



This newspaper is the sister concern of news agency Kashmir News Observer (KNO)

www.kashmirthunder.in | epaper.kashmirthunder.in | twitter.com / kashmirthunder | facebook.com/kashmirthundernews | Regd. No. JKENG/2010/39938

## In past 9 months, no local youth joined terror outfit in J&K: HM Shah

Region will get statehood at appropriate time | Paki used to hand over arms to our children; situation has changed | J&K people now feel belonging to entire country

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Oct 18: Asserting that no local youth has joined any terrorist outfit during the past nine months in Jammu and Kashmir, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday promised restoration of statehood to the region at "an appropriate time."

Addressing a media conclave in Patna, Shah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "After the abrogation of Article 370, terror-infested Jammu and Kashmir has taken a U-turn, local recruitment in terror outfits has fallen to zero as no local youth has been recruited in the past nine months."

He said that there is a qualitative change in Jammu and Kashmir, where separatism had been festering since the 1990s. "Earlier, Pakistan felt no need



to send terrorists from across the border. They used to place

arms in the hands of our children. Now the situation has

changed. The people of Jammu and Kashmir feel they belong to the entire country and the entire country belongs to them," Shah said.

The Union Home Minister said, "Today, democracy has been restored in Jammu and Kashmir. Panchayat and municipal polls have taken place, and so have elections for the legislative assembly. Rajya Sabha elections will also take place after some time."

Asked about a statement by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who spoke of a "gulf" remaining in between Jammu and Kashmir and New Delhi on account of statehood not being restored even after a year of his swearing in, Shah replied, "He (Abdullah) may be saying this out of political compulsions. But statehood would be restored at an appropriate time. And it will be done following discussions with him." (KNO)

## 'Op Sindoor' was trailer, every inch of Pak territory within BrahMos range: Rajnath

KNO Monitoring Desk

Srinagar, Oct 18: Terming 'Operation Sindoor' just a trailer, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said any provocation from Pakistan would be met with a stronger response, and every inch of the neighbouring country is within the range of BrahMos missiles.

Speaking at a ceremony in Lucknow in Rajnath Singh, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "The BrahMos missile is capable of striking long distances at supersonic speeds."

He said that India has strengthened its defence capabilities with the first batch of BrahMos missiles manufactured at the BrahMos Integration and Testing Facility Centre in Lucknow under the Uttar Pradesh



Defence Industrial Corridor. "Every inch of Pakistan's territory is now within the reach of BrahMos. Operation Sindoor is proof that victory has become our habit. The operation was just a trailer. We must further enhance our capabilities," he said. Rajnath Singh added that the missile's guided system and traditional warhead

make it a key component of India's defence and that India is now producing advanced defence systems indigenously.

He said small industries producing critical components must be strengthened to ensure that the entire supply chain remains within India. "We must develop all types | More on P6

## Linking Pahalgam attack with statehood injustice to J&K people: CM Omar



Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

- » Considering cabinet expansion
- » Never promised against smart meters
- » Budgam candidate within 48 hours
- » PSA removal only after statehood

Owais Gul

Srinagar, Oct 18: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday said that linking Pahalgam attack with statehood restoration is an injustice to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He added that the government will scrap

Public Safety Act (PSA) once statehood is restored.

Omar also said the candidate for Budgam by-poll would be announced within the next 48 hours. He further announced that the cabinet would be expanded after the by-elections.

Fulfilling promises Addressing a press conference in Srinagar over the completion of one year in office, the CM, per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that all promises made with the people will be fulfilled in the five-year tenure.

"There are some hurdles in our way, but all our promises to the people mentioned in the | More on P6

## LG Sinha thanks PM Modi for opportunity to bring back holy relics from Russia

'Exposition will strengthen people-to-people ties between two countries'

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 18: Thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi for providing him with a sacred opportunity to bring back holy relics of Lord Buddha from Kalmykia, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said the exposition will strengthen the people to people ties between India & Russia.

Interacting with media persons after paying his reverent homage to the relics, enshrined at the iconic Geden Sheddup Choikorling Monastery, popularly known as the "Golden Abode of Shakyamuni Buddha, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Exposition of the holy relics of



Lord Buddha in Kalmykia is a landmark event that represents a historic homecoming of faith for the Kalmyk people, the only Buddhist nation in Europe. It stands as a powerful bridge of spiritual friendship between India and Russia, showcasing India's efforts in cultural ties

and the unifying power of the Buddha's teachings."

