

## Modi Govt's tough stand on terror in J&K unmatched: Amit Shah

» When terrorists tried to rise again, we launched Op Sindoor

» During Congress rule, terrorists played 'Khoon Ki Holi' across India

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Oct 17: Asserting that India now responds to terror threats with unprecedented resolve and strength, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said the PM Modi-led government's action against terrorism in J&K is unlike anything seen in decades.

Addressing a public rally in Taraiya, Bihar, Shah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "During the Congress rule, terrorists played 'khoon ki holi' (blood-soaked Holi) across India. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we entered their homes and wiped them out through 'Operation Sindoor'."

He said that terrorists involved in the Pahalgam terror attack were brought to justice



under 'Operation Mahadev,' and their handlers were also targeted inside Pakistan. "The way Modi ji responded to terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, no one did in the past several decades," he added.

Highlighting the

government's achievements, the Home Minister said the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir was a historic decision that permanently integrated the region with the rest of the country. "From removing Article 370 to fighting terrorism, we have

acted on every front. When terrorists tried to rise again, we launched Operation Sindoor and taught them a lesson in their own homes," Shah said.

He said the government ended the practice of triple talaq, giving justice to Muslim women, and after 350 years fulfilled the long-standing promise of building the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Shah also accused opposition parties of misleading people with "unrealistic promises" and reviving what he described as the politics of corruption and fear.

He said the regime led by PM Modi remains focussed on development, welfare, and national security.

"The Indian economy is now among the fastest-growing in the world, inflation is under control, | More on P6

## Have asked Congress to field candidate from Nagrota; Budgam to stay with NC: Omar

'All promises will be fulfilled in 5-year tenure'

Jahangeer Ganaie

Anantnag, Oct 17: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday said the National Conference (NC) has asked its ally, Congress, to field a candidate from the Nagrota Assembly seat in the by-election, slated to be held next month. He added that the alienation with New Delhi will end once the statehood is restored.

Speaking to media persons in Anantnag here, the Chief Minister, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that a year has passed since the elected government took over. "However, a year has elapsed, but we still have four years left. The work is before the people, and we stick to our promises."

Omar said the people should not judge them for a period of a week, a month



or a year, but they have been given a time of five years, and hopefully they will fulfil their promises.

About the nomination of candidates for the by-election on two Assembly seats in Jammu and Kashmir, the Chief Minister said there are still a few days left. "NC will contest from the Budgam seat while Congress has been asked to field its candidate from the Nagrota seat. We have assured

our complete support to Congress if they want to field their candidate from Nagrota. Congress has sought consent from the high command, and if they get the approval, then they will file the nomination papers from Nagrota and Budgam will be left for NC," he said.

About the regularisation for the daily wagers after the CPWs, the CM said that a committee has already been formed in the | More on P6

### RAJYA SABHA POLLS

## All eyes on independents, but no one can see their vote

Opaque voting rules put spotlight on 7 non-party MLAs

Ibni Maqbool

Srinagar, Oct 17: The National Conference (NC) and Congress made last-ditch efforts to forge unity ahead of the Rajya Sabha polls, following Congress's public announcement that it would not contest the 'riskier' fourth seat. As a result of negotiations, Congress leaders claim they had nearly agreed to field a candidate for the competitive seat; however, the issue of independents played spoilsport in the final moments of the unity talks. The differences arose from the voting method of independent MLAs, who are not required to show their marked ballots to polling agents—unlike party-affiliated legislators.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), with the Rajya Sabha election just a week away, all eyes are on seven independent MLAs—five of whom support the government and two who are aligned with the fragmented bloc of Kashmir-based opposition in the Assembly.

Among the five supporting the government are Satish Sharma, a minister in the Omar Abdullah-led administration; Pyare Lal (MLA, Inderwal); Muzaffar Khan (MLA, Rajouri); Choudhary Akram (MLA, Surankote); and Dr. Rameshwar Singh (MLA, Bani). These MLAs did not contest the 2024 Assembly elections on the ticket of any recognized or registered party and won as independents. They submitted letters of support to Omar Abdullah when he staked his claim to form the government in October last year.

In the | More on P6

## Expecting more powers, putting efforts for statehood: CM Abdullah

'Darbar Move revival was a promise to people'

Umaisar Gull Ganie

Kulgam, Oct 17: Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Omar Abdullah Friday said that his government is making continuous efforts for the restoration of statehood, hoping that more powers (statehood) will be granted soon, which is being delayed for the reasons only known to Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Speaking to reporters in Kulgam, Omar, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that statehood was a promise made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and should have been fulfilled by now. "We were hoping that the Centre



would restore statehood within a year. We don't know why there is a delay — only the BJP knows. But our fight for it will continue," he said.

On revival of bi-annual Darbar Move practice, Omar said, "I have made it clear from day one that in the Union Territory, whatever promises we made, we will fulfill them.

"The Darbar Move was one of the promises we made in our manifesto, and since 2021, it has been restored."

About reservation, the Chief Minister said that a cabinet sub-committee led by Sakeena Itoo was formed and it has submitted the final report. "The report has been approved. The cabinet memo is being

prepared for circulation and will be sent to the LG for approval," the Chief Minister said.

Regarding losses suffered by farmers, Omar said that the government does not need to wait for the Assembly to address the issue. "Wherever there has been damage to agricultural or horticultural crops, assessments have been completed. Talks with the Centre are underway for a relief package, similar to those given to other states. J&K also deserves such a package," he said.

On the revocation of FIRs registered during COVID-19 restrictions, Omar said, "Law and order is not with the elected government right now. Once we regain those powers, we will fulfill our other promises as well."

Meanwhile, in a post on X, the Office of Chief Minister, J&K, said that | More on P6

## Police arrest 19 long-time absconders

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 17: In a major breakthrough in its ongoing efforts to track down fugitives, Jammu and Kashmir Police on Friday said to have apprehended nineteen (19) long-time absconders from districts of Kulgam, Anantnag, Shopian, Ganderbal & PD Awantipora.

These individuals had been evading arrest for years, some for over three decades in connection with serious criminal cases, a police spokesman said in a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

In Kulgam, two absconders were apprehended and have been identified as Aijaz Ahmad Sheikh, son of Gh. Qadir Sheikh, resident of Nassu Badrahgund, and Bilal Ahmad Ganie, son of Gh. Nabi Ganie, resident of Lalen Ganoor Kulgam, presently residing at Levдора near Railway Bridge Qazigund, the spokesman said.

"The accused Aijaz Ahmad Sheikh was wanted in FIR No. 107/2005 under Sections 15/18 NDPS Act of Police Station Qazigund. The accused was arrested near J&K Bank Qazigund after evading arrest for about 20 years. Moreover, Bilal Ahmad Ganie, son of Gh. Nabi Ganie, resident of Lalen Ganoor Kulgam, presently residing at Levдора near Railway Bridge Qazigund, was wanted in FIR No. 223/2006 under Sections 15/18 NDPS Act of Police Station Qazigund. The accused was absconding for around 19 years," he said.

In Anantnag, J&K Police have successfully apprehended five absconders who had been evading arrest for years in connection with serious criminal offenses, including abduction, rape, and theft, the statement reads.

The arrested absconders have been | More on P6

### LADAKH VIOLENCE

## MHA orders judicial probe, retired SC Judge to conduct inquiry



Sajid Raina

New Delhi, Oct 17: The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has ordered a judicial inquiry into the police action in Leh town on September 24, which resulted

in the deaths of four individuals.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the Ministry of Home Affairs issued the notification on Friday, which reads that an FIR (No. 144/2025) has | More on P6

## Act responsibly, don't repeat past mistakes: CS to people

Sajid Raina

Leh, Oct 17: Soon after the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) ordered a judicial probe into September 24 Leh violence, which left 4 people dead and several injured, Chief Secretary of Ladakh Dr Pawan Kotwal on Friday urged the people to 'act responsibly' and avoid repeating the past mistakes.

Addressing a news conference here Dr Kotwal, according to the news

agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "We have come out of a painful experience. Let us not repeat it. The Government of India has responded positively to every major demand, including the judicial inquiry. Now it is time for peace, progress, and unity. Ladakh's future depends on our collective responsibility."

Dr Kotwal expressed deep sorrow over the tragedy, recalling his visit to the hospital where doctors | More on P6

## India to take domestic defence production to 100 pc: Rajnath

PTI

Nashik (Maharashtra), Oct 17: India is looking at taking domestic defence production to 100 per cent as dependence on foreign military supplies creates "strategic vulnerability", Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Friday.

Singh said this after inaugurating a third production line of Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)—Mk1A and a second manufacturing facility of trainer jet HTT-40.

With opening of the new facility for Tejas jets, the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) is expected to produce at least 24 LCA aircraft.

"There was a time when



the country was dependent on other countries to meet its defence needs, and almost 65-70 percent of defence equipment was imported," Singh said in his address.

"But today, this situation has changed; now India is doing 65 per cent manufacturing on its own | More on P6

## 5.6 mag earthquake hits Afghanistan, tremors felt in J&K

ANI/Agencies

Srinagar, Oct 17: A strong earthquake of magnitude 5.6 struck 47 kilometres north-northwest of Khand d, Afghanistan, at 5:30 AM IST on Friday, according to the European-Mediterranean Seismological Centre (EMSC). The quake, occurring at a depth of 51 kilometres, was also felt in parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

Earlier on the same day, a 4.3-magnitude tremor shook areas 133 kilometres east of Kabul at a depth of 10 kilometres, as reported by the National Center for Seismology.



The German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ) confirmed a magnitude 5.66 quake near the Afghanistan-Tajikistan border.

On October 5, a 4.1-magnitude earthquake struck Afghanistan at a depth of 180 km, according to the National Centre for Seismology (NCS). In a post on X, the NCS reported:

"EQ of M: 4.1, On: 06/10/2025 20:12:21 IST, Lat: 36.64 N, Long: 70.88 E, Depth: 180 Km, Location: Afghanistan."

Earlier, on September 28, the region experienced another earthquake measuring 3.9 in magnitude at a shallow depth of 10 km, which makes it more prone to aftershocks. The NCS reported: "EQ of M: 3.9, On: 28/09/2025 04:16:13 IST, Lat: 34.62 N, Long: 70.84 E, Depth: 10 Km, Location: Afghanistan." Shallow earthquakes are generally more dangerous because seismic waves travel a shorter distance to the surface, causing stronger | More on P6

## Over 27% increase in glacial lake area among 55 glacial lakes in India since 2011: CWC

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 17: Water spread area of glacial lakes within India has increased by over 27 per cent between 2011 and July 2025, according to a report that analysed 55 glacial lakes.

The Monthly Monitoring Report of Glacial Lakes and Water Bodies in the Himalayan Region, July 2025 released by the Central Water Commission (CWC) said the total inventory area of glacial lakes within India rose from 1,952 hectares in 2011 to 2,496 hectares in July 2025.

The analysis covered 100 glacial lakes (GLs) located within



India across Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and

Arunachal Pradesh. Of these, 58 glacial lakes showed growth in water spread area in July 2025.

"There is a 27.87 per cent increase in area. (Out of 100 GLs, only 55 GLs were considered for this interpretation. The remaining lakes include 40 Supraglacial Debris Cover (SDC) lakes which have no inventory details as well as lakes which were not analysed/have been merged during the month of July, 2025," the report said.

State-wise, the lakes identified for vigorous monitoring include Ladakh (8), Jammu and Kashmir (7), Himachal Pradesh (5), Uttarakhand (6), Sikkim (28) and Arunachal Pradesh (4). The CWC's monitoring also found that the | More on P6



# Speaker engages with media persons in pre-Assembly session talks

Assures full support to fraternity during upcoming LA session

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 17: Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly (JKLA), Abdul Rahim Rather Friday interacted with media persons of different News organisations at Assembly Secretariat here to facilitate smooth and efficient coverage of the forthcoming Assembly session.

The meeting was attended by Director Information, Nitish Rajora; Secretary, JKLA, Manoj Kumar Pandit; SSP Security Civil Secretariat, Sajjad K. Bhat; Joint Director Information Kashmir, Syed Shah Nawaz Bukhari; Deputy Director Information (PR), Javid Ahmad Rather; Assistant Director Doordarshan, veteran journalists, bureau chiefs, senior journalists and correspondents, representatives of All India Radio and other concerned officers.

During the interaction, Speaker Rather held detailed discussion with the media fraternity on various issues concerning media professionals, identifying additional requirements to enhance their working environment during the upcoming session. The deliberations also focused on ensuring hassle-free entry of media persons to the Legislative Assembly premises and as well as their facilitation for smooth coverage of the session.

The Speaker highlighted the vital role of media in upholding transparency and fostering informed public discourse on legislative proceedings. He



emphasized that the media acts as a vital bridge between the people and the legislature, ensuring citizens remain aware of policies, discussions and decisions that shape governance across Jammu and Kashmir.

