, Oct 09: Reaffirming the PM Modi led government's resolve to achieve a terrorism-free Jammu and Kashmir, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday asserted that security forces will continue to have full operational freedom to eliminate any threat to peace and stability in the region.

Shah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer, chaired a high-level meeting in New Delhi to review the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

After the meeting ended the Union Home Minister wrote on X: "Reviewed the security of



Jammu and Kashmir along with the Lt. Governor and other senior officials. We are committed to cripple the terror ecosystem

in J&K."

"Our security forces will continue to have full freedom to crush any attempt to threaten

peace and security in the region. Instructed to further intensify alertness and synergy to accelerate Modi Ji's vision

of a terror-free Jammu and Kashmir," he wrote further.

The security review meeting was attended by J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha; the Union Home Secretary; the Director, Intelligence Bureau; the Chief of Army Staff; the J&K Chief Secretary and Director General of Police of Jammu and Kashmir; the Directors General of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs); and senior officers from the Government of India, the Army, and the Jammu and Kashmir administration.

An official said that the meeting discussed J&K situation threadbare and the participants briefed Home Minister Shah about the | [More on P6](#)

SC to hear petitions on statehood today

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Oct 09: The Supreme Court will hear a batch of petitions tomorrow seeking the restoration of Jammu & Kashmir's statehood.

According to the causelist released by the Apex Court's registry, the petitions are listed before the Court of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) on Friday, October 10.

"The case is listed for hearing before a bench headed by the Chief Justice of India," advocate Soayib Qureshi told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

He further said that the Union of India has not yet filed any response in the matter.

On August 14, during a hearing of the case, the Supreme Court granted eight weeks' time to the Solicitor General of India to seek instructions from the government regarding the



pleas for restoration of J&K's statehood.

At that time, the CJI emphasized that the real situation on the ground must be considered and that incidents such as the Pahalgam attack cannot be overlooked.

"You must also take into account the ground realities; you cannot ignore what happened in Pahalgam," said the bench led by CJI.

The petitioners have argued that the | [More on P6](#)

Modi, Starmer agree on anti-terror efforts, condemn Pahalgam attack

Back joint military exercises, naval cooperation, global anti-terror mechanisms under UN framework

KNO Monitoring Desk

Srinagar, Oct 09: India and the United Kingdom on Thursday strongly condemned the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which left 26 civilians, mostly tourists dead.

In a joint statement following talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer in Mumbai, both countries, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), pledged co-ordinated efforts to counter terrorism and uphold zero tolerance for terrorism and violent extremism.

The two leaders agreed to work together at bilateral and multilateral levels. They



outlined plans to counter radicalisation, disrupt terror financing, prevent the cross-border movement of terrorists, and stop the use of new technologies for terrorist

purposes. Measures will also target recruitment efforts and include enhanced information sharing, judicial cooperation, and capacity building. PM Modi | [More on P6](#)

Life returns to normal in Ladakh

Restrictions lifted, internet restored, edu instts reopen

LG Gupta urges people to support region's dev

Yogesh

Leh, Oct 09: Life has returned to normal in Ladakh after the lifting of restrictions in the region.

Officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that people's cooperation and their responsible conduct has led to restoration of internet services, smooth functioning of educational institutions, and resumption of public transport and other civic activities.

Chairing a high-level security review meeting here on

Thursday, Lieutenant Governor, Kavinder Gupta, expressed satisfaction over the prevailing calm and order across the Union Territory. He commended the efforts of the civil and police administration, security forces, and the people of Ladakh for their collective role in maintaining peace and harmony.

The Lt Governor said that the people of Ladakh have shown exemplary patience and unity during recent challenging times. He stressed that their spirit of cooperation has been instrumental in quickly restoring normal life across the region. "The restoration of normal life is a clear reflection of the people's faith in the administration's commitment to ensuring

safety, stability, and inclusive growth," he said.

Highlighting the deep-rooted sense of nationalism among the people, the Lt Governor observed, "Ladakhis are among the most patriotic citizens of our nation, who have always stood shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the country in safeguarding national interests."

Urging the people to continue contributing to the region's progress, Kavinder Gupta called upon all sections of society to work with renewed energy for the development and prosperity of Ladakh. He reiterated the administration's commitment to ensuring equitable growth across all sectors — education, health, | [More on P6](#)

Major rejig in Police Dept; 24 IPS, JKPS officers transferred

KNO Correspondent

Srinagar, Oct 09: In a major reshuffle, the Jammu and Kashmir government has ordered the transfer and posting of 24 IPS and JKPS officers in the interest of administration.

According to an order under number 484-Home of 2025, issued by the Home Department, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Abdul Ghani Mir, IPS (AGMUT:1994), awaiting orders of posting, has been appointed as Commandant General, Home Guards, Civil Defence, and SDRF, J&K, relieving Alok Kumar, IPS of the additional charge.

Among other key transfers, Mohd. Yaseen Kichloo, IPS (AGMUT:2013), has been transferred from SSP CICE Jammu and posted as Principal STC Talwara, while Shobhit Saxena, IPS (AGMUT:2015), SSP Kathua, has been appointed as SSP Security, J&K.

Tanushree, IPS (AGMUT:2017), serving as SP SIA HQ, has been transferred as SSP Pulwama, replacing P.D. Nitya, IPS, whereas Sahil Sarangal, IPS (AGMUT:2017), has been posted as SSP Handwara, succeeding Mushtaq Ahmad.

Mohita Sharma, IPS (AGMUT:2017), AIG Provisions, has been appointed as | [More on P6](#)

Blitz over private member bills in J&K faces reality check

Passage remains elusive; only 3 such bills passed in past 45 years

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Oct 09: As political parties in Jammu & Kashmir are blitzing on private member bills submitted by them in the Legislative Assembly, the reality remains that such bills rarely see the light of day.

A Private Member's Bill is a legislative proposal introduced by a member of the Legislative Assembly who is not a minister, and belongs to either the treasury benches or the opposition.

Records available with news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reveal that not a single private member has been passed in Parliament since past 55 years.

According to details, only 14 private member Bills have ever been passed by the Parliament and received Presidential assent, with the last one becoming law in 1970.

The fate of private member also remains similar in J&K Assembly.

Since 1980, only three private member bills have been passed in the House. Two of them— Jammu & Kashmir Resettlement Act-1982 and Jammu & Kashmir Jammu and



Kashmir Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 2007—were moved by Abdul Rahim Rather, the incumbent speaker. The first was brought by him as MLA of NC in eighties and second as Leader of Opposition during PDP- Congress rule.

Former Lok Sabha General Secretary and expert on legislative matters, P.D.T. Achary told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the normal attitude of the government is that they don't allow such bills to pass. "In a few cases, they had allowed it to be passed—long, long ago. That was in the 1950s and 1960s. The passage of a bill depends on the attitude of the government, as it | [More on P6](#)

J&K, Ladakh likely to see 3470 MWs peak power demand in Oct

MoP predicts 980 MWs power shortfall

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Oct 09: With the onset of cold weather, the Ministry of Power (MoP) has predicted a peak power requirement of 3470 Megawatts (MWs) for Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh for the ongoing month.

However, contrary to it the ministry has anticipated that there may be a peak power availability of only 2490 MWs for the month of October.

According to the official figures available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the MoP has predicted that Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh may have a shortfall of 980 MWs against the total peak requirement.

Stating the anticipated power supply position in the northern region for October 2025,



MoP has said that the representatives of Haryana, SLDC, Punjab SLDC and J&K SLDC informed that the shortfall in J&K would be met through Real time exchanges.

Earlier, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) has said that the Discom is trying hard to improve and supply uninterrupted | [More on P6](#)

Operation Warsun

Army, police recover huge cache of arms, ammunition

KNO Correspondent

Srinagar, Oct 09: A joint operation by the Indian Army and Jammu and Kashmir Police in North Kashmir's Kupwara District on Thursday led to the recovery of a huge cache of arms and ammunition.

Officials, as per the news

agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that the operation (OP WARSUN) was launched based on intelligence input in the general area of Brijthor forest in Warsun, Kupwara. "Security forces busted a hideout and recovered two AK series rifles, four rocket launchers,

World Sight Day: Prolonged screen time linked to blurred vision, say doctors

Recommend regular eye check-ups to combat rising vision issues

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Oct 09: As screen time continues to rise in today's digital era, medical experts warn that prolonged exposure to digital devices is emerging as a major cause of visual health issues, particularly among the elderly and children.

On the occasion of World Sight Day, ophthalmologists urged the public to take preventive steps to protect their vision — including reducing

screen time and scheduling regular eye examinations.

Doctors, who spoke to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that staring at screens for extended periods forces the eyes to focus closely and continuously, resulting in a condition known as digital eye strain or computer vision syndrome. Common symptoms include blurred vision, dry eyes, headaches, and pain in the neck and shoulders.

They further noted that children are particularly

vulnerable, as excessive screen time at a young age increases the risk of developing myopia (nearsightedness) early in life. The condition, if left unmonitored, can lead to long-term complications, they added.

Dr Tariq Dar, an ophthalmologist, highlighted the growing prevalence of age-related macular degeneration (AMD), which they said is a leading cause of vision loss among the elderly.

"The number of AMD cases has doubled over the past



decade," he said. "Regular eye check-ups every six months are essential for the elderly to ensure early detection and treatment of such conditions."

He recommended that children should undergo an eye check-up at least once a year, even if they don't display immediate symptoms.

Dr Nusrat, another ophthalmologist, said that a significant number of vision problems are preventable. "Refractive errors, cataracts, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy are among the most common causes of preventable blindness in India," she said.

Dr Nusrat advised maintaining a balanced diet rich in green leafy vegetables, fruits, and lean meats such as fish to promote better eye health. "It's important to get your eyes tested regularly," she said.

"Many eye conditions show no symptoms until the advanced stages, when significant damage has already occurred."

The doctor warned that individuals with diabetes, hypertension, and other systemic illnesses are at a higher risk of developing eye complications and should undergo more frequent evaluations.

Meanwhile, doctors highlighted recent technological advancements that have transformed eye care. "Gene therapy is now being | [More on P6](#)

Div Com chairs meeting of Rakhs & Farms Department



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 09: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg Thursday chaired a meeting of Rakhs & Farms Department to assess its functioning and other related issues.

The meeting was attended by Director Rakhs & Farms, Assistant Commissioner Central, General Manager Govt Press, Assistant Director Rakhs & Farms, OSD to Div Com, Deputy Director Archives, Archeology & Museums and officers from revenue

department.

Addressing the meeting, Div Com enjoined the officers of the department to compile the details of quantum of land under its possession, revenue records of Rakhs & Farms, rules and orders issued from time to time governing the department and the processes followed by the department for utilization and supervision of land besides legal orders, acquisition rules and encroachment issues.

He also directed constitution of the committee to address the issues confronted by the department.

PDP's theatrics over 'Land Grants Bill' desperate attempt to stay relevant: NC



KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Oct 09: National Conference (NC) Chief Spokesperson and MLA Zaidal Tanveer Sadiq Thursday reaffirmed the party's commitment to provide genuine relief to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

On the occasion, he announced that, as part of this effort, the National Conference has already introduced the "Land Grants (Restoration and Protection) Bill" in the Assembly, seeking to nullify the 2022 amendments and reinstate the 1960 Act to ensure extension of leases for local leaseholders.

According to Tanvir, the Bill is designed to safeguard the rights of existing leaseholders, protect local businesses, and ensure that government land continues to serve the people of Jammu and Kashmir rather than speculative or non-local interests. "Any change in land policy must

emanate from the elected Assembly not through unilateral administrative orders," he said.

Speaking to the media, Tanvir said, "Our intention is clear, it's to protect the rights of the poor, small traders, and local businessmen. I have already introduced a private member's bill in the Assembly to restore leases and safeguard people's land. The PDP's press conference on this issue is nothing but political drama."

He emphasized that no bill or resolution meant for the Assembly can be publicized before being tabled. "While we quietly worked for the people, PDP chose to create noise for attention. We act while they act out," he said.

Responding to statements made by PDP President Mehbooba Mufti and opposition leader Sunil Sharma, Sadiq said both the PDP and BJP appear to be following the same script. "Yesterday's press conferences by PDP and BJP show they receive dictation from the same place. Their language and tone are identical. They no longer sound like opposition parties, but like spokespersons of the LG administration."

Govt committed to strengthen educational ecosystem across J&K: Sakeena

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 09: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo Thursday inaugurated a two-day educational workshop organized at PM Shri High School Yaroo, D.H. Pora, under the aegis of PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) initiative.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Sakeena reaffirmed the Government's commitment to enhancing learning outcomes and strengthening the educational ecosystem across Jammu & Kashmir.

She appreciated the efforts of PARAKH and NCERT in building teacher capacity and promoting learner-centric education practices.

Highlighting initiatives like PARAKH, which prepare secondary school students for the World of Work (WoW), the Minister emphasized the importance of developing future-ready learners equipped with skills and competencies.