The J&K Lieutenant Governor presented "Khatak" to the holy relics and lighted a lamp in the temple. He also offered prayers and presented "Khatak" in front of Bakula Rinpoche.

LG Sinha presented a

Kashmiri shawl to Shajin Lama and received blessings.

Pertinently, the Lieutenant Governor on Friday arrived in Russia to bring back the holy relics of Lord Buddha to India following their exposition in Elista, the Capital city of the Republic of | More on P6

## Assembly session: Speaker forms Business Advisory Panel

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 18: Ahead of the Assembly Session, Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather has formed a Business Advisory Committee.

According to a communique, a copy of which lies with news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the panel has been formed by the speaker under Rule 317 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Jammu and Kashmir legislative Assembly.

Sunil Kumar Sharma, Leader of Opposition, Ali Mohammad Sagar, Mubarak Gul, Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, Gulam Ahmad Mir, Sajad Gani Lone, Mohammad Fayaz, and Choudhary Mohammad Akram are its members. (KNO)

## Rajya Sabha polls stir old ghosts of cross-voting in J&K

Legislative council may be gone, but its shadows persist

Ibni Maqbool

Srinagar, Oct 18: The upcoming Rajya Sabha election in Jammu & Kashmir has rekindled memories of cross-voting by Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) during elections to the now-defunct Legislative Council, which was abolished by Parliament under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act of 2019.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), a look back at

previous indirect contests in J&K—where MLAs served as voters—reveals a history riddled with political surprises. Elections to the Legislative Council, known as the House of Elders, witnessed numerous instances of MLAs defying party whips. The Council, which no longer exists, had 36 members, 22 of whom were elected by MLAs.

The most shocking instance of cross-voting happened on April 13, 2011, when BJP's candidate Thakur Ranjit Singh secured

only four votes, despite the party having 11 MLAs in the Assembly.

Embarrassed by the defiance of the party line, the BJP expelled seven MLAs and even wrote to the Speaker of the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly seeking their disqualification.

The issue of cross-voting also echoed repeatedly in the Legislative Assembly during the NC-Congress alliance, with the Congress seeking the disqualification of BJP MLAs. | More on P6

## Div Com invites tourists to Kashmir

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 18: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Saturday invited tourists to visit the Valley this winter, saying that the administration is fully geared up to ensure smooth public services and promote winter tourism across prominent destinations.

Speaking to reporters, in Lal Chowk Srinagar, Anshul Garg, per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that winters are not new to Kashmir, they come every year and with each passing season, administration keeps

improving its preparedness.

He said that the Chief Secretary has issued specific directions regarding winter preparations and that divisional and district administrations are conducting regular field visits to review arrangements.

"From control rooms to snow clearance and other facilities, everything has been organized in a detailed and systematic manner," he added.

Highlighting tourism prospects, the Divisional Commissioner said the government is trying to "kickstart winter tourism" this season. "We invite all tourists to visit Kashmir. | More on P6

## CM Abdullah seeks tangible steps to improve patient care in J&K

National experts discuss strategies for strengthening patient safety at SKIMS conference

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Oct 18: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday inaugurated the National Conference on Patient Safety at SKICC, organised by the Department of Hospital Administration, Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) and called for tangible reforms in the healthcare delivery system.

The theme of the conference was "Every Error a Lesson, Every Lesson a Safer Care." The event brought together prominent policymakers, healthcare administrators, and medical

experts from across the country to deliberate on strategies to strengthen patient safety frameworks in hospitals and healthcare institutions.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by Minister for Health & Education Sakina Itoo, Advisor to Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Secretary Health & Medical Education Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Founder Director SKIMS Dr A.K. Nagpal, and others.

In his inaugural address, the Chief Minister, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), underscored the crucial link between patient



safety, efficient hospital management, and overall patient satisfaction.

He said that healthcare

institutions must not let conferences remain mere academic exercises but should derive "actionable outcomes" that can be

implemented across hospitals in the Union Territory.

"Patient safety and patient care are directly linked to

efficient patient management. I urge SKIMS to frame concrete recommendations through this conference that can serve as a model for other hospitals across Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister for Health & Medical Education Sakina Itoo emphasised the government's unwavering commitment to upgrading healthcare facilities in the region. She highlighted a series of recent initiatives at SKIMS, including the installation of advanced diagnostic and treatment equipment such as a CT Scan, LINAC machine, 20 anaesthesia workstations, and five

mobile X-ray units.