Recognizing the significance of media in highlighting public issues, the Speaker sought cooperation from media houses for balanced and responsible reporting of the Session. He emphasized the critical role of journalists in ensuring transparency and public awareness of legislative discussions and advised them to keep public interests paramount while discharging their professional assignments.

While reviewing arrangements for media persons, the Speaker emphasized on the

importance of taking necessary measures to prevent inconvenience to journalists covering the proceedings. He instructed the Assembly Secretariat officers to prepare and issue entry passes for journalists in coordination with the information department well in advance for their unhindered entry into the assembly complex.

To enhance media accessibility, the Speaker directed the information department to install a sufficient number of microphones and Public Address Systems (PAS) within the Assembly Hall and its lawns, facilitating smooth interaction between dignitaries, Ministers, legislative assembly members and the journalists. He also directed the Hospitality & Protocol

department to install Shamyana with a dais for press briefings by the MLAs and Ministers.

The Speaker also directed SSP Security, Civil Secretariat to make appropriate parking arrangements for media personnel near the Assembly Secretariat.

During the interaction, the Speaker also invited constructive suggestions from journalists for improving media engagement and coverage of legislative business. Representatives of both print and electronic media expressed their appreciation for the Speaker's proactive approach and shared valuable inputs on improving accessibility and communication channels between the media and the Assembly Secretariat.

## Judicial Academy Sgr organizes orientation programme

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 17: The Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy, Srinagar, organized a One Day Special Orientation Programme on "Medical Forensics & Medico-Legal Aspects in Trial; Different Dimensions of Cyber Crimes and Electronic Evidence".

The programme was organized under the patronage of Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Judicial Academy), Justice Arun Palli and under the guidance of the Chairperson and Members of the Governing Committee of the Academy, for Judicial Officers of the District Judiciary of Kashmir Province including UT of Ladakh, Public Prosecutors, Additional Public Prosecutors, Assistant Public Prosecutors, and Investigating Officers of Kashmir Province.

The programme commenced with introductory remarks by Director, J&K Judicial Academy, Sonia Gupta, who outlined the objectives of the orientation programme. She emphasized that in the age of digital transformation and advancing forensic technologies, the judiciary and prosecution must stay equipped with evolving scientific, medical, and technological developments that critically shape the administration of criminal justice.

Speaking on the occasion, Senior Assistant Professor, School of Law, University of Kashmir, Dr. Mir Junaid Alam focused on the theme "Demystifying the Information Technology Act, 2000 with Reference to Cyber Crimes viz. Issues, Challenges and Way Forward."

He discussed the legal and procedural complexities arising from cyber offences, data breaches, and online frauds. He also highlighted the gaps between technology and enforcement and emphasized the need for judicial officers and investigators



to enhance their understanding of digital footprints, data preservation, and admissibility of electronic records.

In his address, he also underscored the importance of judicial sensitivity to privacy, digital rights, and due process in cases involving cybercrime.

Senior Assistant Professor, Centre for Distance and Online Education, University of Kashmir, Dr. Aneeda Jan deliberated on "Medical Forensic Law: Constitutional Perspective and Role of Judiciary" and "Impact of Technology on Forensic Evidence." She elaborated on the intricate relationship between law and forensic medicine, underscoring the critical role of medical evidence in the dispensation of justice. Further, she spoke on the constitutional and ethical dimensions of forensic investigation, highlighting the responsibility of courts to ensure the integrity, authenticity, and admissibility of

forensic materials.

Discussing technological advances, she pointed out how digital imaging, DNA analysis, and AI-based diagnostic tools are transforming medico-legal practices and judicial evaluation of evidence. Registrar Vigilance, High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Rajeev Gupta addressed on the topic "Electronic Evidence: Definitions and Characteristics". He outlined the essential requirements for the admissibility of electronic evidence.

He also discussed judicial precedents governing electronic records, the authenticity of digital signatures, and challenges in verifying metadata and data chain integrity. He stressed that the digital age demands a deeper understanding of technological processes to prevent miscarriage of justice due to procedural lapses in electronic documentation and certification.

## Nasha Mukht Abhiyan DIPR organises awareness programme at GGHS Batamaloo

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 17: The Cultural Unit Kashmir of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) Friday organised an awareness programme under the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan campaign at Government Girls High School (GGHS), Batamaloo Srinagar.

On the occasion, artists of the Cultural Unit presented a thought-provoking skit highlighting the ill effects of drug abuse and its drastic consequences on individuals and society. The performance aimed to spread awareness among students about the importance of living a healthy and drug-free life.

Headmistress of the institution, Nusrat Ara, lauded the efforts of Cultural Unit Kashmir, DIPR, for organising such impactful and socially relevant programmes that sensitize the youth towards crucial social issues.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from the staff and students of GGHS Batamaloo, who appreciated the initiative and pledged their support towards a drug-free society.



### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE KULGAM

Email: dckulgam-jk@gov.in Fax No: 01931 260499 PH: 01931260500

Subject-Initiating of Magisterial enquiry of Anti-Terrorist Operation took place at village Gudder Kulgam on 08.09.2025.

#### GENERAL NOTICE

Whereas, District Magistrate, Kulgam vide No. DMK/JC/2025-26/731-35, dated 17-10-2025 has appointed the undersigned as enquiry Officer for conducting the inquiry into the matter so as to ascertain the facts and circumstances related to the incident and the cause of death.

Now, in this regard notice is hereby issued to the general Public that any person who is in knowledge of the incident and is willing to record his/her statement or wants to give any other information about the incident, he/she may attend the office of the undersigned in the office complex of District Magistrate Kulgam for recording the statements in this matter within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice from 11:00AM to 3:00PM during working days, so that the inquiry in the said case is completed.

Viqar Ahmad Giri (JKAS)  
Addl. District Magistrate, Kulgam

No. DMK/JC/2025-26/741

DATED: 17-10-2025

DIPK-7291/25

DATED: 17-10-2025

### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER REW DIVISION PULWAMA

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

e- NIT No. 105/2025-26 Dated 13-10-2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Of Union Territory of JandK, e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with UT of JandK Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works: -  
Call 1"

S. No.	Name of the Work	Block	Estim ated /Adv. Cost (In Lacs)	Cost of tender docum ents (In Rupees)	EMD (in %)	Class of Contractor	Time of completion	Major head
1.	FINDC2526112493 Construction of Girls toilet at Govt High School Iajora.	Kakapora	1.5	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
2.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP NEAR H/O SHABIR AHMAD WAGAY S/O AB RAHIM WAGAY MOHALLA KOWSIBAGH	Kakapora	0.58	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
3.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP NEAR H/O ABDUL REHMAN HAJAM, HAJAM MOHALLA KOWSIBAGH	Kakapora	0.58	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
4.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP NEAR H/O GH MOHD MIR, MIR MOHALLA KOWSIBAGH	Kakapora	0.58	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
5.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP FAT LONE MOHALLA KAKAPORA	Kakapora	0.6	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
6.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP AT ARAMWARI KAH NEAR LAND OF TARIQ AHMAD BHAT AND OTHERS AT LONE MOHALLAH KAKAPORA A	Kakapora	0.6	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
7.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP NEARLAND OF LATIF BHAT AND OTHERS, KAKAPORA A	Kakapora	0.6	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
8.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP NEAR GOVT PRIMARY SCHOOL KISRIGAM	Kakapora	0.6	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
9.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP NEAR H/O TARIQ AHMAD MANTOO KISRIGAM	Kakapora	0.6	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
10.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP NEAR THE LAND OF SHOWKAT AHMAD DAR, S/O ABDUL SALAM DAR AND OTHERS AT KISRIGAM	Kakapora	0.6	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
11.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP NEAR THE LAND OF RIYAZ AHMAD DAR AND OTHERS AT RIGHT SIDE OF PARIGAM ROAD AT LARAV	Kakapora	0.6	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
12.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP NEAR PRIMARY SCHOL BEGHUMBAGH	Kakapora	0.6	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
13.	INSTALLTION OF HAND PUMP NEAR MASJID SHARIEF BEGHUMBAGH	Kakapora	0.58	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
14.	INSTALLATION OF HAND PUMP NEAR LAND OF NAZIR AHMAD MIR TRICH	Kakapora	0.58	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
15.	CONSTRUCTION OF BOREWELL AT VILLAGE JAMAI PARK BANDERPORA	Kakapora	1.195	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
16.	RDDC2526100405 (IMP OF DOBHI MOHLA GHAT AT ROMISHI NALLAH KAKAPORA)	Kakapora	2.00	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 Days	PRI
17.	FINDC2526105345-(CONST RAISING OF RWALL ON LAR AT RPORA)	Kakapora	1.972	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 Days	DDC
18.	FINDC2526114174 CONSTRUCTION OF LANE DRAIN FROM HO AB RAHIM NAJAR TO MOHD SUBAN GANAI AT LONE MOHALLA KHANKAH	Dadasara	0.787	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
19.	FINDC2526114176 CONSTRUCTION OF GATE CULVERT AND IMPROVEMENT OF ROAD UPTO GRAVEYARD AT SHAH MOHLA NOWDAL	Dadasara	2.693	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
20.	FINDC2526114183 CO CRATE BUND AT GRAVEYARD DOONIGUND NEAR CHANDRI NALLAH	Dadasara	1.434	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
21.	FINDC2526114180 CO CULVERT AT GRATBAL BARAGAM	Dadasara	0.942	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
22.	FINDC2526114181 CO CULVERT AT HERPORA BARAGAM	Dadasara	0.984	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
23.	FINDC2526114179 CO CULVERT AT NAMBAL BARAGAM	Dadasara	1.464	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
24.	FINDC2526114184 FENCING OF GRAVEYARD AT BUCHOO BALA	Dadasara	1.982	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF

Position of A/A: - Accorded  
The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates.

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	13-10-2025
2.	Online Bid submission Start Date	13-10-2025 from 06:55 PM
3.	Online Bid Submission End Date	24-10-2025 up to 06:55 PM
4.	Date and time of opening of Online Bids	25-10-2025 at 09:00 AM or any convenient day in the office of the Executive Engineer REW Pulwama
5.	Note: - Fee Receipt and EMD shall be deposited after the financial bids opened. Incase The original Tender Document Fee Receipt and EMD is not Deposited within 5 days after the Financial Bids Opened for all responsive bidders Who have participated online, the Department shall take action as per Rules.	

Xen/REW/Pul/4381-87  
Dated: -13/10/2025

DIPK-7277/25  
DATED: 17-10-2025

Sd/= Executive Engineer  
REW Division Pulwama

KASHMIR  
THUNDER  
IS AVAILABLE  
AT ALL LEADING  
STALLS



# ‘Initial hour after accident usually decides survival rate of victim’

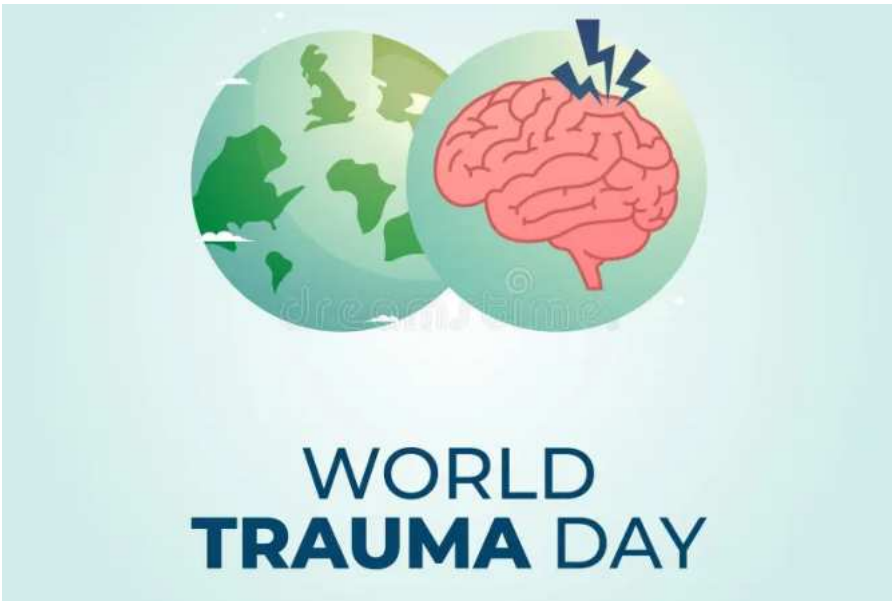
JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Oct 17: On the occasion of World Trauma Day, medical experts have highlighted the life-saving potential of early intervention in trauma cases and called for urgent strengthening of trauma care facilities, particularly in peripheral hospitals across Jammu and Kashmir.

They said that the “golden hour” - the critical first hour after an accident - often determines whether a patient survives or succumbs to injuries.