The Minister acknowledged the sincerity of teachers while urging further efforts to achieve better results. She added government is working with a strong focus on providing quality education and improved facilities across the Union Territory.

Director General School Education, Kashmir, Dr. G.N. Itoo, in his address highlighted the objectives



of PARAKH initiative and the significance of trade and vocational training in enhancing skill development.

During the event, the Minister also inspected various stalls showcasing innovative projects made by students

The workshop was aimed to create awareness among teachers, students and education stakeholders about competency-based learning, assessment reforms, and

innovative pedagogical approaches aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

The workshop saw participation from teachers, vocational trainers, students and education officers.

On the sidelines of the event, the Minister distributed regularisation orders to newly appointed CPWs, noting that more than 300 CPWs have been regularised under the current government.

Bye-Elections to 27-AC Budgam

DEO inspects proposed dispatch, collection centres

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 09: In view of the Upcoming bye-elections to 27-Budgam Assembly Constituency, the District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat Thursday conducted an extensive inspection of the proposed dispatch and collection centres established for the smooth and efficient conduct of the electoral process.

The DEO visited Boys Higher Secondary School Budgam and Sheikh-ul-Alam Degree College Budgam, the two institutions shortlisted for setting up distribution and collection centres for polling material and related arrangements. During the inspection, the DEO took a detailed review of logistics, infrastructure, security setup, space management, and other essential facilities required to ensure a seamless dispatch and collection process on the polling and counting days.

He also assessed the availability of basic amenities, vehicle parking, entry and exit routes, and communication arrangements at both the venues. The DEO emphasized that all necessary guidelines and instructions of the Election Commission of India (ECI) shall be implemented in letter and spirit to guarantee free, fair, and transparent elections.

He directed the concerned officers to

ensure that all arrangements are finalized well before the polling date and that proper coordination is maintained among all line departments.

The DEO underscored the importance of meticulous planning, timely preparedness, and close monitoring of every election-related activity, including training of polling staff, material management, and security deployment.

The DEO also reviewed the functioning



of the Returning Officer (RO) Headquarters established for 27-Budgam Assembly Constituency and instructed the officials to maintain readiness for the upcoming electoral exercise.

Among others, the DEO was accompanied by the Returning Officer 27-AC Budgam, Chief Planning Officer Budgam, Dy. election officer Budgam, Assistant Returning Officer, and other concerned officers and officials of the election machinery.

DLSA Budgam organizes awareness programme

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 09: The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Budgam, organized an Awareness Programme on the NALSA (Child Friendly Legal Services for Children) Scheme, 2024 in collaboration with Boys Higher Secondary School, Budgam (LLC).

The primary objective of the NALSA (Child Friendly Legal Services for Children) Scheme, 2024 is to ensure accessible, effective, timely, and child-sensitive legal aid to children in need, safeguarding their best interests in all legal, civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings. The scheme also aims to educate communities about the legal protections available to children and to promote a supportive and child-friendly environment throughout legal processes.

The DLSA, Budgam, deputed Chief LADC, Lateef Ahmad Khan and Assistant LADC as resource persons for the event. They delivered insightful presentations on the scheme and raised awareness among participants regarding its objectives and implementation.

In his address, Chief LADC emphasized that the NALSA provides accessible, effective, and child-sensitive legal aid to all children in need, including

those with disabilities. He highlighted that this comprehensive scheme consolidates earlier NALSA initiatives on child rights and protection, ensuring that children have access to competent legal practitioners and are empowered to understand their rights, entitlements, and court procedures. He also stressed the importance of community outreach to identify vulnerable children and the need for timely legal support for those requiring protection or assistance.

Assistant Legal Aid Defence Counsel also addressed the gathering and elaborated that the NALSA (Child Friendly Legal Services for Children) Scheme, 2024 provides children with free, age-appropriate legal services, representation, and a sensitive environment during legal proceedings, ensuring their protection from abuse and exploitation. She further explained that Legal Services Units for Children (LSUCs) play a pivotal role in implementing the scheme by establishing legal aid clinics, training lawyers and para-legal volunteers, conducting awareness programmes, and working closely with child care institutions and police authorities to ensure the adoption of child-friendly procedures and the creation of a safe, child-centric justice system.

FSD seizes 5 quintals of Namkeen snacks, seals unit

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 09: Continuing its intensified drive against the sale of unsafe and substandard food items, a team of Food Safety Officers, led by the Assistant Commissioner Food Safety Srinagar, conducted an inspection of a snack manufacturing unit operating from Abhanshah, HMT Srinagar.

During the inspection, the unit was found operating without a valid licence and under unsanitary conditions. Around five quintals of Namkeen snacks, including katlam and finni, were seized on the spot. Samples of the seized items were lifted for detailed

analytical testing. Subsequently, the unit was sealed immediately and prohibited from carrying out further manufacturing activities. A complaint under the relevant provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and Rules & Regulations, 2011 will be submitted before the competent court in due course of time. Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration, Smitha Sethi, has directed all food business operators to strictly comply with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act and maintain proper hygiene and licensing requirements. She warned that stringent action will be taken against violators as per the law.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL GOVT. BOYS HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL KUPWARA TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders affixed with revenue stamp of Rs: 51= are invited from the reputed publishers/ Suppliers accompanied by a CDR of Rs: 5000/-= for the Yearly magazine of the school. The detailed specification can be had from the office of the undersigned during working hours. The tenders should reach to the office of the u/sd within a weeks' time from the date of its publication in the local newspapers.

The Undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason thereof.

**Sd/-
Principal
Bhss Kupwara**

**No:- Bhssk/2025/148
Dtc-29/09/2025.**

**DIPK-6991/25
DATED: 09-10-2025**

SAD DEMISE



With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the demise of **Haji Master Ghulam Rasool Wani S/o Haji Ghulam Ahmad Wani R/o Gowherpora, Chadoora, Budgam** who passed away on **7TH October, 2025 Tuesday, May Almighty Allah grant Jannat-Ul-Firdous** to the departed soul.

BEREAVED FAMILY

Manzoor Ahmad Wani (Son)

Contact no: 7006423928

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, **Syed Firdoos Ahmad Gillani S/O Syed Mohd Fazil Gillani R/O Malikpora Verinag Anantnag, Jammu and Kashmir** am applying for the correction in my **Date of Birth** shown on my Aadhaar card. Instead of **06-02-1988**, the actual DOB is **06-02-1966** as per the educational documents. Anyone having an objection shall report to the office of **Municipal Committee Dooru-Verinag** within seven-days of the date of publication of this notice.

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GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES OFFICE OF THE CHIEF PROJECT OFFICER TROUT FISH FARMING PROJECT KOKERNAG.

E-mail: cpo-kokernag@jk.gov.in

AUCTION NOTICE

It is for the information of general public that auction of 100 No's of already identified and marked for disposal, non-fruit bearing (standing) trees, (Poplar 74, Willow 26) existing at Trout Fish Farming Project Kokernag, is being conducted in the premises of Trout Fish Farming Project Kokernag on **16-10-2025 at 12:00 PM** on the below mentioned terms and conditions:-

- Terms and Conditions:-**
- The interested bidders can visit for on spot verification on any working day before the day of Auction.
 - The interested bidders shall have to deposit refundable earnest money amounting to Rs 1000001= (Rupees one lac only) in the form of Call deposit receipt (CDR) pledged to the Chief Project Officer TFFP Kokernag for participation in the Auction. The CDR should reach to this office by or before 15-10-2025 upto 4PM.
 - No CDR will be accepted on the day of Auction.
 - The Auction committee reserves the right to accept or reject any bid without assigning any reasons.
 - The successful bidder has to deposit the whole bid amount on the date of auction.
 - The basic bid amount is Rs 11.83 lacs (Rupees Eleven lac Eighty Three Thousand only).
 - The successful bidder must ensure that no damage is caused to the surrounding property infrastructure, or other trees during the removal process. Any damage caused will be rectified at the bidders expense.
 - The department will not be responsible for any accident, injuries or damages that occur during the removal operations.
 - The successful bidder shall be responsible for complete removal of the Auctioned trees within 20 days from the date of Auction.

**Sajad Hussain Dar
Chief Project Officer
Trout Fish Farming Project, Kokernag**

**CP0/K0K/2025-26/984-90
Dated: 08-10-2025**

**DIPK-6977/25
DATED: 09-10-2025**

Govt orders transfer, posting of 108 officers

Zahoor Ahmad Raina is Joint Director Information, Naseer Ahmad Wani posted as DSEK

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 09: Government of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday ordered the transfer and posting orders for 108 administrative officers across various departments and positions.

According to an order, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, awaiting adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as Vice-Chairman, Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA), and will also hold the charge of Chief Executive Officer, WUCMA. Aijaz Abdullah Saraf, CEO/Secretary of the J&K Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board, has been transferred and posted as Member, J&K Special Tribunal.

Munir-ul-Islam, Secretary in the Information Department, will additionally hold the charge of CEO/Secretary of the Workers Welfare Board. Mathora Masoom, Managing Director of J&K Financial Corporation, has been posted as Director, Floriculture, Kashmir. Rajesh Kumar Shavan, awaiting adjustment, has been posted as Special Secretary, Tribal Affairs Department. Musheer Ahmed, Mission Director, ICDS, J&K, has been posted as Special Secretary, Transport Department. Rakesh Kumar Srangal, Managing Director, J&K Road Transport Corporation, has been posted as Special Secretary, Finance Department, while Abdul Rashid War, awaiting adjustment, will take over as Managing Director, J&K Road Transport Corporation.

Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar, Vice-Chairman, LCMA, and holding additional charge of CEO, WUCMA, has been posted as Director, Hospitality and Protocol. Ravi Shankar Sharma, Special Secretary in the Agriculture Production Department, has been transferred to the Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction as Special Secretary. Manisha Sarin, Director, Urban Local Bodies, Jammu, has been posted as Special Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj. Purnima Mittal, Special Secretary in the Cooperatives Department, has been posted as Managing Director, J&K Women's Development Corporation.

Haris Ahmad Handoo, Special Secretary in the Chief Minister's Secretariat, will hold additional charge as Director SKICC and Secretary, Royal Springs Golf Course. Ashwani Khajuria, Director, Hospitality & Protocol, has been transferred and will await further orders in the General Administration Department. Kapil Sharma, Managing Director, J&K Medical Supplies Corporation, has been posted as Director, Urban Local Bodies, Jammu. Tariq Hussain Ganai, Director General, Estates, Kashmir, with additional charge of Estates Jammu, will also hold the charge of Managing Director, Medical Supplies Corporation. Rakesh Kumar, Registrar, J&K Special Tribunal, has been posted as



Regional Director, Survey and Land Records (Ex-Officio Settlement Officer), Rajouri. Rajinder Singh, Additional District Development Commissioner, Udhampur, is now Special Secretary to the Agriculture Production Department. Ulfat Jabeen, Managing Director, J&K Women's Development Corporation, is posted as Special Secretary to the Government.

Anju Gupta, Special Secretary in the Housing and Urban Development Department, has been posted as Additional Transport Commissioner. Naseer Ahmad Wani, Special Secretary, Public Works Department, will become Director, School Education Kashmir, after the retirement of Ghulam Nabi Itoo on October 31, 2025. Malikzada Sheraz ul Haq, Special Secretary, Culture Department, is now Additional District Development Commissioner, Rajouri.

Ghulam Rasool, awaiting orders in the General Administration Department, is posted as Special Secretary, Revenue Department. Ranjeet Singh, Managing Director, SC, ST and OBC Development Corporation, is posted as Director, Social Welfare, Jammu, while retaining his previous charge. Jugul Kishore, Secretary, Socially and Educationally Backward Classes Commission, is posted as Additional District Development Commissioner, Udhampur.

Arun Kishore Kotwal, Additional Transport Commissioner, is posted as Special Secretary, Finance Department. Basharat Hussain, Additional Secretary, Tourism Department, is now CEO/Secretary, J&K Khadi & Village Industries Board. Devinder Singh Katoch, CEO, Surinsar-Mansar Tourism Development Authority, is posted as Administrator, Government Medical College, Udhampur.

Vinod Kumar Behnal, Joint Director, ICDS, Social Welfare Department, is posted as Additional District Development Commissioner, Kishtwar, relieving Pawan Kumar of additional charge. Parvez Sajad Ganai, Joint Director, Handicrafts Kashmir, is now Special Secretary, Culture Department. Ishfaq Ahmad, Executive Director, J&K Rehabilitation Council, has been posted as Managing Director, J&K Projects Construction Corporation Ltd. Jahangir Hashmi, Programme

Officer, ICDS Project Ramban, has been posted as Registrar, District Kulgam.

Tazayun Mukhtar, IKAS, Deputy Excise Commissioner (Executive), Kashmir, is transferred and posted as Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Agency, Kashmir. She shall also hold the charge of Mission Director, DJAY, in addition to her own duties, till further orders. Jagdish Chander, JKAS, Chief Executive Officer/Secretary, J&K Khadi & Village Industries Board, under orders of transfer as Additional Secretary to the Government, Housing and Urban Development Department, is posted as Joint Director, Education, Udhampur/Reasi.