"SKIMS is a visionary creation of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, whose contributions to the healthcare sector are timeless. The government is committed to further strengthening this premier institution to ensure quality care for all," she said.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani praised SKIMS for maintaining its reputation as one of the leading medical institutions in the country. He said the institute's highly skilled human resources have brought national and international recognition to Jammu and Kashmir's healthcare system. | More on P6



## Oral health cornerstone of overall well-being: Sakeena

'Dentists integral to preventive, systemic healthcare'

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 18: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Saturday addressed the 16th Indian Dental Association J&K Dental Conference at Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) here.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Sakeena lauded the vital contributions of dental professionals in strengthening the healthcare system of Jammu and Kashmir. She underlined that oral health is the cornerstone of overall well-being and must be integrated more prominently into general healthcare policies.

The Health Minister highlighted that oral health was commonly an overlooked aspect for most of the individuals, but in recent times people have understood that oral



health plays a critical role in preventing systemic diseases like diabetes, cardiovascular ailments and respiratory infections. The Health Minister

added that in recent years oral hygiene practices and dental check-ups have emerged as an essential routine for people, especially the young

generation. She urged the dentists and participants to aware people about adopting regular oral hygiene practices and dental check-ups as an essential part of their healthcare routine.

Acknowledging various issues faced by dental doctors, Minister Sakeena emphasized that dental doctors are as important as MBBS doctors and dentists need to be given due recognition at par with other kind of doctors.

"Dentists are not merely tooth doctors; they are integral to preventive and systemic healthcare. It is high time that dental professionals are given due recognition and status, at par with MBBS doctors," she asserted, drawing a resounding applause from the audience of leading dental experts, practitioners and students.

Highlighting the government's commitment to improving dental

education and public oral health awareness, the Minister highlighted that policy measures are being explored to strengthen dental infrastructure, research, and service delivery across urban and rural areas. She also added that measures are being explored for creating employment avenues for dental doctors.

Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir, Prof. Nilofer Khan and Principal Indira Gandhi Govt. Dental College and Hospital Jammu, Dr. Parveen A Lone also spoke on the occasion.

The dental conference, organized by the J&K chapter of Indian Dental Association (IDA), brought together eminent academicians and practitioners from across the country to deliberate on advances in dental science, public health dentistry and innovations in oral care technologies.

## STD supports Rural Women Entrepreneurs on Diwali



KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, OCTOBER 18: In true spirit of Diwali, a team from J&K State Taxes department, led by Additional Commissioner Enforcement and Administration Jammu, Namrita Dogra visited stalls set up by Self-Help Groups (SHGs) under the J&K Rural Livelihood Mission (Umeed) at Excise and Taxation Complex here.

The officers enthusiastically interacted with the women entrepreneurs and purchased 'diyas, decorative items, candles, and other festive products, showcasing their solidarity and encouragement towards local talent and self-reliance.

Speaking on the occasion, Namrita Dogra expressed heartfelt appreciation

for the creativity and determination of the SHG members. "These women are not just crafting beautiful products; they are shaping brighter futures for their families and communities," the Additional Commissioner said. "This Diwali, I personally pledge to continue supporting Self-Help Groups by buying from them and encouraging others to do the same. Every small purchase from a local artisan lights up many homes."

The initiative, under the supervision of Additional Commissioner, highlighted the department's commitment towards promoting local entrepreneurship and women empowerment. The event reflected how collective efforts and conscious choices can bring festive cheer and sustainable growth to the grassroots level.

NCAP

## SMC Commissioner reviews progress of ongoing projects

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 18: In a continued effort to strengthen air quality management in the city, Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb Saturday conducted a comprehensive review of all ongoing projects under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).

The review meeting, held at the SMC Headquarters, focused on the status, progress, and timelines of various interventions aimed at mitigating air pollution and improving environmental sustainability across Srinagar. Senior officers from different departments and executing agencies briefed the Commissioner on the current implementation status of NCAP projects, including green space enhancement, mechanical road sweeping, dust suppression measures, installation of air quality monitoring systems, and public awareness campaigns.

The Commissioner emphasized strict adherence to project timelines and directed concerned officers to ensure quality execution of all works. He further underscored the importance of inter-departmental coordination to achieve measurable improvements in the city's air quality index. Commissioner reiterated SMC's commitment to implementing the NCAP roadmap effectively to make Srinagar cleaner, greener, and healthier for its citizens.