Doctors said that trauma remains one of the leading causes of death and disability globally, and timely management can make all the difference. “The first hour after a major accident is crucial. If a patient receives proper medical attention during this period, the chances of survival rise dramatically,” said Dr Shabir, a senior surgeon posted in south Kashmir.

He said that most trauma victims in rural or remote areas lose precious time being



transported to tertiary care hospitals like SKIMS or SMHS. “A well-equipped emergency unit at district or sub-district hospitals could handle primary stabilisation — airway management, bleeding control, and fracture immobilisation — before transferring the patient. This can save lives and prevent complications,” he said.

Another health expert, Dr Rouf Ahmad Wani Ahmad, said that improving infrastructure in peripheral hospitals would not only save time but also reduce the overwhelming rush at tertiary centres. “Many trauma cases could be managed locally if peripheral facilities had trained trauma teams, emergency operating rooms, and adequate equipment. This would help tertiary hospitals focus on highly complex cases,” he said.

Doctors stressed the need for capacity building and training of first responders and paramedical staff in basic trauma life support. “Even a small delay in handling airway obstruction or excessive bleeding can prove fatal. Proper training and timely response

can transform outcomes,” they said.

They said the government’s focus should be on developing a hub-and-spoke model for trauma care, connecting peripheral hospitals with tertiary centres through a coordinated referral and transport system. “Ambulances must be well-equipped, and real-time communication between hospitals is vital,” they said. They added that road traffic accidents, workplace injuries, and falls contribute significantly to trauma cases in Jammu and Kashmir, and the need for well-prepared local hospitals is urgent.

“Strengthening peripheral infrastructure is not just about convenience; it’s about saving lives,” said Dr Shabir. “If every district hospital can provide immediate life-saving care, countless families will be spared tragedy.”

World Trauma Day is observed every year on October 17 to raise awareness about trauma prevention and the importance of timely medical care in reducing deaths and disabilities resulting from injuries—(KNO)

## CM Omar convenes review meeting of District Kulgam

KT NEWS DESK

Kulgam Oct 17: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Friday chaired a comprehensive review meeting of District Kulgam to assess the progress of developmental works under the District CAPEX Budget 2025–26 and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS).

The Chief Minister appreciated the district administration’s effective response during the recent floods and reviewed ongoing measures for infrastructure restoration and public service delivery. He directed officers to ensure uninterrupted power and water supply during the upcoming winter months, to expedite permanent restoration of damaged infrastructure, to intensify field inspections, and strengthen inter-departmental coordination. He further instructed the officers to prioritize the completion of all ongoing projects within set timelines to ensure visible outcomes on the ground.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Ministers Sakina Itoo, Javed Rana, Javid Dar, and Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, DDC Chairperson Kulgam, MLAs M.Y. Tarigami and Pirzada Feroz Ahmed, Additional Chief Secretary to CM Dheeraj Gupta, Additional Chief Secretary R&B, Deputy Commissioner Kulgam Athar Amir Ul Shafi Khan, heads of departments, and all district officers attended the meeting.

While reviewing winter preparedness, the Chief Minister underscored the importance of



equipping districts, particularly in snow-prone areas, with sufficient 4x4 ambulances to ensure uninterrupted emergency services. “We are working with the concerned departments to make sure that every district has an adequate number of 4x4 ambulances so that people do not face difficulties during heavy snowfall,” he said, directing officials to ensure that the ongoing arrangements include appropriate mobility and safety measures.

On the developmental front, the Chief Minister noted that while the number of new works had increased compared to the previous year, the value and scale of ongoing projects had also grown significantly. “Our achievement levels need to improve further as the working season is short. I urge the district administration to utilize the remaining two months effectively to maximize expenditure and

progress,” he said.

Highlighting the importance of timely fund utilization under Centrally Sponsored Schemes, Omar Abdullah directed officers to ensure that the first instalments are fully utilized by December to avoid delays in the release of subsequent funds. “Frequent reviews are essential to track the progress and utilization under schemes like SASCI to prevent work disruption and withholding of funds on account to low percentage of expenditure by the end of December,” he added.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister e-inaugurated several key urban infrastructure projects in Kulgam, including the Solid Waste Management & Material Recovery Facility at Lirrow, the Municipal Shopping Complex, and a Modern Abattoir, aimed at strengthening commerce and civic amenities in the district.

Earlier, the Chief Minister

inspected departmental stalls showcasing various government schemes, welfare initiatives, and achievements under flagship programmes. He interacted with officials and beneficiaries, appreciating their efforts in ensuring citizen-centric governance and effective public service delivery.

During the meeting, the DDC Chairperson and local legislators raised several development related issues concerning their respective areas. The Chief Minister assured that all genuine demands would be considered on priority to accelerate Kulgam’s overall growth and development.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Amir Ul Shafi Khan, gave a detailed presentation outlining the district’s developmental progress, achievements, and challenges for 2024–2026. He highlighted key focus areas like post-flood infrastructure restoration, healthcare,

agriculture, education, and rural-urban development.

Significant progress was reported under CAPEX investments, with major achievements in irrigation, education, health, and urban sectors, besides ongoing works on bridges, roads, and water supply schemes. Schemes like MGNREGA and PMAY have generated substantial employment and housing support. Upgradation of health facilities, improved school retention rates, and expansion in horticulture, livestock, and fisheries sectors were also noted.

Deputy Commissioner underlined proactive winter preparedness, while identifying challenges such as transformer shortages, staff vacancies, and delays in road restoration and industrial land allotment. He said the district’s integrated departmental coordination continues to drive resilient and inclusive growth.

## Retaining wall collapse on NH disrupts traffic

UMAISAR GUL GANAIE

Srinagar, Oct 17: The damages and destructive effects caused by the landslide are still evident on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway.

On Thursday evening, a major retaining wall suddenly collapsed in the Dalwas area near Ramban, resulting in the closure of one tube of the highway to traffic.

According to reports, a section of about 50 meters of the retaining wall, as well as a large portion of the link road leading to the Saoni Panchayat, suddenly collapsed in the Darwas area of the highway. As a result, a part of the four-lane highway was affected, and vehicle movement in this area has slowed significantly.

It was stated that after the wall collapsed and one tube of the highway was closed, traffic from both sides was diverted to another road. By this evening, hundreds of passenger and freight vehicles had traveled via the highway, while repair work continued at the Dalwas site.

Local residents of Dalwas said that the collapse of the highway wall also took away a large part of the link road to Saoni Panchayat, severely affecting the movement of the local population.

When contacted, Shubham Yadav, Project Director of the National Highways Authority of India, told KNO that about 40 to 45 meters of the concrete retaining wall in the Darwas

area had collapsed, and since last evening, one tube of the highway has been closed to traffic.

He said that restoration work has begun to make the affected road passable again, and efforts are underway to reopen the closed tube to general traffic as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, after several weeks, passenger vehicles have been allowed to move in both directions on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, while freight vehicles are still only allowed to move in one direction.

Police officials told KNO this evening that passenger vehicles have been permitted to travel in both directions since this morning, but freight vehicles are only allowed from Jammu towards Srinagar. Passenger vehicles are permitted to travel from Jammu only between 8 am and 11 am, and vehicles crossing the Banihal Tunnel must do so between 7 am and 10 am; drivers are advised to plan their journeys accordingly.

Officials also said that the condition of the road at several locations on the highway is quite poor, causing slow traffic movement. Furthermore, the continuous movement of freight convoys, the deteriorating condition of the highway, and the daily migration of Gujjar and Bakarwal communities with their livestock from Kashmir to the plains of Jammu continue to impact the flow of traffic on a daily basis—(KNO)

## Congress rules out rift with NC

Vows to block BJP’s agenda in J&K

RAHEEN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Oct 17: Amid growing speculation over cracks in the Congress–National Conference (NC) alliance, the Congress on Friday said that the partnership between the two parties will continue for the greater common good.

Congress General Secretary, Ghulam Ahmad Mir told the media persons that internal differences do not mean the alliance is breaking apart.

“Leaders express their opinions—some support one side, some the other—but there are proper party forums and authorized persons to speak on such matters,” he said.

Mir explained that Congress had asked for a specific Rajya Sabha seat but could not reach an agreement with the NC. “The fourth seat was given according to their own calculations. Our top leadership had decided that if we were not given what was rightfully ours, we would not contest. That was a party decision,” he said. He dismissed



speculation about the alliance collapsing; saying disagreements on one issue should not be seen as a split. “If we focus on just one issue, no one achieves any major goal,” Mir said.

He said that both parties remain united against the BJP. “We will not let the BJP’s designs or their communal agenda succeed in Jammu and Kashmir. Internally, we may have differences, but externally, we will remain united to stop the BJP’s ambitions,” he said—(KNO)

## ‘Minibus operators flout rules in Srinagar’

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 17: The Srinagar traffic police have raised concerns over unregulated operations by minibus operators, warning that their practices could lead to severe traffic chaos within the city.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic City, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat said some operators are introducing routes from other districts into city limits without proper authorization. “These operators are running their fleets without any regulation and are often seen switching routes at will,” he said.

Meanwhile, officials have asked operators to submit detailed information about their fleets to gauge how many minibuses are operating on each route, but many have failed to comply.

Moreover, they say drivers reportedly keep multiple route boards in stock and frequently change routes, making it difficult even for fleet managers to enforce discipline.

SSP Bhat said risks posed by these unregulated practices and urged operators to follow the rules to ensure smooth traffic flow. A video highlighting the issue has been circulated among officials for reference—(KNO)

## 50 more MBBS seats for GMC Anantnag

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Anantnag, Oct 17: In a historic stride for medical education in south Kashmir, the Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag has achieved two remarkable milestones — the grant of 50 additional MBBS seats, raising the total intake to 150, and the approval of 18 postgraduate MD/MS seats by the National Medical Commission (NMC).

The twin approvals mark a transformative moment for the institution and are expected to significantly boost both undergraduate and postgraduate medical training opportunities in the region.

Principal GMC Anantnag, Prof Dr Rukhsana Najeeb, expressed heartfelt gratitude to Secretary, Health and Medical Education, Dr Syed Abid Rashid Shah, for his “unwavering guidance and continuous support” in securing these approvals.

“This is a proud moment for the entire GMC Anantnag



fraternity. The addition of 50 MBBS seats will provide more opportunities for aspiring students from South Kashmir and beyond, while the MD/MS recognition places our college among the leading institutions of the country,” Prof Najeeb said.

She said the approval process required rigorous compliance with NMC standards. “I personally visited the NMC office in New Delhi multiple times to present our case, respond to their observations, and ensure full adherence to their criteria. This success is the result of teamwork, persistence, and collective dedication,” she added. Faculty members,

residents, and staff hailed Prof Rukhsana’s “visionary” leadership and described the development as a “turning point” for the institution. They credited her proactive approach and tireless efforts for putting GMC Anantnag on the national map of medical excellence.

Under the new sanction, the college will offer 18 MD/MS seats in key specialties, including general medicine (4 seats), general surgery, paediatrics and anaesthesia (four seats each) and two seats for ENT (Otorhinolaryngology).

This expansion will not only enhance clinical and academic training for

students but also strengthen tertiary-level healthcare services across South Kashmir by ensuring a consistent supply of specialists.

Prof Rukhsana extended her gratitude to the Minister for Health and Medical Education and the entire administrative team for their continued encouragement. She acknowledged the cooperation of faculty members, consultants, residents, support staff, and media fraternity whose collective contributions made the achievement possible.

Civil society representatives congratulated the GMC Anantnag administration, calling the twin approvals a “historic advancement” for south Kashmir. “This is not just an institutional success — it’s a victory for our youth, our patients, and our healthcare system. It will reduce the need for students to seek education outside J&K and improve patient care across the region,” said a senior citizen from Anantnag—(KNO)



## Serious Action Needed To End National Highway Gridlock

The Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, especially the Ramban stretch, has become an emblem of commuter distress, time lost, and economic setbacks for the region. Once envisaged as a lifeline connecting Kashmir to the rest of India, this crucial artery now evokes images of endless lines of frustrated travellers, stranded apple-laden trucks, and daily uncertainties for thousands who rely on its timely functioning. Gridlock on this highway has escalated to crisis levels. What should have been

a smooth four-to-five-hour drive has turned into a harrowing ten-hour ordeal for commuters. Many who rely on the highway for work, trade, and family obligations are at a breaking point. Ongoing repair activities, breakdowns of heavy trucks, wrong-lane driving, overtaking violations, and the movement of nomadic flocks all add to the chaos. In particular, the Ramban-Udhampur sector faces severe bottlenecks, with the much-advertised double-laning often only existing on paper, reducing traffic to single lanes and

compounding delays. Every day, commuters and truck drivers face mounting costs and acute frustration. Exporters, especially apple growers, find their produce at risk as traffic jams threaten both livelihoods and the broader supply chain(see the generated image above). Despite officials' assurances, visible improvements are lacking on the ground. While two-way traffic for light vehicles has been restored in some sectors, congestion and chronic blockages continue, especially from Qazigund through the notorious

Ramban stretch. Repairs, blasting, and maintenance teams help to some extent, but these short-term fixes cannot substitute for systematic solutions. Authorities must recognise that the future of the Kashmir Valley's economic and social well-being runs directly through this highway. There should be a coordinated push to expedite ongoing construction and repair with the utmost urgency while ensuring continuous monitoring and a genuine double-laning of all choke points. Strategic interventions, such as better traffic

regulation, staggered truck movements, preventive maintenance, and clear public advisories, are essential. The seamless movement of goods, produce, and people is not just a matter of convenience but of economic survival and regional stability. The current condition of the Jammu-Srinagar highway is an urgent call for action. Authorities must act decisively to implement sustainable solutions, alleviate daily suffering, and restore trust in this highway as a channel, not a chokepoint, for progress in Kashmir.