Veveik Puri, JKAS, Joint Director, Information (Hqr) in the Directorate of Information, J&K, is transferred and posted as Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Development Authority, Surinsar-Mansar. Tabassum Shafat Kamili, IKAS, Deputy Commissioner, State Taxes (Appeals), Srinagar, is transferred and posted as Deputy Excise Commissioner (Executive), Kashmir. Mohammad Syed Khan, JKAS, Additional Secretary to the Government, Public Works (R&B) Department, is transferred and posted as Programme Officer, ICDS Project, Kathua, against an available vacancy.

Ghulam Nabi That, JKAS, Additional Secretary to the Government, Revenue Department, is transferred and posted as Additional Secretary to the Government, Agriculture Production Department. Zahoot Ahmad Raina, IKAS, Programme Officer, ICDS Project, Anantnag, is transferred and posted as Joint Director, Information (Hqr) in the Directorate of Information, J&K. Navdeep Wazir, IKAS, Deputy Commissioner, State Taxes, Judicial, is transferred and posted as General Manager, DIC, Reasi, against an available vacancy. Dhirender Sharma, JKAS, Joint Director, Education, Udhampur/Reasi, is transferred and posted as Additional Secretary to the Government, Housing and Urban Development Department. Jatinder Mishra, IKAS, Deputy Director in the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports, J&K, is transferred and posted as Sub-Registrar Akhnor.

Joginder Singh Jasrotia, JKAS, Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Development Authority, Baderwah, is transferred and posted as

Deputy Commissioner, State Taxes (Enforcement), Kathua, against an available vacancy. Supriya Kohli, JKAS, Deputy Director, Information (KBI), New Delhi, is transferred and posted as Additional Secretary in the Resident Commission, J&K Government, New Delhi. Naem ul Nisa, JKAS, Project Officer, IWMP, Poonch, is transferred and posted as General Manager, DIC, Poonch. Rakesh Kumar-II, IKAS, Deputy District Election Officer, Reasi, is transferred and posted as Secretary, J&K Socially & Educationally Backward Classes Commission.

Suhail-ul-Islam, IKAS, Secretary, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, is posted as Joint Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation. One post from the overall cadre strength of Selection Grade of Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Department is transferred to Srinagar Municipal Corporation for drawal of salary of the officer. Sartaj Hussain, JKAS, Joint Director (Administration) in the Directorate of Rural Development, Kashmir, holding additional charge of Deputy Director, Estates, Kashmir, is transferred and posted as Officer on Special Duty with the Hon'ble Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science & Technology, Information Technology, Youth Services and Sports, and ARI & Tanveer ul Majid Wani, JKAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, is posted as Additional Secretary to the Government, Public Works (R&B) Department.

Mohd. Ashfaq, JKAS, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Ramban, is transferred and posted as Joint Director, Education, Doda, against an available vacancy. Vikas Dhar Bagati, JKAS, Registrar, District Kathua, is transferred and posted as Additional Secretary to the Government, Tourism Department. Zahida, JKAS, Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Agency, Kashmir, is transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, State Taxes (Appeals-I), Srinagar. Shavi, JKAS, Deputy Director, Handloom, Jammu, is transferred and posted as Joint Director, ICDS, Social Welfare Department. Deebah Khalid Peer, JKAS, Assistant Commissioner, Panchayat, Srinagar, is transferred and posted as Joint Director, Handicrafts, Kashmir.

Sanna Khan, JKAS, Deputy Director (Administration) in the Directorate of Social Welfare, Jammu, is transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, State Taxes, Judicial. Ahsan-ul-Haq Chisti, JKAS, Deputy Director, Information (PR), Srinagar, is transferred and posted as Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Development Authority, Wullar-Manasbal. Sheeba Inayat, JKAS, Deputy Director, District Employment & Counselling Centre, Srinagar, is transferred and posted as Development Officer, Handicrafts (Textiles), Kashmir, against an available vacancy. Abid Iqbal Malik, JKAS, Deputy Director, Tourism, Kashmir, is transferred and posted as Project Officer, Wage Employment (ACD), Pulwama.

Peerzada Farhat Ahmed, JKAS, Project Officer, Wage Employment (ACD), Pulwama, is transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner (General), Srinagar, against an available vacancy. Muzaffar Ahmad Sheikh, JKAS, Project Officer, Wage Employment (ACD), Kupwara, is transferred and posted as Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Shopian. He shall also hold the charge of Project Officer, Wage Employment (ACD), Shopian, in addition to his own duties, till further orders. Tariq Ahmad Reshi, JKAS, District Mineral Officer, Anantnag, is transferred and posted as Project Officer, Wage Employment (ACD), Srinagar, against an available vacancy.

Suheel Ahmad Lone is posted as Deputy Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, while Mohd. Rafiq is posted as Sub-Registrar, Thanamandi. Rafiq Ahmad is transferred as Project Officer, Wage Employment, Samba. Sheraz Ahmad moves to Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Ramban with additional charge. Showkat Ahmad Bhat is posted as Sub-Registrar, Pahalgam with additional charge of Anantnag. Mohd. Hanief is posted as Deputy District Election Officer, Poonch. Shubi Tabassum becomes Deputy Director, District Employment Centre, Srinagar. Abdul Jabbar is transferred to Associated Hospitals, Jammu. Mushtaq Ahmad Yaqdoomi moves to Directorate of Social Welfare, Kashmir. Asif Amin Chandel is posted in Science & Technology Department, while Harvinder Singh is shifted to Handicrafts, Jammu. Babu Pardeep Kumar is posted as Deputy District Election Officer, Udhampur.

Arshad Qadir Bhat, Tej Krishan Koul, Ajit Kumar, Allaz Ali Lone, Neeraj Sharma, Sakhi Mohd. Khan, Mohammad Altaf Rather, and Sunil Dutt are posted in various Panchayat, Tax, and Tribal Affairs roles.

Angel Kotwal is transferred to Youth Services and Sports; Pankaj Sasan to Tourism; Shruti Bhardwai to Information, New Delhi. Several private secretaries, including Ghulam Rasool Mir, Ghulam Mohd. Khan, Babeeta Kumari, Mohd. Rafiq Zuilah, Sajid Rashid Bhat, and Arshada Akhter are moved to Panchayat and developmental roles. Raman Kumar and Braham Rai are posted in Social Welfare and Hospitality & Protocol. Muneer Ahmad Khan becomes Secretary, LCMA. Amit Singh Manhas and Sana Khan are posted with Deputy CM and SSB respectively. Mohsin Mushtaq is posted as Haj Officer.

Amil Khateeb and Sahil Bhagotra's services are placed at the disposal of Employment and Social Welfare Departments.

Other officers including Mohd. Arshad, Alka Misra, Shivani Deonia, Muzammil Hassan Choudhary, Faisal Nazir, Farhat Naz Choudhary, Mohammad Arif Sheikh, Manish Sudan, Mohammad Shafi Lone, Ghulam Rasool Mir, Saroj Khah, and Rajinder Kumar are transferred to various administrative, estates, tribal, aviation, and information roles—(KNO)

Boost milk, mutton production in J&K: CS



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 9: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Thursday chaired a high-level meeting of the Agriculture Production Department (APD) to review the measures being taken to enhance milk and mutton production across the Union Territory. He emphasized that both sectors hold immense potential for growth, value addition, and entrepreneurship if approached with the right policy interventions and sustained departmental support. The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department, Shailendra Kumar; Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-Jammu; Managing Director, HADP; Managing Director, Dairy Development; Directors of Agriculture and Sheep Husbandry from both Jammu and Kashmir divisions; and other senior officers of the department.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary underscored the need to create replicable success stories in these sectors to inspire public participation and entrepreneurship.

He observed that the region, being primarily a consumer state, offers a significant market for milk, mutton, and their processed products. Even in

catering to local demand there exists vast potential in exploring commercial expansion and export of its value-added products.

He maintained that the UT must move beyond basic packaging and branding. The focus should be on scientific processing and value addition that can yield high-demand products and sustainable livelihoods. He urged local entrepreneurs to unlock the potential of the region's dairy and livestock sectors for finding the gainful employment.

While speaking in this meeting the ACS, APD, Shailendra Kumar, gave a comprehensive overview of the present status and consumption patterns of milk and mutton in J&K. He noted that dairy products form part of the daily diet across the UT, while mutton consumption is among the highest in the country, creating steady market demand.

The department, he said, has assessed the existing gaps and devised a roadmap to enhance both production and value addition over the next few years. As per the presentation given by the department, J&K produces 28.75 lakh metric tonnes of milk annually, with a per capita availability of 577 grams per day, which is higher than the national average of 471 grams. However, only about 4% of milk production is currently organized, accounting for just 4% of the local production. The department aims to bring at least 20% of production under the organized sector within the next 5-7 years, the meeting was apprised.

To achieve this target, the department plans to expand Artificial Insemination (AI) coverage, secure High Genetic Merit (HGM) bulls, establish facilities for sexed semen, and address fodder deficit issues through scientific feeding practices.

Dy CM calls LoP Sharma a 'lollipop leader'



KNO

Srinagar, Oct: A day after Leader of Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma slammed National Conference over governance and human rights, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary on Thursday called him a "lollipop leader."

Speaking to reporters, Choudhary described him as a lollipop leader. "If you conduct his narco test, he would even demand statehood," he said.

He said the flood-affected people of Jammu have been left in lurch by BJP. "You ask the LoP leader, you should ask the lollipop leader—he talks every day and blames us. Jammu province was devastated by floods. The same Jammu province that gave you 28 seats. Houses were destroyed, crops ruined, roads washed away, and people lost their savings and jewellery for weddings. Have you (BJP) paid them compensation? They don't dare to venture among the people and only speak to media," he said.

He further said that the Leader of Opposition (LoP) should ensure the Transaction of Business Rules file is cleared by the Lieutenant Governor. "The business file was cleared by the cabinet long ago. You should get it approved," he added.

He said that Mehbooba Mufti is speaking BJP's language and was responsible for destroying the special status of J&K.

"You should listen to Mehbooba Mufti's speech yesterday's speech—she was speaking the language of the LoP. The BJP-PDP alliance is still intact," he said, adding that the people of Jammu and Kashmir would never forgive Mehbooba Mufti for destroying the region's special status—(KNO)

CM signature pledge 'Big promises, no delivery': Imran Ansari

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 09: Ahead of the Supreme Court's hearing regarding the restoration of Jammu & Kashmir's statehood, senior Peoples Conference leader Imran Reza Ansari on Thursday slammed Chief Minister Abdullah over his 'failure' to deliver on the promise of a signature campaign made during his Independence Day speech.

In a social media post, Ansari recalled the Chief Minister's Independence Day speech, where he had pledged to collect lakhs of signatures within eight weeks in support of restoring statehood and submit them to the Supreme Court before the October 10 hearing. "Big talk,



big promises—typical JKNC style," Ansari said in a Facebook post.

"Now here we are, on the eve of October 10. The case is on the Supreme Court's list for tomorrow. But where's that famous signature campaign that was supposed to shake Delhi? Did the lakhs of signatures get lost somewhere between Gupkar and Twitter?"

Ansari questioned whether the Chief Minister, who is currently in Delhi, had gone to submit the collected signatures or merely to gather more photos for his social media accounts.

"So naturally, one wonders—has he gone to submit those 'lakhs of signatures' his government collected, or just to collect a few more photos for his next social media post?"

He further added, "Promises were made to the people, press releases were issued to the media, but in the end, it seems only the signatures of silence made it to Delhi."

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear the petitions seeking restoration of statehood on October 10—(KNO)

Monitoring committee formed for health schemes

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 09: The Jammu and Kashmir government has set up a monitoring committee to oversee the implementation of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PMJAY) and AB PMJAY SEHA health insurance schemes.

According to a Government Order under No. 661-JK(HME) of 2025, issued by the Health and Medical Education Department, the committee aims to improve transparency, accountability and regular monitoring of the schemes.

The order has been issued by the Secretary to the Government, Health and Medical Education Department.

The committee will be headed by the Director

of Health Services, Jammu, and will include the Director of Health Services, Kashmir, Chief Medical Officers from various districts, and officials from the State Health Agency.

Its main task will be to review the functioning of the two health schemes, ensure proper delivery of healthcare to beneficiaries, and submit regular progress reports to the government.

Officials said the move shows the administration's commitment to strengthen the public health system and ensure effective health coverage to people across Jammu and Kashmir.

The committee has been asked to send quarterly reports and recommendations to the Health Department for necessary action.