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 18: After Gul-e-Lala (Tulip) season of Spring, Gul-e-Dawood (Chrysanthemum) season of Autumn is gradually turning into another attraction for tourists & locals in Srinagar.

On Saturday, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg inaugurated the 3rd Chrysanthemum Show at Clock Tower, Lal Chowk Srinagar organised collectively by SKUAST-K, SMC and Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL).

As the heart of city glows in hue of vibrant colours casted by a variety of Gul-e-Dawood flower beds, Div Com invited tourists, locals & students to visit the place and enjoy the show which shall continue to uplift-spirit of visitors till 20th of November.

Speaking on the occasion, Garg says the Chrysanthemum Show is a great initiative of SKUAST-K to decorate the city



hub and to reach to the people.

Divulging the market essence of flower farming, Div Com said that cut flowers is a big industry and an opportunity for the progressive farmers for income generation.

He said that for twenty years Kashmir has been famous for

the Tulip season which attracts visitors from across the country & the world.

He added that the Autumn season is equally colourful and famous season of Kashmir as Spring, Summer or Winter.

He hoped that the Chrysanthemum Show would be

another attraction for the tourists to visit Kashmir & enhance the influx of visitors. Div Com divulged that Chrysanthemum gardens will be developed at different spots to adorn and beautify the city which will augment the vibrancy of Smart City.

VC, SKUAST-K, Prof. Nazir Ahmad while speaking at the occasion remarked "we converted a bustling business hub into a Colorful garden" and urged the business community to take care of Gul-e-Dawood show for the rest of the period.

CEO, SSCL Faz Lul Haseeb while speaking at the event highlighted the collaboration between SKUAST-Kashmir and Smart City to organize the show and its potential to increase footfall of tourists.

Among others, the event was attended by the business community, traders, locals, students and officers from concerned departments.

## DC, SSP Sgr chair NCORD meeting

Review anti-drug measures

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 18: To review the impact of ongoing efforts and strategize further measures in the fight against drug abuse and its trafficking, a meeting of the District Level Committee on Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) was Saturday convened under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo here at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar, Sandeep Chakravarty was also present in the meeting. At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner was given a comprehensive briefing on the key measures undertaken in the district to combat drug abuse, trafficking and ensure proper rehabilitation of affected individuals. The DC was apprised of

recent seizures, arrests, financial investigations, and detentions carried out under the NDPS Act.

Furthermore, the DC was apprised of steps taken to ensure accurate revenue entries in NDPS cases to safeguard property records and cent percent use of computerization/online billing system at pharmaceuticals in the district.

On the occasion, the DC emphasised effective anti-drug public awareness and sensitization campaigns, strengthening of Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATFs), improved inter-departmental coordination, and intensified surveillance and preventive measures at identified vulnerable hotspots.

The DC underscored the importance of eradicating the illegal cultivation of contraband crops such as bang and poppy within the district.

### OFFICE OF THE RETURNING OFFICER FOR BIENNIAL ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL OF STATES BY THE ELECTED MEMBERS/ ELECTORAL COLLEGE OF THE UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

#### NOTICE

In pursuance to rule 69 of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 notice is hereby given that the poll for the Biennial Election to the Council of States by the Elected Members of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly, will be taken on 24th of October, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the J&K Assembly Secretariat Lobby, Srinagar.

Srinagar  
October 17, 2025

(Manoj Kumar Pandit)

Returning Officer for Biennial Election to the Council of States  
(Secretary, J&K Legislative Assembly)

No.LA-43-47/ELEC//RS/2025  
Dated: 17.10.2025

DIPK-7324/25  
DATED: 18-10-2025

**KASHMIR THUNDER  
IS AVAILABLE  
AT ALL LEADING  
STALLS**

INOX  
LIVE the MOVIE  
SRINAGAR

INOX CINEMA  
SHIVPORA SRINAGAR



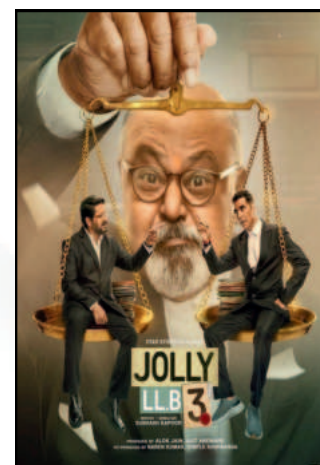
KANTARA A LEGEND: CHAPTER 1 (UA16+)  
HINDI ATMOS - 11:30 AM, 03:00 PM, 06:30 PM  
HINDI - 05:15 PM