# National Consumer Helpline: ‘India’s Frontline of Consumer Protection’

From resolving grievances and securing refunds to boosting transparency and trust, the NCH’s innovative approach is empowering citizens and transforming consumer protection across sectors

### Press Information Bureau

These are not just isolated success stories but clear examples of how the National Consumer Helpline acts as a lifeline for ordinary citizens. The National Consumer Helpline is a flagship initiative of the Department of Consumer Affairs to guide consumers, resolve grievances and create awareness about their rights. It operates through the portal [consumerhelpline.gov.in](https://consumerhelpline.gov.in), which functions as the Integrated Grievance Redress Mechanism. The platform brings together consumers, government agencies, regulators, ombudsmen, companies and call centres on a single system.

Through this mechanism, consumers can register complaints online and seek resolution at the pre-litigation stage. If they remain unsatisfied, they still have the option to approach the Consumer Commissions. The portal also serves as a knowledge platform to inform citizens about their responsibilities while protecting their rights.

#### Progress in Consumer Redressal

The reach and efficiency of the helpline has been significantly enhanced by leveraging technology. Call volumes have grown more than tenfold, rising from 12,553 in December 2015 to 1,55,138 in December 2024.The platform currently receives over one lakh complaints per month reflecting the growing consumer trust. The average number of monthly complaint registrations has increased from 37,062 in 2017 to 1,70,585 in 2025.With the introduction of digital modes, nearly 65% of consumer grievances on the helpline are registered through online and digital channels. Grievance registration via WhatsApp has shown a significant growth from 3% in March 2023 to 20% in March 2025.

Further, In July 2025, the National Consumer Helpline successfully facilitated refunds totalling Rs. 2.72 crore by resolving



7,256 consumer grievances across 27 different sectors which increased from 1079 consumer grievances with total refund of Rs. 62 lakhs in April 2025. The e-commerce sector for July 2025 accounted for the largest number of refund-related complaints, with 3,594 cases resulting in refunds worth 1.34 crore. The Travel and Tourism sector followed, with refunds amounting to 31 lakh.

Under the Convergence initiative, companies partner with the National Consumer Helpline on a voluntary and free-of-charge basis to ensure that customer grievances are resolved quickly and amicably. Complaints are forwarded in real time, and companies are expected to respond within 30 days.

The number of convergence partners has steadily increased from 263 in 2017 to 1,142 companies till Sept,2025, strengthening collaborative mechanisms for timely grievance redressal.

Partnering with NCH offers several advantages. Companies can address consumer

grievances proactively, preventing disputes from escalating.

This approach enables faster and mutually satisfactory resolutions, benefiting both customers and the company.

It helps improve customer retention and build loyalty through better service.

Participation promotes strong corporate governance and demonstrates a commitment to social responsibility.

National Consumer Helpline Empowers Students in Refund Disputes

As of Feb 2025, the Department of Consumer Affairs has secured refunds worth 1.56 crore for more than 600 students enrolled in Civil Services, Engineering and other courses, after coaching centres failed to honour their refund commitments. The action, enabled through grievances filed on the National Consumer Helpline, ensured timely redressal of issues such as unfulfilled services, cancelled classes and unfair practices, while also mandating coaching institutes to adopt transparent, student-friendly refund policies.

NCH Integrated with Next-Gen GST Reforms 2025

The Department of Consumer Affairs has aligned the National Consumer Helpline with the Next-Gen GST Reforms 2025, which were approved at the 56th meeting of the GST Council chaired by the Union Finance Minister in Sep 2025, and are in keeping with the vision outlined by the Prime Minister in his Independence Day 2025 address. To manage the rise in consumer queries and complaints expected after the introduction of revised GST charges, rates and exemptions from 22 September 2025, a dedicated category was created on the INGRAM portal. This category covers major sectors such as automobiles, banking, consumer durables, e-commerce, fast moving consumer goods and others, where consumers can directly

register GST related complaints.

Since the implementation of the Next-Generation GST Reforms 2025, the National Consumer Helpline has logged 3,981 calls concerning GST issues as of 2nd Oct 2025. Of those, 31% were queries and 69% were formal grievances handled for further action.

Out of the total, 1,992 grievances have been forwarded to the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) for further action, while 761 grievances have been referred in real time to the relevant convergence partner companies for direct resolution.

Several key sectors have emerged where consumers are seeking clarity and action following the GST changes:

A notable share of grievances were related to milk pricing. Many consumers reached NCH believing that milk companies ought to reduce milk prices in light of revised GST rates, but it was clarified that fresh milk is already exempt from GST and UHT milk has now also been exempted.

Another large cluster of complaints involved electronic goods purchased online. Consumers alleged no benefit was passed on despite GST reductions. The investigation highlighted that rate reductions (from 28% to 18%) apply to items like TVs, ACs, monitors and dishwashers, while some items like laptops, refrigerators and washing machines were already taxed at 18%.

Complaints also came in about domestic LPG cylinders. People said prices had not decreased. It was clarified that the GST rate on domestic LPG remains at 5%.

Some complaints involved petrol pricing, where people expected reductions. But petrol sits outside the GST regime altogether.

The first week of GST-related grievance reporting shows that consumers are engaging actively with the redressal system, reflecting growing awareness and confidence in the mechanisms set up by the Department of

Consumer Affairs.

How one Registers his/her Grievance?

Consumers can register their grievances with the National Consumer Helpline through multiple channels:

Call the toll-free numbers 1800 11 4000and speak directly with an agent. Grievances can be registered in 17 languages via toll-free number 1915.

Register on the portal [consumerhelpline.gov.in](https://consumerhelpline.gov.in). After a one-time signup and email verification, a user ID and password will be created. With these credentials, consumers can log in, lodge complaints and upload supporting documents.

Send an SMS to 8800001915 and the team will get back to the consumer.

Use WhatsApp to raise the grievance.

Lodge complaints through the NCH mobile app.

Access the service on the UMANG app.

Further, a dedicated feedback mechanism has been introduced, encouraging consumers to share suggestions via <https://consumerhelpline.gov.in/public/feedback>. The feedback received is systematically reviewed and analysed, serving as a vital input for continuous improvement in line with consumer needs.

#### Conclusion

The National Consumer Helpline has established itself as a vital platform for protecting consumer rights and ensuring fair business practices. By providing timely grievance redressal, facilitating collaboration between consumers, companies and authorities, and leveraging technology for greater efficiency, NCH empowers individuals to seek justice without lengthy legal processes. Its proactive approach strengthens transparency, builds trust in the system, and promotes a culture of accountability, making it an indispensable tool in India's consumer protection framework.

# Corn Must Become India’s New Crude

For India to become Atma Nirbhar and achieve its ambition of a \$5 trillion economy, the solution to one of its biggest vulnerabilities – dependence on imported petroleum and LNG – is already in front of us

### Dr J P Gupta

For India to become Atma Nirbhar and achieve its ambition of a \$5 trillion economy, the solution to one of its biggest vulnerabilities – dependence on imported petroleum and LNG – is already in front of us. By adopting a focused five-year plan, India can drastically reduce its chronic energy import dependency and accelerate toward energy self-reliance, food security, and decarbonization. India's annual petroleum import bill stands at Rs 24 lakh crore and is growing at an alarming pace.

By 2030, imports of petroleum, LNG, and petrochemical feedstocks are projected to rise steeply, by ending eningthe economy and undermining national security. Nearly 85 per cent of India's petroleum demand is met through imports, a figure that will only climb with GDP growth if corrective action is not taken. Petroleum-fuelled vehicles alone contribute nearly 40 per cent of India's environmental pollution, especially in cities like Delhi, which already ranks among the most polluted globally.

Unless India shifts gears, the dual crisis of import dependency and pollution will derail its growth story. The solution is a corn revolution. India must emulate the Brazilian model , which successfully transitioned to ethanol-based fuels. Brazil has mandated flex-fuel vehicles that run on 100 per cent hydrous ethanol (92 per cent ethanol + 8 p er cent water), reducing pollution and



petroleum dependence for over 30 years.

India's demand is clear: 35 million tons/year of gasoline Growing demand for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), renewable diesel (RD), and ethylene for petrochemicals This can be fully met by producing 70 million tons of ethanol annually, requiring about 200 million tons of corn. A global comparison shows that while the USA produces 400+ million tons of corn/year; China 300+ million tons/year, Brazil (with just a seventh of India's population) 150 million tons/year, India produces just 45 million tons/year but with a potential for 200 million tons within 5 years.

With India's 2–3 crop cycles per year, hybrid dent corn seeds, and modern practices, productivity can surpass the US.

The key advantages of corn as the new crude oil are: Energy Security: Reduced reliance on imports that are vulnerable to wars, sanctions, and tariffs. Rural Prosperity: Direct economic gains for farmers and rural India. Economic Savings: Billions saved on imports, fuelling GDP growth. Food & Nutrition Security: Corn by-products include food, animal feed, edible oil, and beverage-grade CO2. Clean Air: Sharp reduction in city pollution – India hosts 10 of the world's most polluted

cities. Edible Oil Independence: Corn ethanol production would yield 4 million tons/year of corn oil, cutting palm oil imports (over \$20 billion annually).

Corn can produce not only biofuels (ethanol, methanol, SAF, RD) but also protein meal for livestock; cooking oil (a healthier alternative to palm oil); beverage-grade CO2 and dry ice; ethylene and downstream polymers and green hydrogen (with minimal power input). This makes corn the most versatile and strategic crop for India's energy transition. The Ministry of Petroleum recently approved \$100 billion for petroleum-based ethylene crackers. This is counterproductive.

The same ethylene can be produced from corn ethanol at just 30 to 40 per cent of the capital cost – with cleaner environmental impact and massive rural benefits. It is time we learnt from global successes. In the USA, 200 ethanol plants produce 60 million tons/year, nearly double India's gasoline demand. In Brazil, flex-fuel cars run on 100 per cent ethanol or blends. California promotes E85 fuel (85 per cent ethanol + 15 per cent gasoline). India's strength is that with short 110-day crop cycles, India can scale up corn production faster than any global competitor.

Past success stories show this is possible. The use of Bt Cotton (2002) turned India from cotton importer to global leader in a decade. The use of GM Brinjal in Bangladesh increased crop productivity dramatically. A similar adoption of fuel-purpose yellow dent corn seeds can transform India's economy. The

following actions recommended: Establish mega bio-ethanol plants (1200–1500 KLPD) via oil sector refineries. Build 10 new corn-based green ethylene complexes at a fraction of petroleum cracker costs.

Transition existing petrochemical crackers (IOC, BPCL, GAIL, RIL, Adani) from petroleum/LNG to corn. Declare Corn Production as a National Mission, with priority support equal to the Green Hydrogen Mission. Secure international corn supply agreements (Brazil, Argentina, Ukraine, USA) as a stop-gap until domestic capacity scales.

The health and environmental gains from such a strategy will include reduced PM2.5 pollution and improved urban air quality; Corn oil as a heart-healthy substitute for palm oil and contribution to India's Net Zero 2070 goals. Corn is the new crude oil. It offers not just fuels and petrochemicals but also food, feed, oil, and CO value chains. With the right policies, India can achieve energy security; food security and decarbonization. Declaring Corn Production as a National Mission will make India truly Atma Nirbhar, resilient against oil cartels, and firmly on the path to becoming a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

The writer is Chair, Environment & Green Hydrogen Committee, PHDCCI and Managing Director, Greenstat Hydrogen India Pvt. Ltd. He can be reached at [jpglobalconsultinggroup@gmail.com](mailto:jpglobalconsultinggroup@gmail.com)

Source: The Statesman

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Adi Karmayogi Abhiyaan

# Bandipora shines nationally, wins best performer award

President felicitates DC Bandipora for exemplary performance

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 17: In a historic moment and a matter of immense pride for Jammu and Kashmir, District Bandipora has bagged the Best Performer Award in the Country under the prestigious Adi Karmayogi Abhiyaan (AKY), recognizing the district's outstanding implementation and on-ground impact of the initiative.