Health sector stakeholders have welcomed the decision, saying it will help identify gaps, improve

EDITORIAL

Friday Brief: Embrace Contentment Through Gratitude

In our daily lives, it's easy to focus on what we don't have. We chase after more money, a better job, or a bigger house, thinking this will make us happy. But this chase often leaves us feeling empty. Islam offers a beautiful solution to this feeling: the practice of thankfulness. In the Quran, God makes a powerful promise: "If you are grateful, I will certainly give you more" (Quran 14:7). This means that being thankful isn't just good manners; it's like a key that

unlocks more blessings. When we appreciate what we have, no matter how small, we open the door for more good to come our way. The Quran constantly reminds us to be thankful for the simple things we often take for granted—our sight, our hearing, and our ability to think. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the perfect example of a thankful person. He spent so much time in prayer that his feet would swell. When asked why he did this, he simply

said, "Should I not be a thankful servant?" For him, thankfulness was shown through action. It was about using his life in God's service. His teachings give us simple, practical advice. He taught us to say "Alhamdulillah" (All praise is for God) throughout the day. He also gave us a powerful tip for feeling happier: instead of looking at people who have more than us, we should look at those who have less. This one habit alone can wipe away feelings of jealousy and make

us see our own lives as full of blessings. So, Islamic thankfulness is a three-step practice: feeling it in your heart, saying it with your tongue, and showing it through your actions by using your blessings in good ways. It is the real secret to a contented heart. In a world that always tells us we need more, gratitude helps us see and appreciate the amazing gifts we already have. It is a direct path to peace and a closer connection to God.

The Gift Of Sight:

More Than Meets The Eye

A reflection on how genuine vision encompasses understanding, empathy,

and the collective responsibility to ensure no one is left in darkness

Same-ul-Haq Wani

Sight is often mistaken for the mere ability to see — a function of eyes translating light into form. But true sight is far more intimate; it is the quiet language of perception, the tender dialogue between the visible and the felt. It begins where vision ends — in the spaces where the world is not only observed but understood, where beauty is not simply witnessed but absorbed by the soul.

Sight is the mind's poetry written in light — a symphony that allows one to recognise love in a glance, grief in silence, and hope in a horizon yet unseen. It is the gentle awareness that gives colour to emotion and direction to thought. It is what makes a mother identify her child in a crowd not by sight alone, but by instinct, and what makes a poet see verses in the rain long before words find the page.

To see is not merely to look — it is to connect, to interpret, to feel the pulse of existence in its smallest gestures. Even when eyes fail, sight often lingers — in memory, in imagination, in the heart's own way of perceiving what lies beyond light. It is what transforms darkness from emptiness into depth, what turns absence into presence, and silence into a form of seeing.

Sight, then, is not confined to the act of vision; it is an inward awakening — a harmony between sense and spirit. It is how the world touches us and how we, in turn, touch the world. To truly see is to live consciously, to recognise the sacred in the ordinary, and to find clarity not only in the eyes but in understanding itself.

In a land like Kashmir, where every dawn paints poetry across the mountains and every reflection on Dal Lake whispers a story, the essence of sight holds a sacred place. Here, to see is to belong — to the sky, to the river, to one another. Yet, amid this natural splendour, countless hearts live in partial or complete darkness, reminding us that the gift of sight must never be taken for granted.

Sight, as profound and personal as it is, thrives only when it is cherished. This year's global theme — "Love Your Eyes" — is more than a slogan; it is a philosophy of gratitude and responsibility. It reminds humanity that caring for our eyes is not merely a medical routine but an emotional and moral act — a recognition of the very gift that connects us to the beauty of life itself. To love your eyes is to pause amid the rush of modern existence and acknowledge how every sunrise we witness, every face we recognise, and every written word we read becomes possible through this unique miracle of vision.

Loving one's eyes means nurturing them with care, protecting them from strain, giving them rest in a sleepless digital world, and seeking timely attention when something feels amiss. It also means creating a society where everyone — regardless of geography, age, or income — has the right to see clearly and live fully. In the context of Kashmir, where the landscape itself teaches the language of light, this theme finds even deeper resonance. To love one's eyes here is to love the colours of the Valley, to protect the sight that beholds its splendour, and to ensure that no child, elder, or worker loses that privilege to neglect or lack of awareness.

When the world unites under the banner of "Love Your Eyes," it is, in truth, a collective pledge — a vow that we will not take for granted the light that defines our humanity. For in loving our eyes, we are, in essence, loving our ability to dream, to feel, and to see not just the world before us, but the infinite beauty that lies within.

Yet even within these challenges, a



powerful narrative of resilience is being written. A growing trend of achievers is emerging from the Valley, redefining the limits of possibility. We see this in the academic dedication of scholars like Raziya Samoon, Tariq Bashir, and Ruhi Jaan, who, as Assistant Professors, are illuminating minds and proving that insight transcends sight. It is echoed in the legal acumen of Saniya Zehra, a master of law from the prestigious National Law University, Patiala, who is championing the right to education and justice through her advocacy. Meanwhile, technocrats and social workers like Abrar Ahmed are at the forefront of a digital revolution, championing accessibility and digital literacy to bridge the technological divide.

A particularly hopeful signal of this revolution is the pioneering initiative this year, where a couple of students from Kashmir are set to become the first to write their computer-based 12th Class CBSE examinations — a transformative step that promises to revolutionise digitally accessible education for the visually impaired.

This wave of achievement extends beyond these notable names, finding its pulse in a younger generation now receiving degrees in diverse fields like Business Administration, Computer Science, and the Arts. This collective ascent is not a series of isolated successes but a quiet revolution — a definitive statement on the indomitable potential residing within the region's visually impaired community.

Yet, for every achiever, the path is often needlessly steep. A significant hurdle for school-going children with visual impairment is the stark lack of accessible learning materials. The scarcity of audiobooks and the absence of standardised large-print font books in schools create an information famine, leaving young minds hungry for knowledge that their peers access effortlessly. This gap in educational equity dims potential at its very dawn.

Together, these individuals form the

unseen light of Kashmir — the proof that blindness does not reside in the eyes but in the absence of will. Their stories are not just of survival but of triumph; not of darkness, but of the art of finding light where others see none. In their lives, the message of World Sight Day — "Love Your Eyes" — finds its truest meaning: a reminder that vision begins in the heart long before it reaches the eyes.

It is important to recognise that the struggle of vision loss is not solitary. It extends across families, towns, and districts — across Kashmir. In recent hospital-based studies in Srinagar, nearly 58.36% of patients presented with some form of visual impairment, while 12% were observed to be blind. Yet another district of Kashmir, among people aged 50 and above, the prevalence of bilateral cataract-induced blindness has been found to be around 4.16%.

These numbers are not mere data points — they represent the silent lives of neighbours, elders, and children whose world dims gradually when help is delayed or unreachable.

Many of the causes of visual impairment in Kashmir are common, yet preventable or treatable. Cataracts remain the leading cause of ocular morbidity (about 30%) among patients coming to tertiary eye care centres in the region. Uncorrected refractive errors (problems like nearsightedness, farsightedness, or astigmatism) follow close behind. Conditions like diabetic retinopathy, which can rob people of vision over time if blood sugar is not controlled or screenings are neglected, are emerging as serious threats. Glaucoma, often called the "silent thief of sight," lurks undetected in many until damage is advanced.

Yet these conditions do not act alone. Barriers — both tangible and invisible — stand in the way of treatment: the cost of surgery or frequent clinic visits, distance to specialised centres, lack of awareness that some vision loss can be prevented

or reversed, and delays until the condition becomes severe. The combination of these makes the difference between seeing tomorrow's sunrise and missing it altogether.

The journey toward a world where sight is cherished and accessible demands more than awareness — it calls for deliberate action, rooted in empathy and responsibility. The challenges of visual impairment are not abstract; they are lived realities in every street, school, office, and home. Addressing them requires the concerted effort of authorities, society, and individuals alike.

To Authorities: Governance is the scaffolding upon which inclusion stands. Public infrastructure must be redesigned with accessibility at its core — tactile paving, audible traffic signals, and barrier-free buildings are not luxuries but essential rights. Digital services, from government websites to mobile applications, must be inclusive, compatible with screen readers, and resilient against disruptions that too often leave people cut off from critical information. Policies should enforce accountability, ensuring that accessibility is embedded into the very blueprint of public life.

To Society: Inclusion is a collective responsibility. Schools must welcome visually impaired students as equal participants in learning, while workplaces should provide opportunities that recognise skill over sight. Communities can dismantle barriers by learning basic interaction etiquette, fostering awareness, and celebrating ability rather than pity. Every act of understanding and accommodation transforms isolation into belonging, silence into voice, and limitation into possibility.

To Every Individual: Empathy is the light that bridges perception and action. Advocacy is not passive; it is the insistence that the world be navigable, welcoming, and equitable for all. Loving and protecting one's own eyes, as World Sight

Day urges, extends naturally to creating a society where no one is left in darkness. Every step taken to support accessibility, every effort to amplify the voices of the visually impaired, and every conscious act to remove obstacles is a testament to the truth that sight is not merely personal — it is a shared responsibility.

Kashmir, a land of breathtaking light and shadow, has the potential to shine not only through its mountains and lakes but through the dignity, inclusivity, and opportunity it offers its people. The path forward is clear: deliberate action, heartfelt empathy, and unyielding commitment. In this collective vision, sight is no longer a privilege but a right — a light that illuminates not only the world outside but the humanity within.

Amid the mountains, rivers, and valleys that have inspired generations, the true beauty of Kashmir lies not only in its landscapes but in the light of its people. The journey of the visually impaired reminds us that vision is more than the ability to see; it is the courage to perceive, the resilience to navigate, and the hope to thrive despite barriers. Their struggles, far from being isolated, mirror a collective responsibility — to create a Valley where every citizen can experience life in its full depth and colour.

A Kashmir that embraces accessibility is a Kashmir that celebrates dignity, equity, and inclusion. It is a land where children can explore their surroundings safely, where students can learn without limitation, and where workplaces, streets, and public spaces welcome all, regardless of physical ability. When accessibility becomes the standard, empathy the instinct, and action the habit, the Valley itself transforms into a place where everyone can witness its poetry, its light, and its splendour.

The stories of role models like Raziya Samoon, Tariq Bashir, Saniya Zehra, and Abrar Bhat illuminate the path forward — showing that determination, knowledge, and compassion can overcome even the harshest obstacles. Their lives are a living testament to the fact that when society invests in inclusion, it invests in hope, progress, and shared humanity.

Let this vision guide us. Let it inspire authorities to enforce accessibility, communities to embrace inclusivity, and every individual to champion empathy over pity. In striving for a Kashmir that is fully accessible, we do not merely restore sight — we illuminate lives, amplify potential, and honour the shared love we hold for this Valley.

And so, let us pledge on this World Sight Day to weave a Kashmir not just of breathtaking sights but of boundless insight — where every child, regardless of the light their eyes can hold, can trace the contours of a story, and every soul can read the poetry of their own potential.

Let the rustle of the Chinar leaves be a Braille of ancient wisdom, and the murmur of the Jhelum an audiobook of timeless grace. For in the end, the most profound vision is the one we build together — a symphony of hope where every heart becomes a window, and every life, a testament to the light that never truly fades.

About the Author

Same-ul-Haq Wani, a visually impaired teacher from Drugmulla, Kupwara, has been serving in the J&K School Education Department for over 20 years. His writings reflect his deep insight into inclusion, empathy, and the power of vision beyond sight.

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

Sakeena stresses on mental well-being of healthcare professionals

Inaugurates two days Annual Sports Meet of GMC Srinagar

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 09: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo inaugurated two days Annual Sports Meet-2025 of Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar at Boys Hostel Bemina here on Thursday.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Minister underscored the crucial link between the physical and mental well-being of healthcare professionals and its impact on overall quality of healthcare delivery.

“Our doctors and medical students are the backbone of the healthcare system. Their physical fitness and emotional balance directly influence the care they provide. Initiatives like these help rejuvenate their spirits and foster teamwork and positivity”, Minister Sakeena stated.

Commending GMC Srinagar for organizing the event, the Minister highlighted that sports and recreational activities are essential components of stress management, especially for those in demanding medical professions.

She underlined that sports plays a vital role in decreasing the mental stress that medical students face while adhering to their rigorous academic



schedule.

The Minister also asked the GMC Srinagar administration to upgrade facilities at this playground of Boys Hostel so that maximum students are attracted towards extracurricular activities.

Principal GMC Srinagar, Dr. Iffat Hassan expressed gratitude to the Minister for constant support. She said that sports improve confidence, balance, focus and appreciated the efforts of the organizing committee.

Earlier, the Minister interacted with participants, faculty and medical students.

Chairman Sports Committee, GMC Srinagar, Dr. Salim Iqbal, played a key role in planning and organizing the event.

Pertinently, during the two

days Annual Sports Meet sporting events like cricket, volleyball, football, badminton, table tennis, carrom, tug of war, and musical chair are being held, besides track and field events like 100m, 200m, 400m, relay, shot put, javelin throw, and discus throw will also form the part of sports meet. Fun games like matka race, sack race, and spoon and egg race also added energy to the program to celebrate camaraderie and holistic well-being among medical professionals and students.

Principal GMC Srinagar, Dr. Iffat Hassan Shah; Administrator GMC Srinagar, Mohammad Ashraf Hakak; Heads of Departments, Medical Superintendents, faculty members, students and staff were also present on the occasion.