LOVE AAJ KAL - RE-RELEASE (UA)  
HINDI - 11:00 AM



SUNNY SANSKARI KI TULSI KUMARI (UA13+)  
HINDI - 11:50 AM



JOLLY LLB 3 (UA16+)  
HINDI - 01:45 PM, 06:00 PM

## MOVIES Schedule

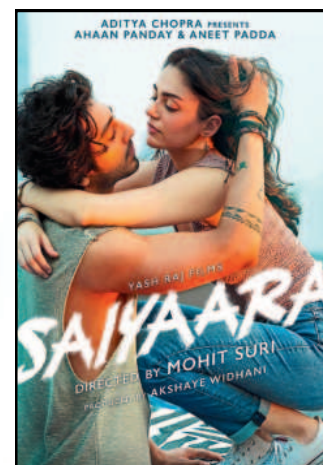
Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> October

TICKETS AT

www.bookmyshow.com  
www.inoxmovies.com  
Paytm, Inox App or  
Directly from the booking  
counter at the cinema.



CALL 95416 13868  
FOR ASSISTANCE WITH TICKETS



SAIYAARA (UA16+)  
HINDI - 02:45 PM



## Ladakh crisis ‘extremely unfortunate’: CM Omar



RAJA SYED RATHER

Srinagar, Oct 18: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday described the ongoing crisis in Ladakh as “extremely unfortunate”, saying the people of the region have been “pushed to the wall” due to the Centre’s failure to deliver on its promises. Addressing a press

conference here, Abdullah said the Union government had pledged Sixth Schedule status to Ladakh but has failed to honour that commitment. “The people of Ladakh have been pushed to the wall. Promises have been made to them that have not been kept. Unfortunately, this seems to be a practice, particularly with the erstwhile state of Jammu and

Kashmir. Promises are made and then promises are broken,” he remarked.

Drawing parallels with Jammu and Kashmir, Omar said the same pattern of “broken promises” is visible. “You promised us statehood, but are not fulfilling it. Is the attempt now to push Jammu and Kashmir to the wall also? Is that what you’re saying — that they are not happy with the situation being peaceful here, or that our demands are being raised democratically and constitutionally?” he asked.

The Chief Minister said both J&K and Ladakh were assured special constitutional safeguards following the abrogation of Article 370, but those assurances remain unfulfilled. “All we want is for those promises to be kept,” he said—(KNO)

## Artificial fruit colour law soon: Javid Dar

WARIS FAYAZ

Srinagar, Oct 18: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Departments, Javid Ahmad Dar on Saturday said the government will soon introduce a law to prohibit the use of artificial colouring on fruits, saying the practice is damaging Kashmir’s fruit industry, consumer health and market credibility.

Speaking to reporters in Bara-mulla, Minister Dar said artificial colouring has become a serious concern. “Colouring is affecting our fruit business across markets. Buyers in Delhi, Jammu and Kolkata have complained about it. We will be soon drafting a law to stop its use completely,” he said.

Minister said the government is also finalizing the creation of a dedicated Enforcement Wing to regulate fertilizers and pesticides. “Many fertilizers and pesticides



in use are of poor quality. We are strengthening enforcement to identify and act against violators,” he said.

He warned that penalties will be imposed on traders and growers

who bring coloured fruit to markets ahead of the season. “If a September apple arrives in August and shows colouring, it is malpractice. This must stop,” he said. On pest control, Minister

Dar said the illegal import of rootstocks without quarantine checks has worsened the “leaf miner” pest problem. “Some people bring rootstocks through black marketing. We have identified them and strict action will follow,” he said.

The Minister said the government will ensure safety standards in trade. “We are a progressive state. We will not ban licenses arbitrarily, but misuse will not be allowed,” he said.

He also said a plan is being prepared to decongest and expand the Sopore Fruit Mandi. “Departments of Housing, R&B, Planning and Power will jointly develop a comprehensive plan to improve transport flow and expand market space,” he said.

Minister confirmed that the Doabagh government juice plant remains functional and has been outsourced to a private operator. “It continues to operate smoothly under private management,” he said—(KNO)

## Owaisi criticizes CM Omar on PSA repeal remarks

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 18: All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) President Asaduddin Owaisi on Saturday questioned Chief Minister Omar Abdullah’s statement on his remarks over the scrapping of Public Safety Act (PSA) in Jammu and Kashmir, saying that from Sheikh Abdullah to Omar Abdullah, every chief minister had the power to repeal the law but they did not do so.