For this remarkable feat, Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, was felicitated by the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, during a national-level ceremony held today.

The honour marks a significant milestone for the district, reflecting its commitment to innovation, transparency, and citizen-centric administration.

The Adi Karmayogi Abhiyaan, a flagship initiative of the Government of India aimed at capacity building, skill enhancement, and improving governance efficiency, was implemented in Bandipora with remarkable zeal and vision. The district administration adopted a proactive approach by conducting extensive training sessions, awareness programmes, and introducing



digital governance practices, all of which contributed to its recognition as the Best Performing District in India.

The DC expressed gratitude on receiving the national honour and dedicated the achievement to the collective efforts of her team and the people of Bandipora. She said that the recognition belongs to the

entire Bandipora team who worked tirelessly to make the Adi Karmayogi Abhiyaan a success.

The DC acknowledged the relentless dedication and coordination of the District Nodal Officer (DNO) Yar Ali Khan, Chief Planning Officer, M. Maqbool Lone; District and Block Mission Teams (DMTs

and BMTs), Aadi Saathis, Aadi Sahyogis, and all 17 participating Ministries.

This national recognition has brought unprecedented pride and visibility to Bandipora and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, placing it firmly on the national map for excellence in governance and public administration.

## NC welcomes restoration of Darbar Move

Calls it a step towards regional unity



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 17: National Conference Provincial President Kashmir Showkat Mir Friday warmly welcomed the decision to restore the Darbar Move, calling it a significant step toward reinforcing the historic bond between the regions of Jammu and Kashmir.

He said the revival of this age-old administrative tradition will not only revitalize economic activity in Jammu during the winter months but also help bridge the emotional and regional gap between the two provinces.

"The Darbar Move was never just about shifting files. It was about building trust and connection between the people of Jammu and Kashmir. It ensured that both regions received equal administrative attention and engagement," he said.

He highlighted that the restoration of the practice by

Omar Abdullah led elected govt would revive business, hospitality, and tourism sectors in Jammu, providing a much-needed economic boost during the lean season.

"The Darbar Move symbolized unity in diversity, a legacy that brought people of both regions closer through shared governance and mutual engagement. Its restoration is a welcome move that will foster inclusivity and regional harmony," he said.

Mir urged the administration to ensure that the revival is implemented with proper planning and consideration for environmental and infrastructural concerns, ensuring it benefits the people without undue logistical strain.

He reiterated the party's commitment to policies and traditions that uphold the composite culture, economic balance, and political inclusivity of all regions of Jammu and Kashmir.

## Rs 55000 fine imposed on erring FBOs in Handwara

KT News Desk

KUPWARA, OCT 17: Additional Deputy Commissioner, (ADC), Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi who is also Adjudicating officer Handwara Friday imposed a fine of Rs 55,000 on various erring Food Business operators (FBOs) for violations of various provisions of Food Safety and Standard Act (FS&SA) 2006.

The fine was imposed on the erring traders (for miss branded and sub standard food) during the proceeding of cases related to the FS&SA Act 2006 which were listed before the Adjudicating officer.

The Adjudicating officer warned them to abide by the legal regulations adding that non-compliance of Food safety and standards Act-2006 and rules there under by the food business operators will be dealt with more strictness in coming time.

## Special Lok-Adalat for Cheque Bounce cases held

KT News Desk

PULWAMA, OCTOBER 17: Special Lok-Adalat for Cheque Bounce cases was organized in District Court Complex & other sub-ordinate courts of District Pulwama under the Chairmanship of Chairman District Legal Services Authority (Pr.District & Sessions Judge), Pulwama, Malik Shabir Ahmad and under the supervision of Secretary DLSA Pulwama, Mudasar Farooq.

During the Lok-Adalat, a total of 13 cases were taken up by 03 benches in the district out of which 05 cases were settled and an amount of Rs14.05 lakh was awarded as settlement amount.

## Nagrota Bye Election First randomization of EVMs, VVPATs conducted

KT News Desk

JAMMU, OCTOBER 17: First Randomization of FLC passed EVMs and VVPATs was conducted by the District Election Officer Jammu to allocate EVMs and VVPATs for the bye election to 77- Nagrota Assembly Constituency.

The Randomization of EVMs and VVPATs was done through the EVM Management System, developed by Election Commission of India, in the presence of the representatives of National and State Recognized Political Parties.

After completion of the First Randomization, the lists of EVMs and VVPATs were shared with all the National and State Recognised Political Parties at district headquarters.

The EVMs and VVPATs will be provided to the Returning Officer 77- Nagrota for use in bye-election 2025. These EVMs and VVPATs will be stored in strong room of 77- Nagrota Assembly Constituency in the presence of the representatives of the National and State Recognised Political Parties.

After finalization of the list of contesting candidates, the list of first randomized EVMs and VVPATs will be shared with all the contesting candidates, as well.

## Avny Lavasa visits IDTR Kot Bhalwal Jammu



### Reviews ongoing works

KT News Desk

JAMMU, OCTOBER 17: Secretary, Transport department, Avny Lavasa Friday visited Institute of Driving Training and Research (IDTR) located at Kot Bhalwal here and held detailed assessment of ongoing works.

The visit was part of the department's focused efforts to expedite the development of critical transport infrastructure in the Union Territory.

The Secretary was accompanied by Transport Commissioner, Vishesh Paul Mahajan; Additional Transport Commissioner, Anju Gupta; Superintendent Engineer, PW (R&B) Jammu, Additional Secretary, Transport, Regional Transport Officer (RTO), Jammu; Executive Engineers PWD & Mechanical and Assistant Engineers PWD and Mechanical Departments.

At the outset of the visit, the Transport Commissioner presented a detailed overview of the IDTR project. He informed the Secretary about components of the institute like Administrative Block, Hostel

Block, various driving test tracks, and other associated infrastructure being developed to facilitate professional driver training and research.

During the inspection, the Secretary assessed the progress of civil works and examined key training facilities such as driving simulators, classrooms, laboratories and other equipment essential for modern driver education. She also held on-site deliberations regarding coordination, quality control and future operational planning of the IDTR.

Expressing concern over delays in the completion of critical infrastructure, the Secretary issued firm instructions to the Executive Engineers, PWD, Mechanical and Electrical to ensure timely execution of all pending works. She emphasized the importance of adhering to the stipulated timelines and directed that the balance works must be completed within the next 15 days.

Avny Lavasa also reiterated the Transport Department's commitment to developing state-of-the-art training and testing facilities in J&K to enhance road safety, reduce accidents and professionalize driver training standards.

## Chairman DLSA Sgr reviews functioning of LADCs

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 17: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar, under the aegis of the Jammu & Kashmir Legal Services Authority, organized a review meeting in the office chamber of the Principal District and Sessions Judge/Chairman, DLSA Srinagar, at the District Court Complex, Srinagar.

The meeting was chaired by, Principal District and Sessions Judge/Chairman, DLSA Srinagar, Tasleem Arief and held under the supervision of Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, Sajad-ur-Rehman.

The meeting was convened to review the functioning and performance of the Legal Aid Defence Counsels (LADCs) and



to ensure effective delivery of legal aid services to undertrial prisoners and other eligible

beneficiaries. During the meeting, discussions were held on various

## Mission YUVA DLIC meet held at Gbl, 53 fresh cases approved

KT News Desk

GANDERBAL, OCTOBER 17: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore Friday chaired a meeting of district level implementation committee (DLIC) here to examine and approve cases received under the Mission YUVA (Yuva Udyamita Vikas Abhiyan) scheme for financial assistance and entrepreneurial support to beneficiaries in the district.

At the outset, DC emphasized the importance of mission YUVA in promoting entrepreneurship, skill development, and self-employment among youth.

The meeting discussed and

scrutinized the applications regarding units received under the scheme from SBDU, and unanimously approved 53 cases under the Mission YUVA scheme.

The DC directed all the line departments to ensure timely support and facilitation of the beneficiaries approved under the scheme.

Among others, the meeting was attended by the Additional District Development Commissioner, Assistant Director Employment, Lead District Manager, District Nodal Officer JKEDI, besides other officers and officials from concerned departments.

## DC inspects road renovation work in Udhampur Town

KT News Desk

UDHAMPUR, OCTOBER 17: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai conducted an on-spot inspection of the road renovation work here at Chopra ITBP. She reviewed the progress of patch work at the take-off point of a road constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana.

The DC directed the Executive Engineer PMGSY to ensure early completion of the patch work for smooth vehicular movement. She also instructed the Executive Engineer JPDCL to immediately shift the electricity poles, while the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Department was asked to relocate the water supply



pipes lying within the road alignment without delay.

The DC emphasized the timely completion of all related works to improve road connectivity and facilitate hassle-free vehicular movement in the area.

## DC Doda reviews progress of NHIDCL projects Stresses on road safety, timeline completion of NH works

KT News Desk

DODA, OCTOBER 17: Deputy Commissioner Doda Harvinder Singh Friday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of road safety and infrastructure works being executed by the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL).

The meeting focused on the ongoing works along the Batote-Kishtwar National Highway, with special emphasis on improving road safety, maintaining traffic flow and ensuring the timely completion of developmental projects.

Detailed discussions were held regarding construction of



crash barriers, culverts, drainage systems, blacktopping and widening of narrow stretches. The DC directed the concerned departments to ensure the immediate removal of encroachments and expedite the blacktopping of the Batote-Nashri road.

He also emphasized that

blacktopping of all key stretches must be completed before the onset of winter to ensure smooth movement of vehicles and avoid road damage during snowfall. Additionally, he instructed the NHIDCL to expedite the shifting of electricity towers obstructing road work and

constituted a committee to review and resolve the matter.

Stressing on public safety, the DC instructed the NHIDCL to prioritize widening of sharp curves and strengthening of retaining walls, particularly at sensitive locations such as Khellani Mahalla, Ragi Nallah, Assar stretch and Thanda Pani.

The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed the status of bridge construction along the highway and instructed the executing agencies to accelerate the pace of work. He specifically directed the removal of a large boulder at Jalebi Mohare, Pul Doda to prevent any potential mishaps and ensure smooth vehicular movement.

## SWD presents baby kits to newly born baby girls at DH Poonch

KT News Desk

POONCH, OCTOBER 17: In a heart warming initiative to promote the cause of the girl child, the Department of Social Welfare Friday felicitated newly born baby girls at the District Hospital Poonch under the flagship programme "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" (BBBP).

A team led by District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Khalil A. Bandy in the presence of Dr. Mohammed Shafiq Chohan, Medical Superintendent, gave away Baby Care Kits containing essential items for infant care and hygiene to the mothers of newly born girls. The beneficiaries expressed gratitude to the department for this thoughtful gesture and the continued efforts



to uplift the status of women and children in the society.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from hospital staff, social welfare officials and families of the newborns. The DSWO highlighted the significance of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative in improving child sex ratio and ensuring survival, protection and education of the girl child. He emphasized

that such initiatives not only extend immediate support to mothers and newborn girls but also send out a strong message of equality and empowerment.

Dr. Mohammed Shafiq Chohan appreciated the Social Welfare Department and reaffirmed the hospital's commitment to supporting government programmes that focus on maternal and child welfare.



# Jammu Railway Station intensifies inspections ahead of festivals

KT News Desk

Jammu, Oct 17: Indian Railways has made extensive preparations in view of the upcoming festivals and to provide a safe and comfortable travel experience to passengers, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Uchit Singhal said on Friday.

Singhal conducted a detailed inspection of Jammu Railway Station on Friday. The primary objective of the inspection was to review the facilities available for passengers and assess the security arrangements.

Key Points Focused During the Inspection

\* During the inspection at Jammu Railway Station, the availability of drinking water for passengers, the cleanliness of toilets, and the condition of waiting rooms were checked, and all staff working there were



given necessary instructions regarding their work.

\* The help desk and information display boards installed at the station for the guidance of passengers were also inspected.

\* Keeping security in mind, the inspection also ensured that adequate security forces were deployed. Surveillance has been increased on the station premises through luggage scanners, metal detectors, and ample CCTV cameras.

\* The ticket inspector and enquiry office at the station were also thoroughly inspected. All staff present there were strictly instructed to remain vigilant during their work and make frequent announcements regarding trains and platforms for passengers.

\* In view of the expected rush of passengers during the festive season, the inspection also ensured that the elevators and escalators function smoothly and safely, so that passengers do not

face any inconvenience or risk.

\* The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager inspected all the stalls at the station, including the quality of food, hygiene standards, display of licenses, and prescribed rates. He also ensured that all vendors were wearing their uniforms and following all hygiene rules.

During his inspection at the station, Uchit Singhal paid close attention to all the standard amenities available for passengers. To control the heavy rush and maintain uninterrupted train operations, he issued necessary instructions to all railway employees. He appealed to passengers not to carry firecrackers, matches, or any inflammable material during their journey and to contact the Railway Protection Force (RPF) or call the 139 helpline if they notice any suspicious activity.