Ministers Rana, Dar review key issues in Assembly Constituencies

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 09: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana and Minister for Agriculture Production and Rural Development Javid Ahmad Dar Thursday comprehensively reviewed and addressed developmental challenges and public welfare concerns in the constituencies of Baramulla, Sopore and Rafiabad.

The meeting witnessed participation from key stakeholders including MLA Sopore Irshad Rasool Kar and MLA Baramulla Javed Hassan Baig. District Development Commissioner, Baramulla, Chief Engineers of Jal Shakti and Irrigation & Flood Control, Kashmir, along with their respective Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineers, and Assistant Executive Engineers, Conservator of Forests, North Circle Sopore, and other divisional and district-level officers were also present on the occasion.

During the meeting, Minister Javed Rana laid out a roadmap for accelerated and inclusive development in the three constituencies, placing special emphasis on ensuring that all ongoing and upcoming projects are implemented in a timely, efficient and sustainable manner.

He underscored the need to operationalize all completed Water Supply Schemes without further delay, so that the intended benefits reach the people immediately.

Highlighting the importance



of optimal resource utilization, he instructed the Chief Engineer of Jal Shakti to come up with a plan for rationalising manpower and machinery deployment, enabling improved execution on the ground.

Rana also called for the augmentation of existing water supply schemes to improve their long-term viability and service delivery.

He directed the concerned departments to submit Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for proposed upgrades on a priority basis to facilitate timely approvals and planning.

Stressing on the importance of quality control in infrastructure development, he instructed field officers to undertake regular site inspections and ensure all works meet established technical standards without compromise.

To meet the growing demand for drinking water in several areas facing water shortages, Minister Rana approved the deployment of additional water tankers, particularly targeting water-deficit zones in Baramulla and Sopore.

He further emphasized the

critical importance of adopting water conservation practices in every constituency, underscoring the need to manage water resources sustainably to ensure long-term availability and resilience in the face of changing climatic patterns.

Reflecting the broader vision of the Omar Abdullah-led government for environmentally responsible and inclusive development, Javed Rana called for expediting the process of forest clearances for pending infrastructure projects.

He stressed that development and ecological preservation must go hand in hand, and bridging infrastructure gaps must be done while adhering to environmental safeguards.

He further directed the Forest Department to ensure the adequate availability of firewood across all of Jammu and Kashmir, especially in view of the approaching winter season, to cater to the needs of the general population.

In line with the Government's commitment to inclusive development and social justice, the Minister also directed the timely disbursement of sanctioned

scholarships to Scheduled Tribe (ST) students.

He emphasised the need to ensure that forest dwellers and tribal communities receive full access to welfare schemes and benefits, reaffirming the Government's focus on improving the socio-economic conditions of marginalised populations.

During the deliberations, Minister Javed Ahmad Dar presented several suggestions aimed at strengthening the water supply infrastructure across the region.

He emphasised the need for technological upgrades and improved management practices to enhance both efficiency and reliability.

He also flagged several operational issues that required urgent administrative attention to ensure seamless public service delivery.

MLA Sopore Irshad Rasool Kar raised several constituency-specific concerns.

He highlighted the urgent need to revive the Nehri Zangeer, which plays a vital role in supplying water to multiple schemes serving Sopore, Rafiabad, and Bandipora. He sought strengthening of local piping network to ensure consistent and efficient water supply, and also called for comprehensive dredging of the canal system in Sopore to prevent blockages and improve water flow.

Meanwhile, MLA Baramulla Javed Hassan Baig drew attention to delays in the approval of infrastructure projects under PMGSY and R&B, attributing the hold-ups to pending forest clearances.

DHSJ launches Tobacco Free Youth Campaign 3.0



KT News Desk

JAMMU, OCTOBER 9: Tobacco Free Youth Campaign 3.0 was launched Thursday by Director Health Services Jammu, Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar in the presence of senior functionaries of Health Department and staff members of the Health Services Directorate, office of Chief Medical Officer Jammu, State Tuberculosis Office, Venereology and Leprosy and Divisional Nodal Officer, National Tobacco Control Programme.

A presentation was given by the Nodal Officer explaining the Campaign strategies and targets to be achieved during the campaign. The guests also took the No Tobacco Pledge and committed to spread awareness regarding the ill effects of Tobacco use

in their circles.

The programme ended with a signature campaign led by the Director Health Services in presence of Deputy Director Dentristry, Chief Medical Officer Jammu, Joint Director Planning, State Malariologist, Assistant Director HEB, State Venereologist, Medical Officer MMU, Zonal Leprosy Officer & several senior Officers and their support staff.

The objective of the campaign is to reduce tobacco use in the community by creating awareness regarding its harmful effects, sensitizing people about the laws regulating its use, providing avenues for tobacco cessation at the grassroots level and making the villages tobacco free where the majority of our rural population resides.

SKIMS to leverage AI, Data for research, education, patient care: Director

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 09: Director SKIMS and EOSG, Prof. M. Ashraf Ganie, while addressing a Workshop on “AI in Healthcare” organised by the Skill Development Centre SKIMS in collaboration with DataLeads, announced that SKIMS will utilise its rich, thirty-year-old data repository to drive new advances in research, academics, and patient care through Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Calling data the “biggest treasure and strength of SKIMS,” Prof. Ashraf said the institute will leverage this valuable resource to achieve healthcare delivery.

“Data is gold, and SKIMS will utilise this gold for transformative growth in medical education, research, and clinical services,” he emphasized.

Highlighting the importance of AI integration, Prof. Ashraf said the collaboration between human intelligence and machines will enhance precision, accuracy, and contextual understanding in clinical practice. He further stressed that AI can help overcome challenges at SKIMS such as limited human resources while strengthening medical teaching, training, research, and skill development.

Prof. Ashraf expressed



gratitude to Syed Nazakat, CEO & Founder of Data Leads New Delhi, for facilitating the workshop and for highlighting the emerging role of AI in the health sector.

He assured full institutional support from SKIMS for major collaborations in the development of health information systems and AI-driven healthcare models. “SKIMS will take the lead in aligning with the Prime Minister's vision of reshaping healthcare in India through Artificial Intelligence,” he added.

The AI Skill Development Training Programme for Healthcare Professionals, was designed to introduce medical professionals to the transformative potential of AI in modern healthcare delivery, clinical decision-making, and research.

The programme aimed to equip participants with essential knowledge and practical insights into AI-driven tools, digital healthcare applications, and data-informed practices that improve efficiency, accuracy, and patient outcomes.

The workshop covered a broad spectrum of topics including Introduction to AI in Healthcare: Concepts, principles, and global perspectives. Clinical Applications of AI: Diagnostics, imaging, predictive analytics, and personalised treatment planning. AI in Public Health and Research: Population health management, outbreak prediction, and clinical trial support. Ethical and Regulatory Aspects: Patient privacy, data security, accountability, and AI governance in healthcare.

The initiative marks a significant step toward building digital readiness among healthcare professionals, preparing them to harness AI innovations for enhanced clinical practice, research, and system efficiency.

The AI Skill Development Programme at SKIMS reflects the growing need to integrate technology with medicine, aimed at building a digitally empowered healthcare workforce capable of meeting the challenges of the future.

2-month Tobacco Free Youth Campaign 3.0 takes off in Kishtwar

DC calls for collective action to curb menace

KT News Desk

KISHTWAR, OCTOBER 9: Deputy Commissioner, Pankaj Kumar Sharma Thursday flagged off the “Tobacco Free Youth Campaign 3.0” under the National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) in the district organised by the Health Department.

The two-month-long campaign, part of a nationwide initiative by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India was launched here from Government Model Higher Secondary School (Boys) with a student rally flagged off by the Deputy Commissioner.

The rally was organized by the Health Department in collaboration with the Education Department to spread awareness about hazards of tobacco use.

Addressing the participants, the DC emphasized the urgent need for collective action to curb the rising menace of tobacco use, particularly among youth. “We, collectively—including teachers and students—must make this campaign successful in every educational institution in the district,” the DC said, adding that the campaign is being launched from Government Higher Secondary School as Educational Institutions require special focus in the fight against Tobacco addiction. He said the

campaign would subsequently extend to college students.

Over the next sixty days, the campaign will feature Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, community engagement workshops and enforcement drives aimed at promoting a healthier, tobacco-free Kishtwar.

The initiative will raise public awareness about the dangers of tobacco use and ensure strict adherence to Tobacco-Free Educational Institution (ToFEI) guidelines. The community would be acquainted with Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA) 2003 and the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act (PECA) 2019 with stress on enforcement of ban on the sale of tobacco within 100 yards of educational institutions. Efforts would also be directed towards creating tobacco-free villages through awareness programs, sensitization drives and law enforcement initiatives. The students and youth would be encouraged to lead the movement under the slogan: “Say No To Tobacco, Yes To Life.”

The launch event was attended by Chief Education Officer Sanjay Dogra; Chief Medical Officer Dr. Yudhvir Singh Kotwal; the Principal of the host school Ashok Kumar, Teachers and a large number of students.

Mega Exhibition-cum-Kisan Mela organised

KT News Desk

RAJOURI, OCTOBER 9: The Department of Agriculture Production and Farmers' Welfare Thursday organised a mega Exhibition-cum-Kisan Mela at the District Agriculture Complex, Kheora, under the aegis of Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA). The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from across the district.

The programme was presided over by District Development Council Chairperson, Advocate Choudhary Naseem Liaqat, who highlighted the objectives of the event and urged the farming community to take full advantage of the various government schemes aimed at enhancing agricultural productivity and improving the socio-economic condition of farmers. He underlined the immense agricultural potential of Rajouri district, noting its diverse agro-climatic conditions



that are highly conducive for crop diversification.

“The region's diverse topography and climate support cultivation of cereals, pulses, oilseeds, fruits and vegetables as well as allied activities like beekeeping, mushroom cultivation, and floriculture, offering farmers vast opportunities to enhance income and ensure sustainable livelihoods” he noted.

The stakeholder departments

including Horticulture, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, Industries and others had set up informative stalls showcasing respective schemes and services. The Chief Guest inspected each stall and appreciated the efforts put in to educate and motivate farmers.

Resource persons interacted with farmers, providing detailed insights into the initiatives being implemented in

the district to promote sustainable and integrated farming practices.

A magnificent cultural programme was also presented on the occasion, spreading awareness among farmers about different welfare and agricultural schemes in an engaging manner.

Scientist from KVK Arvind Ishar delivered an informative session on the Integrated Farming System, emphasising its benefits for income diversification and long-term sustainability.

The farmers were provided Mustard Seed Kits and Soil Health Cards to promote scientific soil management and enhance productivity. The event served as an effective platform for knowledge exchange and reaffirmed the government's commitment to empowering the farming community through innovation, awareness and convergence of agricultural services.

GCoE hosts seminar on Women Mental health

KT News Desk

JAMMU, OCTOBER 09: The Psychological Counselling Cell of Government College of Education (GCOE) Jammu organized an enlightening seminar to mark World Mental Health Week.

The event aimed to sensitize students, faculty members and teacher trainees about the importance of emotional well-being, stress management and early intervention in mental health concerns.

The Principal of the College, Dr. Jyoti Parihar appreciated the initiative of the counselling cell and expressed that mental health awareness is essential for nurturing emotionally resilient future teachers who can contribute to building a compassionate society.

The program commenced with a formal welcome address by Dr. Ambica Kumari, HOD Psychology and Convener, Psychological Counselling Cell. She elaborated on the objectives



of the seminar and the significance of observing World Mental Health Day in educational settings.

The session was graced by Dr. Abhishek Chouhan, a renowned psychiatrist who served as the resource person for the seminar.

Dr. Chouhan delivered an insightful and interactive lecture on various dimensions of mental health, focusing particularly on the mental health of women and youth in today's competitive and rapidly changing world. He emphasized that maintaining good mental health is not just an individual responsibility but a collective societal need.

He discussed the role of positive thinking, emotional regulation, mindfulness and supportive relationships in promoting psychological well-being.

Dr. Abhishek Chouhan highlighted how stress, anxiety and depression often go unnoticed in educational institutions due to stigma and lack of awareness. He encouraged participants to seek timely help and to foster a culture of openness and empathy toward mental health challenges.

The talk also included engaging anecdotes, case examples and practical exercises that helped the audience connect deeply with the message.

Hungarian master of absurdist excess László Krasznahorkai wins Nobel literature prize

AP

Stockholm, Oct 09: Hungarian writer László Krasznahorkai, whose surreal and anarchic novels combine a bleak world view with mordant humor, won the Nobel Prize in literature Thursday for work the judges said upholds the power of art in the midst of “apocalyptic terror.”

The Nobel judges said the 71-year-old author, whose novels sometimes consist of just one long sentence, is “a great epic writer” whose work “is characterized by absurdism and grotesque excess.”

He’s the first Nobel literature winner from Hungary since Imre Kertesz in 2002 and joins a list of laureates that includes Ernest Hemingway, Toni Morrison and Kazuo Ishiguro.