## Rly Jammu Div conducts surprise ticket checking drive to curb ticketless travel

KT News Desk

Jammu, Oct 17: A surprise ticket checking campaign was conducted under the leadership of Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Uchit Singhal, on the Banihal to Katra section of the Udhampur Srinagar Baramulla Rail Link Project in the Jammu Division. The main objective of this campaign was to create awareness among passengers about ticketed travel, curb ticketless travel, and increase railway revenue.

For this surprise ticket checking campaign, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Uchit Singhal, formed a checking team consisting of Assistant Commercial Manager, Manoj Meena, Ticket Inspector, Abdul Rashid, and other ticket checking staff. They investigated and took action against passengers travelling without tickets on trains running between Banihal



and Katra.

During the action, approximately 36000 was collected as fines from 33 ticketless passengers. Passengers were also made aware of the importance of travelling with a ticket and that travelling without a ticket is a punishable offence.

Regarding this surprise ticket checking campaign, Uchit Singhal stated, "Such checking campaigns will be conducted periodically in various sections of the division to curb ticketless travellers and to prevent inconvenience to other passengers during their travel."

## India-Sri Lanka FTA upgrade needed: Lankan PM in Delhi

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 17: The India-Sri Lanka free trade agreement (FTA), signed way back in 1998, "needs to be upgraded", Sri Lankan Prime Minister Harini Amarasuriya said on Friday.

In her address at NDTV World Summit here, she also said that as the island nation rebuilds, its partnership with India has "evolved into a forward-looking, multi-faceted collaboration in every conceivable area".

Amarasuriya is on a three-day

visit to India from October 16-18, her first official tour to the country after assuming office as the prime minister. On Thursday, she visited Hindu College here, where she received a red-carpet welcome, as the college described her return to the campus as a "remarkable homecoming" of a "distinguished alumna".

While addressing the summit, she recalled her arrival in Delhi in the early 1990s as a young Sri Lankan student, pursuing a Bachelor's degree in sociology. "Delhi.. a city that holds some of



my formative memories. Standing here in Delhi, feels like coming full circle. Three decades ago, in the early 1990s, I was a student at Hindu College, a young student from Sri Lanka, navigating a world in flux. Delhi was a city of ideas then, as it is now, reflecting the enduring spirit of India through the centuries," she said.

It was a period of change and economic reforms. "For many of us students, it was our first encounter with the concept of risk, in life, in economics, in politics and in identity".

And, returning now, several decades later, "I see an India transformed, a confident, vibrant nation of 1.4 billion people charting its own path," Amarasuriya said.

India today stands among the fastest-growing major economies in the world. Its digital revolution, green transition and infrastructure initiatives are laying the foundation of Viksit Bharat, a vision of a developed and prosperous nation, she said.

"India's journey offers valuable lessons for developing countries, including my own," the Lankan

PM said. The members in the audience included many world leaders from different fields.

"Today as Sri Lanka rebuilds, our partnership with India has evolved into a forward-looking, multi-faceted collaboration in every conceivable area, from development cooperation, training and capacity building, connectivity, including grid connectivity, energy security, digitalisation, education and technology, trade and investment, defence, tourism, culture and importantly people-to-people connectivity," she said.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Modi Govt's tough

and the country's global standing has strengthened," he said, adding that the government's vision is to build a self-reliant and secure nation rooted in cultural values.

Calling for public vigilance, Shah urged citizens to stay alert against those who seek to derail progress. "Only a stable government can ensure continuity of development and the safety of the nation," he said.

The Home Minister also launched a sharp attack on Lalu Prasad Yadav, the RJD, and the INDI Alliance, recalling the "jungle raj" era in Bihar marked by corruption and lawlessness. Expressing confidence, Shah said the NDA would return to power in Bihar with the largest majority in two decades.

He also paid tribute to late BJP leader Brijmohan Ji, and remembered Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan and Bhikhari Thakur, calling them symbols of Bihar's political and cultural pride. (KNO)

Have asked Congress

last assembly session, headed by the Chief Secretary. The committee has made progress in this regard. Once the report is filed, we will do whatever is needed," he added.

Abdullah, however, refused to reply to the allegations made by the Congress leader Vikar Rasool Wani, who accused him of keeping Congress away at the directions of Home Minister Amit Shah. "Why are you wasting my time to reply to the accusation of a leader, who stood third in his constituency during the recent Assembly Polls," he said.

Omar further said that the alienation between J&K and New Delhi will end once statehood is restored. "We are being deprived of statehood. The Business Rules are nowhere in sight. Advocate General is nowhere, and many organisations should have control of the elected government. In such a situation, there would be alienation," he said.

"As the alienation was ended in the first year of our tenure, we expect it to be ended in the second year," the Chief Minister said. (KNO)

All eyes on independents

House, Sheikh Khursheed (MLA, Langate) and Shabir Ahmed Kulley are the two independents aligned with the opposition bloc. Kulley contested the last Assembly election as an independent after being denied a party ticket.

Interestingly, he also accompanied the NC's Rajya Sabha candidates to the office of the Returning Officer on October 13, when they submitted their nomination papers.

Khursheed's Awami Ittehad Party does not exist in the records of the Election Commission of India, and he contested the election as an independent.

With the BJP just one vote short of victory on the fourth Rajya Sabha seat, the entire attention has shifted to independent MLAs in the Assembly given opaque voting rules for them.

According to officials of the Election Commission of India (ECI), open ballot voting applies only in elections to the Rajya Sabha. "Every political party which has members in the Assembly can appoint an authorized agent to verify whom its members have voted for. The authorized agent will be seated inside the polling station in seats provided by the Returning Officer. In the case of MLAs who are members of political parties, after they mark their vote and before inserting the ballot into the box, they are required to show the marked ballot paper to the authorized agent of their party," the officials said.

However, they added that independent MLAs are required to insert the marked ballot paper into the ballot box without showing it to any agent. "If they display their vote to anyone, including the authorized agent of any political party, it is liable to be cancelled," they said. (KNO)

Expecting more

Omar Abdullah took a round of stalls set up by various departments at Kulgam.

"Chief Minister took a round of stalls set up by various departments at Kulgam, showcasing key Government schemes, public welfare initiatives, and achievements under flagship programmes," the post reads.

"He interacted with officials and beneficiaries, appreciating the efforts towards ensuring citizen-centric governance and effective service delivery," it added. (KNO)

Police arrest

identified as Mohd Yasin Wani, son of Mohd Maqbool Wani, resident of Brenti Batpora Dialgam, A/P Nagam Kokernag. He was evading arrest in case FIR No. 90/2005 under sections 366, 376 RPC of Police Station Kokernag. Abdul Gani Dar, son of Juma Dar, resident of Pindobal, A/P Singhpora Ashmuqam was wanted in case FIR No. 49/2000 under section 366 RPC of Police Station Kokernag. Sabir Khatana, son of Shafi Khatana, resident of Ahlan Gadole was involved in FIR No. 101/1999 under sections 376, 366, 109 RPC of Police Station Kokernag. Riyaz Ahmad Gigi, son of Mohd Qasim Gigi, resident of Lamed, Kulgam was wanted, in connection with FIR No. 02/2022 and 26/2022 of PS Srigufwara under sections 457, 380, 411, 34, 201 IPC. Manzoor Ahmad Bakerwal, son of Kaloo Bakerwal, resident of Jorda Arnas Reasi, A/P Noorpora Tral was involved, in case FIR No. 02/2022 and 26/2022 of PS Srigufwara under sections 457, 380, 411, 34, 201 IPC. All five accused were produced before Hon'ble Courts and are now in judicial custody, it reads.

In Shopian, J&K Police apprehended absconder identified as Ab. Rashid Sheikh, son of Ab. Rehman Sheikh, resident of Karewa Manloo, Shopian, the statement added.

"The accused had been absconding since 1989 in connection with FIR No. 160/1989 U/S 379 RPC, 6 Forest Act, and a warrant under Section 512 CrPC had been issued against him by the Hon'ble Court of Law. The accused was wanted for his involvement in a criminal case and had been deliberately evading the due process of law for more than three decades. The accused has been produced before the Hon'ble Court, Shopian, for further legal proceedings," police said.

In Ganderbal, J&K Police has traced and arrested 02 absconders who were evading arrest for more than three decades, the spokesman said, adding that the arrested individuals have been identified as Shabir Ahmad Pakhtun son of Lala Din Pakhtun resident of Wangath, and Mohd Lateef Khatana son of Gami Khatana resident of Wangath, who were wanted in case FIR No.'s 83/1995 U/S 3/25 I.A. Act and 84/1990 U/S 451, 336 RPC. The accused persons were apprehended during a special police operation and produced before the Court JMFC Ganderbal for further legal proceedings, police said. In Awantipora, J&K Police received non-bailable warrants under section 299 CrPC/ 335 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita issued by the Hon'ble Principal Session Court Pulwama against nine absconders, involved in different cases registered at Police Station Pampore.

They have been identified as Mohd Shafi Bhat S/o Ab Aziz Bhat R/o Drangabal Pampore, Fayaz Ahmad Dar S/O Ghulam Mohd Dar R/O Kadlbal Pampore, Mohd Shafi Mir S/O Mohd Maqbool Mir R/O Kadlbal Pampore, Zahoor Ahmad Bhat S/o Ab. Hamid Bhat R/O Tulbagh Pampore, Mudaris Manzoor Shah S/O Manzoor Ahmad Shah R/o Kadlbal Pampore, Mudaris Ahmad Sofi S/o Gh. Mohd Sofi R/O namblabal Pampore, Faheem Ahmad Darzi S/ O Mohd Ashraf Darzi R/o Namblabal Pampore, Javid Ahmad Mir S/o Ab Majeed Mir R/o Frestabal Pampore and Muzaffar Ahmad Mir S/O Bashir Ahmad Mir R/O Drangbal Pampore. Accordingly, police said that a special team headed by SHO PS Pampore Inspector Khalid Fayaz under the supervision of SDPO Pampore RP Singh was constituted and the accused persons were arrested from different areas. Subsequently, the arrested accused were produced before the Court of Law.

"The successful arrest of long-absconding accused persons reflects the firm commitment of J&K Police to bring offenders to justice, irrespective of the passage of time. J&K Police remains committed to upholding the rule of law, ensuring accountability, and delivering justice; proving once again that justice may be delayed, but it will never be denied," the spokesman said.

India to take

soil," he said.

"Very soon, we will take our domestic manufacturing to 100 per cent as well," he said.

Singh said India's defence export has reached a record Rs 25,000 crore which was less than Rs 1,000 crore few years ago.

"We have now set a target to achieve Rs three lakh crore in domestic defence manufacturing and Rs 50,000 crore in defence exports by 2029," he said.

MHA orders judicial

been registered at Police Station Leh under multiple sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, covering offences including abetment, attempt to commit offences, causing injury, and obstruction of public servants.

The inquiry will be conducted by a retired Supreme Court Judge Dr B. S. Chauhan. He will be assisted by retired District and Sessions Judge Mohan Singh Parihar as Judicial Secretary and IAS officer Tushar Anand as Administrative Secretary.

The investigation will examine the circumstances that led to the law-and-order situation, the police action and the deaths of the four individuals.

Notably, Ladakh's peaceful protests for statehood and Sixth Schedule protections escalated into violence on September 24 in Leh. Youth clashed with police, torching BJP offices and vehicles; four civilians were killed and more than 80 injured.

A curfew was imposed and activist Sonam Wangchuk was arrested. (KNO)

Act responsibly

performed 11 complex surgeries overnight, saving multiple lives. "Their competence, dedication, and the blessings of God saved many people," he said. "Only five patients remain hospitalized, mostly with bone injuries, and are expected to recover within two weeks."

Dr Kotwal said that the Government of India has responded to public demand for transparency by ordering judicial inquiry to be conducted by former Supreme Court Judge Justice B S Chauhan, who will be assisted by an IAS

officer and a senior judicial officer. "The order has been issued, and the Commission will begin its work immediately. Its purpose is to uncover the truth and ensure that such an incident never happens again," the Chief Secretary said.

Dr Kotwal said that most people who were detained after the Leh violence have been released. "Only 23 individuals remain in judicial custody under the authority of the courts. The law will take its course and public order must be maintained at all costs," he added.

Dr Kotwal thanked community leaders for their cooperation in restoring peace and normalcy, highlighting that internet services, schools, markets, and tourism activities have now resumed. "We have just withdrawn restrictions under Section 163. Our goal is to keep Ladakh peaceful and stable," he said.

Dr Kotwal said, "We cannot afford another incident. Once large crowds form, emotions rise and control becomes difficult. I request everyone not to gather in large numbers. Let's focus on rebuilding our peace and progress."

He commended the patriotism and peace-loving nature of Ladakh's people, noting their historic contribution to national security through the Ladakh Scouts regiment. "Ladakhis are known for their nationalism and devotion to the country. No one can ever doubt their patriotism," he added.