“I am calm and very nervous,” Krasznahorkai told Radio Sweden after getting news of the prize, which comes with an award of more than \$1 million. “This is the first day in my life when I got a Nobel Prize. I don’t know what’s coming in the future.”

The American writer and critic Susan Sontag once described Krasznahorkai as the “contemporary master of the Apocalypse.” His work has echoes of other European writers who explored the absurd tragicomedy of existence, including Franz Kafka and Samuel Beckett.

Zsuzsanna Varga, a Hungarian literature expert at the University of Glasgow, said Krasznahorkai’s novels probe the “utter hopelessness” of human existence, while also being “incredibly funny.”

Krasznahorkai’s near-endless sentences made his work the “Hotel California” of literature — once readers get into it, “you can never leave,” she said.



Varga suggested readers new to Krasznahorkai’s work start with “Satantango,” his 1985 debut, which centered around the few remaining residents of a dying collective farm and set the tone for what was to follow.

Krasznahorkai has since written more than 20 books, including “The Melancholy of Resistance,” a surreal, disturbing tale involving a traveling circus and a stuffed whale, and “Baron Wenckheim’s Homecoming,” the sprawling saga of a gambling-addicted aristocrat.

“Herscht 07769,” from 2021, is set in a German town riven with unrest. Written as a series of letters to then-German Chancellor Angela Merkel, it has just one period in its 400 pages.

Several works, including “Satantango,” and “The Melancholy of Resistance” were turned into films by Hungarian director Béla Tarr.

Krasznahorkai also wrote several books inspired by his travels to China and Japan,

including “A Mountain to the North, a Lake to the South, Paths to the West, a River to the East,” published in Hungarian in 2003.

How Krasznahorkai came to win

Krasznahorkai had been on the Nobel radar for some time, committee member Steve Sem-Sandberg said, calling his literary output “almost half a century of pure excellence.”

The writer was born in the southeastern Hungarian city of Gyula, near the border with Romania, and studied law at universities in Szeged and Budapest before shifting his focus to literature.

Varga, the academic, said Krasznahorkai developed a cult following among young Hungarians during the twilight of Communism in the 1980s, when “authors were pretty much like pop stars.”

János Szeg, Krasznahorkai’s editor at the Budapest-based Magvet publishing house, said that the author’s works deal with “life on the periphery,”

and are interested in “the techniques of power.”

“All the populist tendencies of our time can also be found in his novels — from barbarism to the manipulation of the masses,” Szeg said.

Krasznahorkai has been a critic of autocratic Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, especially his government’s lack of support for Ukraine after the Russian invasion.

In an interview with Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet earlier this year, Krasznahorkai expressed criticism both of Orbán’s political system and the nationalism present in Hungarian society.

“There is no hope left in Hungary today and it is not only because of the Orbán regime,” he told the paper. “The problem is not only political, but also social.”

Orbán nonetheless congratulated the writer in a Facebook post, saying: “The pride of Hungary, the first Nobel Prize winner from Gyula, László Krasznahorkai.”

Surrogacy law: Age bar won't apply if procedure started before Jan 25, 2022, says SC

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 09: In a significant verdict, the Supreme Court on Thursday said age restriction under the 2021 surrogacy law will not apply to intending couples who commenced the procedure, like freezing of embryos, before the law came into effect on January 25, 2022.

The top court dealt with a provision of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021, which states that an intending couple requires an “eligibility certificate” certifying that they are married and between the age of 23 and 50 years in case of female, and between 26 and 55 years in case of male, on the day of certification.

A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and K V Viswanathan noted that the Act came into force with effect from January 25, 2022.

It said before January 25, 2022, there were no binding laws or certifications regarding age restrictions on intending couples wishing to avail surrogacy.

“It is not for the State to question the couple’s ability to parent children after they had begun the exercise of surrogacy when there were no restrictions on them to do so,” the bench said.

It held that Section 4(iii)(c) (I) of the Act does not have retrospective operation.

“Thus, if an intending couple commenced the surrogacy procedure prior to the commencement of the Act, i.e., January 25, 2022, and were at the stage of creation of embryos and freezing after extraction of gametes and on the threshold of transfer of embryos to the uterus of the surrogate mother, the age restriction under Section 4(iii)(c)(I) of the Act would not apply,” the top court held.

The bench delivered its verdict on two petitions and an application filed by three intending couples, whose common grievance was related to the upper age limit.

The petitioners argued that they had commenced the surrogacy procedures prior to the enforcement of the Act, and when they were in the middle of the procedure, the law brought in an embargo in the form of age-limit.

Justice Nagarathna, who penned the verdict for the bench, said when the petitioners generated and froze their embryos, they qualified for surrogacy under the prevailing law.

“Thus, they came to possess a right to surrogacy as part of reproductive autonomy and parenthood,” the bench said.

It did not accept the Centre’s submission that age restrictions under the Act should apply retrospectively to such couples also since the State has an interest in ensuring that children born to such parents receive adequate parenting.

“In this regard, we consider it useful to note that the law does not impose any age restrictions on couples who wish to conceive and bear children naturally,” it said.

The bench said prior to the enforcement of the Act, the petitioners were on the same footing as couples who wished to conceive naturally, but the stark distinction was that owing to medical reasons/disadvantages, they could not have children naturally.

“Having exercised this parity in freedom by commencing the surrogacy process, can it be said that they can now be denied the continued exercise of this freedom only because of the age bar under the Act? We are not inclined to believe so,” it said.

The bench noted that the relevant age limits under the Act are imposed on the intending couples in the present cases.

Missing Nobel won’t diminish Amitav Ghosh’s literary impact, say Bengali authors

PTI

Kolkata, Oct 09: Kolkata on Thursday said that Indian novelist Amitav Ghosh missing the Nobel Prize for literature should not be considered a let down, and millions of people will continue to enjoy his books.

Hungarian writer Laszlo Krasznahorkai, whose philosophical, bleakly funny novels

often unfold in single sentences, won the Nobel Prize in literature Thursday for his “compelling and visionary oeuvre”.

Ghosh, one of the most celebrated Indian writers in English, was being touted as a frontrunner to win the coveted prize in 2025, 112 years after Rabindranath Tagore won it in literature.

“We were all looking



forward to Amitav Ghosh getting the Nobel second time after Tagore. His writings have always focused on the battle of the people in search of livelihood and succour over centuries with historical documentation,” eminent Bengali author Sirshendu Mukhopadhyay told PTI.

Mukhopadhyay, a Sahitya Akademi award-winner, said he does not think his not getting

the Nobel Prize will in any way diminish his appeal and popularity among readers cutting across borders.

“He was considered one of the favourites to be awarded the Nobel. That itself should be an honour,” the nonagenarian author said.

One of the foremost writers of the present generation, Pracheta Gupta, also said that not getting the Nobel in no way lessens

the popularity of his books or makes his seminal epochal cult works lose their lustre.

“There have been many writers across the country, including Bengal, as well as the world, who have gained iconic status among readers for their rich volume of works. How many of them got the Nobel? Did that affect the popularity and craze about their works?” Gupta said.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Modi Govt committed

ground situation.

“Due to the determined efforts of the security agencies, the terrorist network nurtured by the enemies of the nation in J&K have been almost eliminated,” the Union Home Minister said.

He asked the security forces to remain fully prepared to ensure that terrorists do not exploit snowfall to infiltrate across the border.

Shah reiterated the Centre’s unwavering commitment to achieving the goal of a terrorism-free Jammu and Kashmir.

“Any attempt to threaten peace and security in the region will be dealt with sternly. Security forces will continue to have full freedom to crush any design which is aimed at creating chaos,” Shah said.

The Union Home Minister appreciated the steps taken by the local administration and security agencies following the Pahalgam terror attack. “These initiatives have helped strengthen the overall security landscape of Jammu and Kashmir,” he added.

Shah underlined the critical role of all security agencies in working in close coordination and maintaining utmost vigilance to completely eradicate terrorism from the region.

Pertinently, the Union Home Minister during his visit to Jammu last month chaired a comprehensive security review meeting and had reiterated the Central Government’s unwavering zero-tolerance policy against terrorism under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Shah had arrived in Kashmir soon after the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 civilians, mostly tourists dead, and directed the security agencies to deal with the terrorists and their supporters with a “heavy hand.”

He had visited Baisaran Valley in Pahalgam, a terror attack site, also.

Post Pahalgam terror attack continuous operations have been going on to dismantle the terror network in Jammu and Kashmir and efforts are on to ensure that tourism returns to normal. (KNO)

Blitz over private

holds a majority in the House,” he said.

He said the normal attitude of the government is that they advise the members to withdraw the bills. “Normally, the government

doesn’t allow it. The point is that if an opposition member moves a bill and the government allows it to become a law, the member gets all the credit for that, not the government,” he said.

He said the government normally advises the members to withdraw the bill so that the government can bring a comprehensive bill.

“A private member’s bill may not be very comprehensive; there may be very skeletal provisions in it. The private member doesn’t have the technical expertise to draft a very comprehensive bill. It can be done only by the government. That advice is okay, and the government is right in giving it,” he said.

Veteran politician and MLA from Bandipora, Nizamuddin Bhat, said the government always likes laws to be passed through them. “If a private member’s bill is in the public interest and suits their interests, they can allow its passage,” he said. He said such bills have been rarely passed in the House. “A private member is an individual member. He cannot carry the entire House with him,” he said.

The bigger question is whether the bills submitted for the session starting on October 23 will be introduced in the House.

Officials well-versed with the legislative process told news agency—KNO that the chances of their introduction on October 28—the day reserved for Private Member Bills—are almost impossible given that 33 bills from the budget session are already pending with the Assembly Secretariat.

“The Private Member Bills would be listed in business in the order in which the notices were received. Since 33 private member bills are pending, they will get preference in the list of business for that day in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in J&K Legislative Assembly,” he said.

He added that all the bills submitted for during the last budget session, as well as those submitted for the upcoming session, will be listed in the business of the House on that day.

“Given past functioning of the House, only 10 to 12 bills are likely to be taken up for introduction in the House,” he said, adding that the bills which are not taken up will remain active.

He further said that the bills do not lapse with the prorogation of the House; they lapse only upon its dissolution. (KNO)

Modi, Starmer

and Starmer agreed to deepen defence ties, including expanding joint training and military exercises. The UK’s Carrier Strike Group and the Royal Navy’s participation in Exercise KONKAN with the Indian Navy were noted as part of on-going maritime cooperation.

Both sides committed to closer collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region, including the establishment of a Regional Maritime Security Centre of Excellence under the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.

Progress was welcomed on integrating Indian Air Force Qualified Flying Instructors into UK Royal Air Force training programmes. An agreement is also under discussion to support broader defence training and education links between the two countries.

Both governments signalled intent to finalise an Inter-Governmental Agreement on developing maritime electric propulsion systems for Indian naval platforms.

The leaders also agreed to proceed through a government-to-government route for an initial supply of Lightweight Multirole Missile systems to India. This step is aimed at strengthening India’s air defence capability and supporting long-term cooperation in complex weapons development between the two countries.

On global issues, the two Prime Ministers affirmed support for peace and a rules-based international order. The UK reiterated its support for India’s bid for permanent membership in a reformed United Nations Security Council. They expressed support for a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Ukraine based on international law and the UN Charter. (KNO)

J&K, Ladakh likely

power supply this winter.

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

Pertinently, KNO reported that the power demand in Kashmir earlier this week had increased by nearly 200 Megawatts amid dip in mercury.

An official had said that KPDCL has witnessed

an additional demand of nearly 200 MW of power in the past two days. (KNO)

Army, police

a huge cache of ammunition and other warlike stores,” the Chinar Corps — Indian Army said in a post on X. (KNO)

Major rejig in

SSP Kathua, replacing Saxena and Anayat Ali Choudhary, IPS (AGMUT:2017), has been transferred as SSP Kulgam, succeeding Sahil Sarangal.

In the JKPS cadre, several officers have also been reassigned. Mohd Arif Rishu has been posted as Director CTC Lethpora, Benam Tosh as Deputy Director SKPA Udhampur and Harmeet Singh Mehta as Commandant 13 IR.

Other notable transfers include Javid Iqbal as AIG CT & Intelligence, Mohd Fiesel Qureshi as SSP EOW Jammu, Ramnish Gupta as SSP CICE Jammu, Aijaz Ahmed Zargar as SSP Bandipora, and Mushtaq Ahmad as SSP Shopian.

Additionally, several awaiting officers, including Ashiq Hussain Tak, Owais Rashid, Sarfaraz Bashir Ganai, Gh. Mustafa Bhat, Shahzada Kabir Mattoo, and Ashish Gupta, have been assigned to various battalion posts in the IRP and JKAP units.

The order, signed by Chandraker Bharti, IAS Principal Secretary to the Government, stated that the transfers and postings come into effect immediately.

In a separate order, the Jammu and Kashmir government ordered the transfer and posting of three senior JKPS officers, including Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kupwara.

According to an official order issued by the Home Department Civil Secretariat, Jammu/Srinagar, in the interest of administration, the following transfers and postings are hereby ordered with immediate effect.

Sanjay Kumar Bhagat (JKPS:2001) Commandant 14 JKAP, is transferred and posted as AIG Buildings vice Amit Bhasin, who shall await further posting at Police Headquarters, J&K.

Gh. Jeelani Wani (JKPS:2001) SSP Kupwara, is transferred and posted as Commandant 14 JKAP, vice Sanjay Kumar Bhagat.

Syed Al-Tahir Gilani (JKPS:2001) Staff Officer of DGP, J&K, is transferred and posted as SSP Kupwara vice Gh. Jeelani Wani. By Order of the

Lieutenant Governor. (KNO)

Life returns to

infrastructure, and employment — with special focus on youth empowerment and sustainable tourism.

The Lt Governor also assured that the administration remains fully committed to addressing public concerns and ensuring that every measure taken is people-centric and transparent.

Kavinder Gupta further urged citizens to remain vigilant, continue supporting law and order, and actively participate in the development initiatives being undertaken by the administration to ensure a prosperous and secure future for Ladakh. (KNO)

World Sight Day:

used to treat genetic eye disorders such as Leber Congenital Amaurosis, and artificial intelligence (AI) is playing a crucial role in the early and accurate diagnosis of eye diseases,” they said.

They also noted the development of wearable devices and mobile apps that help patients track symptoms and receive reminders for eye exams, making preventive care more accessible.

Doctors offered several practical tips to maintain eye health. These include reducing screen time, especially for children and office workers, taking regular breaks using the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.

They advised eating a nutrient-rich diet that includes vitamin A, omega-3 fatty acids, and antioxidants, staying well-hydrated, avoiding overexposure to blue light from screens, and watching for early warning signs such as blurred vision, floaters, flashes, or changes in night vision. (KNO)

SC to hear

continued delay in restoring statehood violates the principle of federalism, which is part of the basic structure of the Constitution.

They have also submitted that no steps have been taken to lay out a clear timeline or implement the Supreme Court’s December 2023 directive stating that “restoration of statehood shall take place at the earliest and as soon as possible.” (KNO)



PTI

Mumbai, Oct 09: India and the UK are natural partners and the partnership between the two countries is becoming a crucial foundation for global stability and economic progress, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday.

After wide-ranging talks with visiting British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Modi said the foundation of India-UK relationship is a shared belief in values such as democracy, freedom, and rule of law.

In the joint briefing after the talks, Starmer said the India-UK relationship is special.

"We are creating a new modern partnership focusing on future," he said, while hailing India's growth story as remarkable.

Prime Minister Modi also said that India and the UK have reached an agreement on cooperation in military training.

"We are fully committed to

enhancing maritime security cooperation with UK in Indo-Pacific region," PM Modi said.

On the Ukraine conflict and Gaza issue, he said India supports all efforts to restore peace through dialogue and diplomacy.

The two leaders held talks broadly focusing on boosting the India-UK ties in areas of trade, defence and security and critical technology.

The British leader, accompanied by a delegation of 125 of the UK's most prominent business leaders, entrepreneurs and educationists, landed in Mumbai on Wednesday morning on a two-day visit.

Starmer's visit to India came two-and-half months after the two countries inked a landmark free trade pact that will increase market access, cut tariffs and is expected to result in doubling the bilateral trade by 2030.

The trade deal was firming up during PM Modi's visit to London in July.

India, Australia ink 3 pacts to expand defence ties

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 09: India and Australia on Thursday signed three key pacts including one on information sharing, to further expand their bilateral defence and military ties following "productive" talks between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Australian counterpart Richard Marles in Canberra.

Singh, currently on a two-day visit to Australia, also met Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Foreign Minister Penny Wong, broadly focusing on imparting more dynamism to the relations.

The two defence ministers affirmed the importance of enhancing cooperation with regional partners to help maintain a free, open, peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific, underscoring their strong support for freedom of navigation and overflight and unimpeded trade in the region. The resolve came against the backdrop of China's increasing military assertiveness in the strategic waters. Besides the agreement on information sharing, the two sides

firmed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that will provide for cooperation on submarine search and another on establishment of a framework for joint staff talks.

The Singh-Marles meeting marked five years of the India-Australia comprehensive strategic partnership, with both sides reaffirming



their shared commitment to deepening defence cooperation across a wide spectrum, including maritime security, defence industry collaboration and joint research in science and technology.

In his remarks, Singh reiterated India's stand with regards to the threat of terrorism that. Terror and talks cannot go together, terror and trade cannot go together and water and blood cannot flow together, he said in clear reference to India's policy towards Pakistan.

The defence minister also urged the international community to come together against all forms of terrorism.

A day after the April 22 Pahalagam attack, India announced a series of punitive measures against Pakistan, including the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty with New Delhi asserting that "blood and water" cannot flow together.

New Delhi has been maintaining that the

Indus Waters Treaty will remain in "abeyance" until Islamabad "credibly and irrevocably" abjures support to cross-border terrorism.

Singh said both sides also reaffirmed the importance of India-Australia comprehensive strategic partnership.

"I highlighted the rapid growth of India's defence industry and India's growing stature as a credible source of high-quality defence tech globally," he said. The defence minister said both sides discussed potential for "deeper defence industry partnerships".

"I thank Australia for its steadfast support on cross-border terrorism & shared regional stability. Together, we will deepen cooperation for a free, open, and resilient Indo-Pacific," he said.

Earlier in the day, Singh was received by Assistant Minister of Defence of Australia Peter Khalil and was accorded a ceremonial "stair guard" welcome.

As part of his

engagements, a live air-to-air refuelling demonstration was organised onboard the KC-30A Multirole Transport and Tanker Aircraft (MRTT), refuelling an F-35 aircraft en route to Canberra, the defence ministry said.

"It showcased a demonstration of growing interoperability following last year's implementation arrangement on air-to-air refuelling. Upon arrival at the Australian Parliament House, Singh was accorded a traditional welcome in the presence of Richard Marles," it said.

A joint statement said Singh and Marles were pleased that the India-Australia defence partnership now covers "all domains".

The two ministers also affirmed the importance of enhancing cooperation with regional partners to help maintain a free, open, peaceful, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific, it said.

Singh and Marles underscored their strong support for freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded trade in the region, and other lawful uses of the sea consistent with international law, particularly the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the joint statement said.

It said the ministers were pleased with the collaborative maritime domain awareness and anti-submarine warfare activities by Australian and Indian maritime patrol aircraft in the Indian Ocean.

Jan Suraaj releases 1st list of 51 candidates for Bihar polls



PTI

Patna, Oct 09: Jan Suraaj Party on Thursday released its first list of 51 candidates for the Bihar assembly elections, but did not confirm whether its founder Prashant Kishor will contest the polls.

Addressing a press conference here, party national president Uday Singh said Kishor is likely to hit the campaign trail on October 11 from Raghapur, the constituency of RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav.

"We will soon release a list of candidates for other seats. If you find Kishor Ji's name on the list, then he will be contesting. It's quite clear. Kishor Ji will launch the party's election campaign from Raghapur on October 11", Singh said.

Of the 51 candidates named, 11 belong to backward classes, 17 to extremely backward classes, nine are from minority communities and the rest from the general category, he added.

Prominent names on the list include popular Bhojpuri singer Ritesh Ranjan Pandey from Kargahar, and Pritti Kinnar from the third gender community from Bhorey seat in Gopalganj.

Other candidates include Y V Giri (Manjhi), Dr Amit Kumar Das (Muzaffarpur), Dr Shashi Shekhar Sinha (Gopalganj), Drig Narain Nishad (Valmiki Nagar), Sunil Kumar (Lauriya), Awadhesh Ram (Harsidhi-SC), Dr Lal Bbau Prasad (Dhaka), Usha Kiran (Sursand), Vijay Kumar Sah (Runnisaipur), Mhd Parvej Alam (Benipatti), Ram Parvesh Kumar Yadav (Nirmali), Raghib Bablu (Sikti), Abu Affan Farooque (Kochadhaman), Afroz Alam (Amour), Md Shahnawaz Alam (Baisi), Kunal Nishad (Pranpur) and Kishor Kumar (Saharsa), among others.

Nearly 1 bn people in low-and middle-income countries living with avoidable vision loss: Report



IANs

New Delhi, Oct 09: Nearly 1 billion people in low-and middle-income countries are living with avoidable vision loss, according to a new report on World Sight Day on Thursday.

The report by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) showed that most of this can be solved with some of the cheapest interventions: cataract surgery and glasses. IAPB works closely with the United Nations to work for eye care.

The report, launched during the UN General Assembly, showed how India can benefit from prioritising eye health, urging everyone to love their eyes by getting an eye test.

It noted that around 70 crore people in India are living with preventable sight loss, which affects employment, education, income and caregiving responsibilities.

It suggested six simple, cost-effective priorities to prevent sight loss, which include early detection; providing reading glasses on the spot; capacity building in the eye health workforce, coupled with surgical productivity and removal of barriers such as costs, easy access, and social stigma associated with glasses.

These could unlock Rs 3.6 lakh crore for the Indian economy every year, with a Rs 16 return for every Rs 1 invested, the

report said, while urging nationally coordinated efforts along with the execution of eye health campaigns across the length and breadth of the country.

"India is the first nation to launch the National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCB&VI) policy. It is 100 per cent centrally sponsored and a strong example of eye health for all. More than 98 lakh cataract surgeries were performed in the fiscal year 2024-25 under the NPCB&VI in 2024-25, which is the highest in the last five years," Peter Holland, CEO, IAPB, told IANs.

"Such policies help to build a strong foundation towards positive eye health for every Indian, creating real socio-economic impact that helps to shape the economy of India," he added.

Holland recommended early detection of eye health issues in schools with good follow-up, including near vision glasses to further prevent avoidable sight loss.

The expert also suggested innovative technologies such as mobile eye clinics, tele-consultations, tele-optometry, and preventive screenings for eye health.

"Start-ups, large organisations, government, as well as social institutions need to come forward to ensure widespread access to meet the eye health needs of remote India," Holland told IANs.

Study in over 100 oral cancer patients finds low awareness of early symptoms, free screenings

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 09: A study conducted in over 100 patients of oral cancer -- almost all from upper-lower or lower socioeconomic backgrounds -- found that all were unaware of early symptoms of the condition, with a very low awareness of free government screenings.

Over 54 per cent of the participants, recruited from Delhi's Lok Nayak Hospital during August 2023 to June 2024, used smokeless tobacco, 10.3 per cent were smoking, and 27.6 per cent were using both.

Most were found to consume tobacco daily, with 52.6 per cent quitting tobacco consumption following a diagnosis of oral cancer.

The study, by researchers from Maulana Azad Medical College in Delhi, is published in the journal eacancermediscience.

The authors wrote, "Totally, 116 adult patients with histopathologically confirmed oral cancer were recruited using convenience

sampling." "All were unaware of the early symptoms of oral cancer and self-examination methods. Awareness of free government screenings was very low (0.9 per cent), and only 7.8 per cent knew of laws regulating tobacco," they said.

They added the study highlights critical gaps in awareness about the link between tobacco use and oral cancer, government-led screening programs and early symptoms of the disease.

The team recommended a multi-pronged policy, including intensifying public health campaigns to convey the specific risk of oral cancer from tobacco use.

Screening for oral cancer should be incorporated into routine healthcare visits, especially at primary health centres and outreach camps, they added.

The authors also called for a strengthening of training programmes for frontline health workers and clinicians to ensure they are equipped to educate patients and conduct oral examinations.

‘Hours of sunshine received in most of India declined every year during 1988-2018’

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 09: Most of India could be receiving fewer hours of sunshine in a year, with the Himalayan region and west coast seeing the highest reductions, according to an analysis of trends during 1988-2018.

Researchers from the Banaras Hindu University, Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology and India Meteorological Department found that on average, sunshine received by the Himalayan region fell by about 9.5 hours every year during the study period, while that in the west coast fell by over 8.5 hours every year.

The analysis, published in the journal Scientific Reports, looked at data collected from over 20 stations in nine geographically diverse regions across India. Areas in the



Deccan Plateau were found to receive three hours fewer sunshine every years over the three decades, while sunshine received in the north eastern region declined at about 1.5 hours every year.

The authors wrote, "The trend analysis depicted annual negative trend in all geographical regions with different rate (west coast: minus 8.62 hours/year; Deccan plateau: minus 3.05 h/year; north eastern region: minus 1.33 h/year; Himalayan

region: minus 9.47 h/year)." Sunshine hours in a month increased during October to May, followed by significant reductions during June-July in six regions, except northern inland and Himalayan region that showed comparatively opposite monthly trends, the team said.

"The study reveals persistent decline of (sunshine hours) in Indian subcontinent on all temporal scales excluding north eastern region where mild seasonal levelling off was found," the authors wrote.

Studies have shown that India has experienced persistent solar dimming -- receiving lesser sunshine over time -- in the 21st century, with increase in density of aerosol particles in the earth's atmosphere being the most accepted reason.