The Chief Secretary said that the High-Powered Committee (HPC) meeting regarding Ladakh's constitutional safeguards will be held shortly. "The Government of India has accepted the demand for a judicial inquiry. The next step is to hold the HPC meeting where all issues and demands will be discussed and resolved through dialogue," he said.

Dr Kotwal said the administration is considering compensation for the families who lost their breadwinners in the incident. "If an innocent person has suffered, the government is positive about providing compensation as per law. The issue is not money, but principle," he said.

Security Measures Dr Kotwal explained that the Rapid Action Force (RAF) has been deployed in replacement of existing forces not as an addition. "The RAF is better trained for mob control and reduces the risk of casualties. We now have two normal and two RAF companies deployed," he said.

He stated that the Government of India is moving ahead with plans to create five new districts in Ladakh, as announced in August. The proposal is currently under consideration by the Ministry of Finance for approval of necessary posts and resources.

On the issue of internet suspension, Dr. Kotwal acknowledged the difficulties faced by students and businesses. "Students depend on online classes and YouTube courses. Traders and professionals also rely on connectivity. That's why we restored internet services as soon as the situation improved," he explained.

Dr Kotwal said that applications for district-level job recruitment have been invited and that LSSB exams are scheduled for November. "Our focus now is on education, employment, and tourism revival," he said.

The Chief Secretary announced that Ladakh will participate in the WTM London Exhibition an important global tourism event, to promote the region and attract visitors. "We are trying to revive tourism which was affected by recent events. Peace and stability are essential for Ladakh's economy," he said.

He reiterated that traditional village

headmen (Goba) play a crucial role in maintaining communication between communities and the administration. "They are respected figures and are appointed by the District Commissioner. Their cooperation is vital for maintaining public order and community welfare," he said. (KNO)

5.6 mag earthquake

ground shaking, potentially greater structural damage, and higher casualties.

On September 18, India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, reaffirmed India's commitment to promoting peace, stability, and development in Afghanistan. During a UN Security Council quarterly briefing on Afghanistan, he highlighted India's priorities, including providing humanitarian aid and implementing capacity-building initiatives for Afghan citizens.

Ambassador Parvathaneni emphasised the importance of international and regional cooperation on Afghanistan-related issues and expressed India's support for the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). He also thanked UNAMA's Special Representative and Head, Roza Otunbayeva, for her briefing.

Around the same period, northern Pakistan, near the Afghan border, experienced a 5.7-magnitude earthquake. According to India's NCS, the tremor occurred at 5:45:06 pm IST at a depth of 10 km, with coordinates 36.61° N and 72.87° E. Its shallow depth made the quake felt across parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Islamabad, Swat, and Chitral.

Afghanistan, Pakistan, and northern India lie in a highly seismically active zone, where the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates converge. The region frequently experiences moderate to strong earthquakes, often felt across borders due to nearby fault lines. Authorities in Afghanistan and Pakistan have not yet reported casualties or infrastructure damage, as assessments are ongoing.

Over 27% increase

total area of glacial lakes and water bodies in the Himalayan region increased from 5,29,116 hectares in 2011 to 5,61,014 hectares in 2025, reflecting a 6.03 per cent overall rise.

The monitoring was conducted using Sentinel-1 and Sentinel-2 satellite imagery processed through the Google Earth Engine platform, classified the lakes based on changes in their water spread area, greater than 40 per cent, up to 40 per cent, no change, decrease, or not analysed due to factors such as cloud cover or frozen conditions.

The report was prepared by the Morphology and Climate Change Directorate of the CWC under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, as part of its ongoing assessment of glacial lakes in the Indian Himalayan region.

Under its expanded monitoring network, the CWC observed a total of 2,843 glacial lakes and water bodies during July 2025. These include 581 glacial lakes located within India and 1,360 in the trans-boundary region, covering the Indus, Ganga, and Brahmaputra basins.

Among the Indian glacial lakes newly monitored under the Glacial Lake Atlas 2023, the combined water spread area increased by 7.74 per cent, from 11,963 hectares in 2021 to 12,890 hectares in 2025. In the trans-boundary region, the area rose by 5.77 per cent, from 44,409 hectares to 46,971 hectares over the same period.

In July 2025, 471 glacial lakes within India displayed an increase in water spread area. PTI



# SC voices concern over rising instances of digital arrest, seeks Centre's response

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 17: The Supreme Court on Friday took serious note of the digital arrest of a senior citizen couple in Haryana's Ambala on the basis of forged orders of the court and probe agencies by fraudsters to extort Rs 1.05 crore.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi flagged the rising number of digital arrest cases across the country and sought the response of the Centre, CBI in a case registered as suo motu after the 73-year-old woman wrote to Chief Justice of India B R Gavai.

The bench said forging apex court, high court orders, signatures of judges to digitally arrest innocent people, including senior citizens, strikes at the bottom of trust and faith of people in judicial institutions.

"The fabrication of judicial orders bearing forged signatures of judges strikes at the



very foundation of the public trust in the judicial system besides the rule of law. Such action constituted direct assault on the dignity of the institution," the top court said.

It added that such a grave criminal act cannot be treated as an ordinary or solitary offence of cheating or cyber crime.

"We are also inclined to take judicial notice of the fact that the instance case is not the

sole instance. It has been largely reported many times in the media that such crimes have taken place in different parts of the country. We are, therefore, of the view that action and coordinated efforts between the central and state police are required to unearth the full extent of the criminal enterprise involving forging judicial documents, extortion/robbery of innocent people most importantly the senior citizens," the

bench said.

It sought assistance of the Attorney General and directed the Haryana government and Ambala cyber crime department to file a status report on the probe done so far in the case of senior citizen couple.

The matter was brought to the court's notice by the complainant woman who alleged that scamsters produced a forged court order with stamp and seal for arrest and surveillance of the couple between September 3 and 16 to defraud over Rs 1 crore through multiple bank transactions.

The woman said the court orders were shown through multiple audio and video calls by people impersonating as CBI and ED officers to arrest them.

The top court was informed that two FIRs were lodged with the cyber crime department at Ambala under various provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhitya (BNS).

## Sensex jumps 484 points to settle at 83,952, Nifty tops 25,700 as rally extends to third day



PTI

Mumbai, Oct 17: Benchmark Sensex spurted by 484 points and Nifty closed above 25,700 on Friday, extending their winning run to the third consecutive day on buying in blue-chip banking and oil shares and foreign fund inflows.

In a volatile session, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 484.53 points or 0.58 per cent to settle at 83,952.19. During the day, it surged 704.58 points or 0.84 per cent to 84,172.24.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 124.55 points or 0.49 per cent to 25,709.85. Among Sensex firms, Asian Paints jumped the most by 4.18 per cent. Mahindra & Mahindra, Bharti Airtel, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, ICICI Bank and Reliance Industries were also among the gainers.

However, Infosys, HCL Tech, Eternal, Tech Mahindra and Tata Steel

were among the laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 997.29 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) also bought stocks worth Rs 4,076.20 crore in the previous trade.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi settled in the positive territory while Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng ended lower.

Markets in Europe were trading sharply lower. US markets ended lower on Thursday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.92 per cent to USD 60.50 a barrel.

On Thursday, the Sensex jumped 862.23 points or 1.04 per cent to settle at 83,467.66. The Nifty surged 261.75 points or 1.03 per cent to 25,585.30.

## UIDAI launches SITAA to strengthen India's ID Tech ecosystem



IANs

New Delhi, Oct 17: The Unique Identification Authority of India on Friday launched the Scheme for Innovation and Technology Association with Aadhaar (SITAA) to foster innovation and collaboration in the digital identity domain.

The scheme is a collaboration among startups, academia, and industry in the digital identity sector to strengthen India's ID tech ecosystem. The applications for the pilot programme of SITAA will remain open until November 15, an official statement said.

"The pilot will have few initial challenges specifically suitable for academic institutions, startups, and industry partners. All entities that meet the eligibility criteria and provide innovative solutions are encouraged to apply to this programme," the release said.

The initiative focuses on co-developing secure, scalable, and indigenous identity technologies across biometric devices, authentication frameworks, data privacy, artificial intelligence, and secure identity applications. The MeitY Startup Hub and NASSCOM have signed MOUs with the UIDAI to serve as strategic partners. They will provide technical mentoring, incubation, accelerator support, industry connections, and global outreach for SITAA.

The release said that the SITAA programme aligns with the national priorities of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Digital Public Infrastructure, ensuring a pipeline of secure, scalable, and future-ready identity solutions.

The pilot focuses on challenges related to face liveness detection, presentation attack detection, and contactless fingerprint authentication

## Chhattisgarh sees mass surrender of 210 Maoists, CM terms it historic

PTI

Jagdalpur, Oct 17: As many as 210 Maoist cadres, including one Central Committee member, surrendered before authorities in Chhattisgarh's Jagdalpur on Friday, making it the largest mass surrender in the history of anti-Naxal operations in the state, officials said.

With this, a total of 238 Naxalites have quit the path of violence and joined the mainstream in the state in the last three days as 28 others had surrendered on Wednesday.

Hailing the development, Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said it was a historic day not only for Bastar but for Chhattisgarh and the entire nation.

According to officials, Friday's mass surrender - the largest in the history of anti-Naxal operations in the state - marks a decisive turning point in the government's ongoing campaign to eliminate Left-Wing Extremism.

All the cadres, who surrendered before the police and paramilitary officials in Jagdalpur, the headquarters of the Bastar district, were formally welcomed into the mainstream by tribal community leaders and priests who greeted them with red roses, symbolising love, peace and a new beginning.

The surrendered cadres, senior police and paramilitary officials and tribal community leaders later posed for photographs.

The banner behind the stage, where cadres posed for photograph, read 'Poona Margem - Punarwas se Punarjeevan- Maoist cadres rejoining the mainstream'.

Poona Margem is a rehabilitation initiative launched by Bastar Range police for Naxalites.



Addressing a press conference later, CM Sai said 210 brothers and sisters who were misguided and detached from society rejoined the mainstream today, showing faith in the Constitution, the path of non-violence as shown by Mahatma Gandhi, and the state's rehabilitation policy.

The surrendered cadres include top-rung leaders to lower-rung members, he said, congratulating and wishing them well for their future. The state's Surrender and Rehabilitation policy has multiple provisions, including financial assistance, land benefits, benefits in the new Industrial policy and linking them with employment, he added.

The historic event is seen as a result of the central and state governments' comprehensive anti-Naxal strategy, supported by sustained efforts from the police, security forces, local administration, and the active participation of aware and vigilant communities, he said.

Senior Maoist leaders who surrendered include Rupesh alias Satish, a Central Committee member; Bhaskar alias Rajman

Mandavi, Ranita, Raju Salam, Dhannu Vetti alias Santu - all four Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC) members, and Ratan Elam, a Regional Committee Member, officials said.

The surrendered Maoists handed over 153 weapons, including 19 AK-47 rifles, 17 Self-Loading Rifles, 23 INSAS rifles, an INSAS LMG (light machine gun), thirty six .303 rifle, four Carbine and 11 Barrel Grenade Launcher (BGL), a police official said.

On October 2, as many as 103 Naxalites, 49 of them carrying a collective bounty of more than Rs 1.06 crore, had surrendered in Bijapur district of Bastar region.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has repeatedly underlined the government's resolve to eradicate Naxalism, largely concentrated in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region, by March 31, 2026.

On Thursday, Shah declared two worst-hit regions of Chhattisgarh, Abujmarh and North Bastar, free from Naxal terror and made it clear that those willing to surrender are welcome, but those who continue to wield guns will face the wrath of security forces.

## GST reform boosts sales, consumer confidence across markets



IANs

New Delhi, Oct 17: The recent Goods and Services Tax (GST) reform is having a visible impact across markets, with traders and consumers alike reporting significant benefits. Shopkeepers say the reduction in GST rates has led to a noticeable drop in prices, spurring consumer demand and resulting in higher sales volumes.

Ashish Agarwal, a local FMCG product seller in Raipur city, told IANS that his business has doubled compared to last Diwali. "The government has reduced taxes on everything from toothpaste to hair oil and baby diapers. Because of this, people are buying more than before," he said. In the automobile sector, Aditya Sen,

a sales executive in Raipur, said that the new GST rates have lowered vehicle prices, attracting a surge in buyers. "Sales have gone up sharply and the number of showroom inquiries has also increased," he added.

Residents have echoed similar sentiments. Rajat observed that prices have fallen considerably since the GST reform, drawing large crowds to the markets. Ritvik Mishra noted that "after the GST rate cuts, people are shopping in large numbers. It's been almost a month since implementation, and this will give a big push to the economy".

Business owners say the benefits are being passed directly to customers. A local wholesaler said that lower GST has reduced wholesale prices, and retailers are ensuring that customers enjoy the full benefit. "We are seeing a very good response from buyers," he said.

In Surajpur, a resident shared that he purchased a refrigerator at a Rs 2,000 discount thanks to the revised GST rates. "The savings even allowed me to buy a new mixer," he added with satisfaction.

Overall, the GST reform appears to be fueling consumer confidence, reviving market activity, and providing a festive boost to the economy ahead of the festive season.

## Taking magnesium daily? You might be using wrong kind

TOI HEALTH

New Delhi, Oct 16: It's surprising how a single mineral can influence nearly everything, from how the brain functions to how the heart beats. Magnesium works quietly behind the scenes in more than 600 biochemical reactions. Yet, according to Dr Mark Hyman, nearly 80% of people may have low magnesium levels that go unnoticed because standard tests rarely pick it up.

Low magnesium often hides behind common problems like muscle cramps, brain fog, anxiety, poor sleep, PMS, or constipation. Over time, deficiency can even raise the risk of diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke. The real issue, however, isn't just about getting more magnesium, it's about getting the right kind.

### Magnesium Glycinate

When stress feels constant or sleep seems impossible, magnesium glycinate steps in as a gentle hero. Known for its calming effect, this form binds magnesium with glycine, an amino acid that supports relaxation. It's particularly effective for those dealing with anxiety, PMS cramps, or high blood pressure.

What makes it stand out is how easily the body absorbs it without upsetting digestion.



It's mild, soothing, and best taken at night to unwind both body and mind. Think of it as a natural way to ease into a more restful state, without the side effects of stronger

sleep aids.

### Magnesium Citrate

Magnesium citrate has a different role to play. It draws water into the intestines,

helping the body relieve occasional constipation and bloating. For those struggling with sluggish digestion or irregularity during travel, this form brings balance and lightness back to the system.

However, moderation is key. Because it encourages bowel movement, high daily doses can cause discomfort or loose stools. It's best used strategically, when digestion needs a little help, not as an everyday supplement.

### Magnesium L-Threonate

When focus fades or memory feels foggy, magnesium L-threonate offers a brain-specific boost. What makes it unique is its ability to cross the blood-brain barrier, something most forms of magnesium can't do effectively.

This means it directly supports the brain, helping with cognitive clarity, memory, and stress-related sleep issues. It is particularly helpful for improving brain plasticity, the process that keeps the mind sharp and adaptable. It's the form that speaks the brain's language.

### Where magnesium naturally thrives

Supplements are helpful, but food still remains the most natural source of magnesium. Leafy greens like spinach, seeds like pumpkin, nuts like cashews, and creamy avocados all deliver a magnesium-rich

punch. Even dark chocolate, when minimally processed, adds a little indulgence with purpose.

Lifestyle plays an equally vital role. Reducing stress, cutting down on alcohol and caffeine, and maintaining a healthy gut can improve magnesium absorption naturally. Even a relaxing magnesium bath can work wonders by calming tense muscles and soothing the nervous system.

### Getting magnesium right

Choosing magnesium isn't about taking more, it's about understanding which form fits the body's needs. Whether it's calming the mind, supporting digestion, or sharpening focus, each type plays a distinct role.

Magnesium deficiency often whispers before it shouts, showing up in subtle ways that are easy to overlook. Recognising these signs early and choosing the right support can bring noticeable changes, not just in physical health but in emotional balance and mental clarity as well.

### Disclaimer

This article is for informational purposes only and does not replace medical advice. Consulting a healthcare professional before starting or changing any supplement routine is recommended, especially for those with underlying health conditions or those on medication.



### US Chamber of Commerce challenges \$100,000 H-1B visa fee, cites legal concerns



ANI

Washington, Oct 17: The US Chamber of Commerce has filed a legal challenge to the administration's \$100,000 fee on H-1B visa petitions, an official release by the Chamber stated on Thursday.

The Chamber's litigation argues that the new fee is unlawful because it overrides provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act that govern the H-1B program, including the requirement that fees be based on the costs incurred by the government in processing visas.

In announcing today's action, Neil Bradley, Executive Vice President and Chief Policy Officer at the US Chamber, issued the following statement:

"The new \$100,000 visa fee will make it cost-prohibitive for US employers, especially start-ups and small and mid-size businesses, to utilize the H-1B program, which was created by Congress expressly to ensure that American businesses of all sizes can access the global talent they need to grow their operations here in

the US," Bradley said, as per an official release by the US Chamber of Commerce. "President Trump has embarked on an ambitious agenda of securing permanent pro-growth tax reforms, unleashing American energy, and unraveling the overregulation that has stifled growth. The Chamber and our members have actively backed these proposals to attract more investment in America. To support this growth, our economy will require more workers, not fewer.

"The president deserves credit for securing our nation's border. With the border secure, we now have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to accomplish targeted legal immigration reforms, and we stand ready to work with Congress and the administration to make that happen. That includes working together on common-sense reforms to improve the visa process for skilled workers. The president has said he wants to educate, attract, and retain the world's best and brightest in the US, and the Chamber shares that goal," the US Chamber of Commerce added.

## Trump to meet Zelensky after announcing Putin summit

AFP

Washington, Oct 17: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky meets Donald Trump at the White House Friday, seeking US-made Tomahawk missiles even as the US president reaches out to Russia's Vladimir Putin for a fresh summit.

Zelensky will be making his third trip to Washington since Trump returned to office, following a disastrous televised shouting match in February and a make-up meeting in August, as the US leader's stance on the war blows hot and cold.

Trump's latest pivot came on the eve of Zelensky's visit. He announced that he would be meeting Putin in Budapest, in a fresh bid to reach a peace deal and end Moscow's invasion launched in 2022.

Ukraine had hoped Zelensky's trip would be more about adding to the pressure on Putin, especially by getting American-made long-range Tomahawk cruise missiles that can strike deep into Russia.

But Trump, who once



said he could end the war in Ukraine within 24 hours, appears set on pursuing a new diplomatic breakthrough to follow the Gaza ceasefire deal that he brokered last week.

Trump said Thursday he had a "very productive" call with Putin and that they would meet in the Hungarian capital within the next two weeks. He added that he hoped to have "separate but equal" meetings with both Putin and Zelensky but did not elaborate. Zelensky said as he

arrived Thursday in Washington that he hoped Trump's success with the Gaza deal would bring results to end the war that has left swathes of his own country in ruins. "We expect that the momentum of curbing terror and war that succeeded in the Middle East will help to end Russia's war against Ukraine," Zelensky said on X.

Zelensky insisted that the threat of Tomahawks had forced Moscow to negotiate.

"We can already see that Moscow is rushing to resume dialogue as soon as it hears about Tomahawks," Zelensky said, adding that he'll also be meeting US defense companies to discuss additional supplies of air defense systems.

'Didn't like it'

Trump however cast doubt on whether Ukraine would ever get the coveted weapons, which have a 1,000-mile (1,600-kilometer) range.

Trump told reporters on Thursday that the United States could not "deplete" its own supply. "We need them too, so I don't know what we can do about that," he said.

The US president said the Russian leader "didn't like it" when he raised the possibility during their call of giving Tomahawks to Ukraine.

The Kremlin said on Thursday it was making immediate preparations for a Budapest summit after what it called the "extremely frank and trustful" Putin-Trump call.

But Putin told Trump that giving Ukraine Tomahawks

would "not change the situation on the battlefield" and would harm "prospects for peaceful resolution," the Russian president's top aide Yuri Ushakov told journalists.

Trump's relations with Putin — a leader for whom he has repeatedly expressed admiration over the years — and Zelensky have swung wildly since he returned to the White House in January. After an initial rapprochement, Trump has shown increasing frustration with Putin, particularly since he came away from meeting the Russian president in Alaska with no end to the war in sight.

Zelensky meanwhile has gone the opposite way, winning back Trump's support after the disastrous Oval Office encounter when the US president and Vice President JD Vance berated him in front of the cameras.

The Ukrainian returned in August — wearing a suit after he was mocked for not wearing one in the first meeting — and accompanied by a host of Western leaders in solidarity.

## Trump warns US may 'go in and kill Hamas' if attacks continue

ANI

New Delhi, Oct 17: US President Donald Trump has warned that the United States may be forced to take military action against Hamas if the group continues targeting civilians in Gaza.

Trump posted on Truth Social, "If Hamas continues to kill people in Gaza, which

was not the Deal, we will have no choice but to go in and kill them." The warning comes a day after Trump addressed the ongoing situation in Gaza, focusing on Hamas' search for the remaining deceased hostages and the broader implications of the US-brokered peace agreement.

Taken together, Wednesday's remarks on hostages and the

peace deal help explain Thursday's stark warning, linking humanitarian concerns over civilians and hostages with the possibility of stronger US action if attacks continue.

Describing the grim task in recovering bodies, Trump told reporters in the Oval Office, "It's a gruesome process... They're digging and they're finding a lot of bodies. Then they have to

separate the bodies."

He elaborated on the conditions in which some bodies were found, noting, "Some of those bodies have been in there a long time, and some are under rubble. They have to remove rubble. Some are in tunnels... that are way down under the earth."

These comments contextualise the severity of the

humanitarian situation on the ground, which underpins his warning about potential US action. Turning to the issue of weapons, Trump stressed the need for Hamas to comply with the peace agreement, saying, "We want the weapons to be given... They've agreed to do it. Now they have to do it. If they don't do it, we'll do it."

## Last surviving member of first team to climb Mt Everest passes away

IASNS

New Delhi, Oct 17: Kanchha Sherpa, the last surviving member of the first successful summit of Mount Everest in 1953, passed away at the age of 89.

Sherpa, who had been unwell for quite some time, died early Thursday at his home in Kapan, Kathmandu, said Phur Gelje Sherpa, President of the Nepal Mountaineering Association.

"With his passing, there are no longer any surviving members of

that legendary team of climbers, which is a great loss for the entire mountaineering community," he told IASNS.

His last rites are scheduled to be performed on October 20 as per Sherpa tradition.

Sherpa is survived by two sons, two daughters, and their children.

He was among the 35-member team that led Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay to the summit of the 8,848.86-metre peak on May 29, 1953.

He was one of three Sherpas to



reach the final camp before the summit with Hillary and Tenzing.

Born in March 1937, Kanchha was just 17 when he became part of the team that first conquered

the world's highest peak.

In later years, Kanchha continued to work as a high-altitude guide.

He expressed concern about overcrowding and pollution on Mount Everest during a 2024 media interview. He urged people to respect the mountain, which the Sherpas revere as the Mother Goddess.

He also regretted that the Sherpas' contributions to the 1953 expedition were not more widely recognised.

## Head expects Rohit, Kohli to play 2027 ODI World Cup

PTI

Perth, Oct 17: Hard hitting Australian opener Travis Head expects the "great white ball" duo of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma to carry on till the 2027 ODI World Cup.

The speculation over their future has been intense and all eyes will be on the star Indian batters in the ODI series beginning here on Sunday.

Speaking to media alongside India spinner Axar Patel, Head said he would put his money on Rohit and Kohli featuring in the ODI World Cup two years later, even though the upcoming series is expected to be their last in Australia. "Two quality players, two of the great white-ball players. Probably, Virat is the greatest white-ball player. Rohit is probably not far behind.

"As someone who opens batting in the same format, holds huge regard for Rohit and what he's been able to do. So, I'm sure they will miss them at some stage, but I think they're both going to be 37, aren't they?" said Head while standing alongside Axar.

India and Australia play each other frequently across formats and the players of both teams know each other well also because of the IPL. However, Head has never got the chance to speak to Rohit about batting and it is something he hopes to do in the near future.

"It's nice just watching from



afar, as someone who plays the game in a similar way, I think, and having played a lot against him in IPL and a lot of international cricket against him, I feel like he goes the right way about things, he plays the game in the right way.

"But, yeah, I've never really come in contact with him, haven't had the opportunity to play with him anywhere. But, yeah, there might be an opportunity, but like I said, I think he's going to play for a little bit longer and have the opportunity to play in India a few bits, so that opportunity may come," said the southpaw. Head was non-committal when asked whether he would play all eight white ball games against India considering the Ashes is round the corner.

On Cameron Green being ruled out of the India series, Head said it is more of a precautionary measure ahead of

the Ashes.

"I'm sure he's (Green) going all right. He's in good hands. I haven't spoken to him just yet, so it's pretty new. So, yeah, work through it. It's like nothing else with some guys, getting some injuries. We've got, obviously, Josh (Hazlewood) in the same position as well.

"So, yeah, work through that. But, unfortunately, we're not going to have him. I don't think it'll have any impact on the Ashes. It's more disappointing that he's not here at the moment for the next three games," said Head.

He expects the series to be highly competitive like it often has been in the past.

"Yeah, always a big series. If you look at the guys playing the series, eight games, it's against highly skilled opposition. So, it's a very exciting start to the summer," he added.

### Movies Schedule

Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2025

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