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:- hakeemmushtaq.75316@jk.gov.in,

Tel./ Fax No:-0194-2411285

EXTENSION NOTICE 12TH.

Subject: AMC for 35 KVA Generator and Honda 2800 Genset at PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar for the year 2025-26.

Reference: This office Fresh e-NIT No. 09-JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2025-26, issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/25-26/Camp./ 1732-41, dated: 26-05-2025. Bearing Tender ID No. 2025_PHE_277735_1.

Due to "Poor 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 08-10-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM are extended as per the details given below: -

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Period of submission of bids	24-10-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM
2.	Date of opening of tenders	25-10-2025 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.

No: -JS-PHE/GWDS/25-26/Camp./9383-92

Dated: 08-10-2025

DIPK-6997/25

DATED: 09-10-2025

Executive Engineer

Jal Shakti (PHE)

Deptt. Ground Water Division Srinagar.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) MECHANICAL DIVISION (NORTH) SOPORE Extension Corrigendum

Sub: Extension of e-tender.

Ref: This office E-NIT No. 21 of 2025-26, S. No. 05, 06 and 07.

Due to poor response the above referred works are hereby extended as hereunder:

S. No.	Particulars	Date and time
1	Last date for online submission of bids	13-10-2025 (06:55 pm)
2	Date of online opening of bids	14-10-2025 (02:00 pm)

All other terms and conditions shall remain same.

No.: PHE/MDNS/DB/3699-3702

Dated: 08-10-2025

DIPK-7014/25

DATED: 09-10-2025

Sd/-Executive Engineer Jal Shakti

(PHE) Mechanical Division (North)Sopore

Pope Leo blasts economy that marginalises poor while wealthy live in bubble of luxury

AP

Vatican City, Oct 09: Pope Leo XIV blasted how the wealthy elite live in a "bubble of comfort and luxury" while poor people suffer on the margins, confirming in his first teaching document Thursday that he is in perfect lockstep with his predecessor Pope Francis on matters of social and economic injustice.

The Vatican on Thursday released the document, entitled "I have loved you," which Francis had begun to write in his final months but never finished. Leo, who was elected in May, credited Francis with the text, cited him repeatedly, but said he had made the document his own and signed it. The 100-page document traces the history of Christianity's constant concern for poor people, from Biblical citations and the teaching of church fathers to the preaching of recent popes about caring for migrants, prisoners and victims of human trafficking.

Leo credits especially women's religious orders with carrying out God's mandate to care for the sick, feed the poor and welcome the stranger, and also praised lay-led popular movements with advocating for land, housing and work for society's most disadvantaged.

The conclusion Leo draws is that the Catholic Church's "preferential option for the poor" has



existed from the start, is non-negotiable and is in fact the very essence of what it means to be Christian. He calls for a renewed commitment to fixing the structural causes of poverty, while providing unquestioning charity to those who need it.

"When the church kneels beside a leper, a malnourished child or an anonymous dying person, she fulfills her deepest vocation: to love the Lord where he is most disfigured," Leo writes.

Leo cites Francis frequently, including in some of the Argentine pope's most-quoted talking points about the global "economy that kills" and criticism of trickle down economics. Francis made those points from the very start of his pontificate in 2013, saying he wanted a "church that is poor

and for the poor."

"God has a special place in his heart for those who are discriminated against and oppressed, and he asks us, his church, to make a decisive and radical choice in favor of the weakest," Leo writes.

Echoing Francis, Leo rails against the "illusion of happiness" derived from accumulating wealth. "Thus, in a world where the poor are increasingly numerous, we paradoxically see the growth of a wealthy elite, living in a bubble of comfort and luxury, almost in another world compared to ordinary people."

Francis' frequent criticism of capitalism angered many conservative and wealthy Catholics, especially in the United States, who accused the Argentine Jesuit of being a Marxist. In a recent interview, Leo said such

misdirected criticism cannot be leveled against him. "The fact that I am American means, among other things, people can't say, like they did about Francis, he doesn't understand the United States, he just doesn't see what's going on," Leo told Crux, a Catholic site.

As a result, Leo's embrace of Francis' teaching on poverty and the church's obligation to care for the weakest is a significant reaffirmation, especially in Leo's first teaching document.

Leo signed the text on Oct 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the 13th-century mendicant friar who renounced his wealth to live poor among the poor. The date was not coincidental.

The late Pope Francis named himself after the saint and one of the pontiff's most important documents "Fratelli Tutti" (Brothers All) was itself published on the Oct 4 feast day in 2020.

Leo, too, seems inspired by the saint's example: As a young priest, the former Robert Pre-vost left the comforts of home to work as a missionary in Peru as a member of the Augustinian religious order, one of the other ancient mendicant orders that considers community, the sharing of communal property and service to others as central tenets of its spirituality.

"The fact that some dismiss or ridicule charitable works, as

if they were an obsession on the part of a few and not the burning heart of the church's mission, convinces me of the need to go back and reread the Gospel, lest we risk replacing it with the wisdom of this world," Leo writes.

Leo's emphasis on the church's age-old "preferential option for the poor," is unusual given the Vatican's troubled history in dealing with liberation theology, the Latin American-inspired Catholic theology that had the "preferential option for the poor" as its mantra.

The Vatican under St. John Paul II spent much effort battling liberation theology and disciplining some of its most famous defenders, arguing that they had misinterpreted Jesus' preference for the poor as a Marxist call for armed rebellion.

Leo, in contrast, doubled down on the concept, citing several of the Latin American church's fundamental documents on the issue. He praised as an inspiration St Oscar Romero, the Salvadoran archbishop who was killed in 1980 by right-wing death squads opposed to his preaching against the repression of the poor by the army.

Leo's text minimised the dispute over liberation theology by saying the Vatican's 1984 crackdown on its promoters was "not initially well received by everyone".

US opens probe into nearly 2.9 million Tesla vehicles over full self-driving traffic violations



REUTERS

Washington, Oct 09: The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said on Thursday that it is opening an investigation into 2.88 million Tesla vehicles equipped with its Full Self-Driving system over more than 50 reports of traffic-safety violations and a series of crashes.

The auto safety agency said FSD - an assistance system that requires drivers to pay attention and intervene if needed - has "induced vehicle behavior that violated traffic safety laws."

The agency said it has reports of Tesla vehicles using FSD driving through red traffic lights and driving against the proper direction of travel during a lane change.

RECALL COULD FOLLOW IF NHTSA FINDS SAFETY RISKS

In total, NHTSA is reviewing 58 reports of issues involving traffic safety violations when using FSD, including 14 crashes and 23 injuries.

The new investigation comes amid growing scrutiny of Tesla's advanced driver assistance system from Congress and weeks after a new NHTSA administrator was confirmed.

Tesla, which did not immediately respond to a request for comment, issued a software update to FSD this week.

NHTSA said it has six reports in which a Tesla vehicle, operating with FSD engaged, "approached an intersection with a red traffic signal, continued to travel into the intersection against the red light and was subsequently involved in a crash with other motor vehicles in the intersection."

NHTSA said four crashes resulted in one or more injuries.

The investigation - a preliminary evaluation - is the first

step before the agency could seek a recall of the vehicles if it believes they pose an unreasonable risk to safety.

A driver in Houston in 2024 told NHTSA that FSD "is not recognizing traffic signals. This results in the vehicle proceeding through red lights, and stopping at green lights."

The complaint added: "Tesla doesn't want to fix it, or even acknowledge the problem, even though they've done a test drive with me and seen the issue with their own eyes."

NHTSA also said it will review FSD behavior when approaching railroad crossings. Last month, Democrat Senators Ed Markey and Richard Blumenthal cited a growing number of reported near-collisions in urging the agency to investigate.

Tesla's FSD, which is more advanced than its Autopilot system, has been under investigation by NHTSA for a year.

In October 2024, the agency began an inquiry into 2.4 million Tesla vehicles equipped with FSD after four reported collisions in conditions of reduced roadway visibility, such as sun glare, fog or airborne dust, including a 2023 fatal crash.

Tesla says FSD "will drive you almost anywhere with your active supervision, requiring minimal intervention" but does not make the car self-driving.

Tesla's other automated vehicle features have also drawn agency scrutiny.

In January, NHTSA opened an investigation into 2.6 million Tesla vehicles over reports of crashes involving a feature that lets users move their cars remotely.

NHTSA is also reviewing Tesla's deployment of self-driving robotaxis in Austin, Texas, launched in June. (Reporting by David Shephardson.

China clamps down more curbs on export of rare-earth technologies

Beijing, Oct 09: China's Commerce Ministry said that it would impose export control measures with immediate effect on technologies related to rare earths.

Exports of technologies and their carriers related to rare earths mining, smelting and separation, as well as metal smelting, magnetic material manufacturing, and the recycling and utilisation of rare earths from secondary sources, will not be permitted without approval, it said.

China accounts for about 70 per cent of the world's rare earth mining, but it controls about 90 per cent of their processing, which makes it virtually the sole supplier of the precious metals used in a host of modern equipment, including automobiles, electronics, wind energy, and defence.

China's rare earth metals are in demand as the US, EU, and India are its top importers.

So much so that US President Donald Trump, who



earlier imposed 145 per cent tariffs against Chinese exports, settled for an interim trade deal after China stopped the rare earths exports, linking them to the lifting of curbs on semiconductor chips by the US.

Rare earths are a key component of current trade talks between the US and Beijing.

China's new curbs on them came ahead of the planned meeting between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in South Korea (APEC) later this month.

Rare earths have also become an important part of India-China talks in recent months.

Fair call to promote Shubman Gill as ODI captain: Sourav Ganguly

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 09: Former India captain Sourav Ganguly on Thursday backed the decision to hand over India's ODI captaincy to Shubman Gill, calling it a "fair call and not the worst decision".

Ganguly went on to say that Rohit Sharma's removal as ODI captain was likely done in consultation with the Champions Trophy and T20 World Cup winning skipper.

In his debut series as Test captain, Gill-led India drew the five-match series in England.

"I think it has been done in consultation with Rohit, from outside... I don't know what's inside," Ganguly said after being named the national brand ambassador of 'Annapurna Snacks'.

"Somewhere down the line, I feel that it's a fair call. Rohit can keep playing and in the meantime, you keep grooming



a young captain. So, I really don't see a problem in that." India will play three ODIs in Australia starting October 19, followed by a five-match T20I series from October 29.

"Performance not an issue but 40 is a big number"

The decision by the Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee also points to the future looking at the 2027 World Cup in South Africa, when Rohit would be 40-plus and Virat Kohli will be 38. "I am sure

Shanghai Masters: Djokovic battles past Bergs to record 80th Masters 1000 semis

IANS

Shanghai, Oct 09: Novak Djokovic's resilience and experience once again came to the fore as he battled past Belgium's Zizou Bergs 6-3, 6-4 on Thursday to secure a semi-final berth at the 2025 Shanghai Masters.

Despite not being at his physical best, the 38-year-old Serbian extended his dominance on the ATP Masters 1000 stage, becoming the oldest semi-finalist in Masters 1000 history.

Djokovic, who endured a leg issue and heat-related exhaustion in his fourth-round victory over Jaume Munar, was again made to work hard under testing conditions.

The World No. 5 appeared to be struggling with discomfort in his left foot during the opening set but dug deep to clinch his 80th Masters 1000 semi-final appearance - another record in his illustrious career.

The Serbian looked poised to seal victory when he broke Bergs to lead 5-4 in the second set, but the 26-year-old Belgian, playing his first ATP Head2Head match against Djokovic, showed impressive resolve to immediately break back.

What followed was one of the most thrilling exchanges



of the tournament - Djokovic surviving four smashes and a daring volley from Bergs before reclaiming the break in a pulsating rally. This time, he made no mistake serving out the match to claim his milestone win.

"I was just trying to stay alive to be honest on the court," Djokovic admitted afterward. "My first encounter with Bergs. He's a great guy. Obviously, a lot of firepower in his game. At times, I just tried to play an extra ball in the court and make him miss the ball, and that's what happened. I should have closed out the match at 5-4. He played a

good game, again I was a little bit too passive."

Having battled through another gruelling encounter, Djokovic acknowledged the challenge of adapting to the conditions in Shanghai. "Very challenging conditions these days for all the players, and I was just trying to stay alive on the court. I'm glad to overcome this hurdle," he said.

The 24-time Grand Slam champion is now just two wins away from a record-extending 41st Masters 1000 title, and his first since the 2023 Paris Masters.

Friday 10th Oct.

INOX CINEMA SRINAGAR

Movies Watch List

JOLLY LLB 3 (UA16+) HINDI - 05:05 PM

SUNNY SANSKARI KI TULSI KUMARI (UA13+) HINDI - 02:10 PM

KANTARA A LEGEND: CHAPTER 1 (UA16+) HINDI - 02:30 PM, 06:00 PM

TRON: ARES (U/A13+) 3D ENGLISH ATMOS WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES 04:20 PM, 07:00 PM 3D HINDI ATMOS - 01:50 PM

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