The Chief Minister earlier addressed the media persons and stated that his government would revoke the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA) once statehood is restored, adding that he would not wait for an assembly session but remove it through an ordinance.

Reacting to the statement, Owaisi said the PSA was introduced in 1978 by Sheikh Abdullah to deal with smuggling and that successive chief ministers had the opportunity to repeal it.

“The Public Safety Act, 1978, was introduced by Sheikh Abdullah in 1978 to deal with smuggling. Farooq Abdullah, G. M. Shah, Mufti Sayeed, G. N. Azad, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti have all been chief



ministers of J&K. They could have easily repealed the PSA and prevented untold suffering and human rights violations,” Owaisi said.

He added that the law “has been misused by virtually every elected CM and unelected governor,” with over 20,000 people jailed since 1978 without criminal charges, fair trials, or a proper appeals process.

“Some detentions were extended for up to seven to twelve years. One separatist was detained under the PSA and, when he was later needed, he was served with a court warrant and granted bail. Now there is a truncated elected government, and it has dawned on it to do away with the PSA,” he said, adding, “Sab kuch luta ke hosh mein aaye to kya kiya, din mein agar chiragh jalaye to kya kiya.”—(KNO)

## ‘Poshak Bandi’ held at Charar-i-Sharief

### Thousands of devotees visit shrine, offer prayers for peace, prosperity



NAVEED UL HAQ

Budgam, Oct 18: The annual ritual of Poshak Bandi, the ceremonial changing of the cloth draped over the holy grave of Hazrat Sheikh Nooruddin Noorani (RA), was held with religious fervor at Charar-i-Sharief Budgam in Central Kashmir.

This sacred ritual marks the beginning of the annual Urs celebrations.

The Poshak Bandi will be followed by Shab-Khwani (night-long prayers) on the intervening night of October

19–20. The main Urs will be observed on Monday, October 20, 2025, for which a public holiday has been declared.

The Poshak Bandi was carried out by the caretakers of the shrine in the presence of Waqf Board CEO and members, Waqf Board Administrator Charar-i-Sharief Mohammad Ashraf, Mutawali Ziyarat Younis Haji, and Mirwaiz Ameer ud Din Shah, drawing a massive crowd of devotees from across the valley. Devotees offered prayers for peace, harmony, and

prosperity in the region. Maqbool Ahmad from Chadoora said, “Attending the Poshak Bandi is a spiritual experience. We pray for the peace, harmony, and well-being of all in Kashmir.” Officials said arrangements have been put in place to ensure the smooth conduct of the Urs. Authorities directed departments to provide uninterrupted water, power, and transport facilities for devotees, while special security measures were also deployed to manage the large gatherings—(KNO)

## Kashmir markets aglow with Diwali shopping



REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, Oct 18: With Diwali just a few days away, the markets across Srinagar and other parts of the valley are buzzing with life, colour and festive cheer. The festival of lights, which will be celebrated on Monday, has brought joy and excitement to both shopkeepers and shoppers as the valley prepares for the grand celebration.

From the beautiful Lal Chowk to the lanes of Dal Gate, Polo View and Residency Road, shops have been decked with vibrant lights, candles, Diyas and decorative pieces.

Moreover, the aroma of freshly prepared sweets fills the air as people line up to buy traditional favourites like sweets. “We started decorating our shop a week ago and since this morning, there has been a continuous rush of customers,” said, owner of a bakery in Srinagar. He said this year; the response feels much better, with a sense of happiness among people.

Meanwhile, vendors selling firecrackers and decorative lights echoed similar

sentiments. “After quiet years, Diwali sales have picked up. People are buying more sparklers, candles and colourful lights this time,” said Rakesh Kumar, a stall owner from Lal Chowk Srinagar.

Similarly, the festive mood is also drawing admiration from locals. “Even though Diwali is not widely celebrated by everyone here, the festive lights and joy make the whole city look beautiful. It feels like a collective celebration,” said a college student from Rajbagh.

Similar excitement has been reported from Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam and Jammu division, where families are seen doing last-minute shopping.

It is worth mentioning, Diwali, or Deepavali, is one of India’s most significant festivals, symbolising the victory of light over darkness and good over evil. Traditionally celebrated with lamps, sweets and fireworks, the festival also signifies new beginnings and family togetherness. Meanwhile, the administration has urged citizens to celebrate safely and responsibly by avoiding loud firecrackers and encouraging eco-friendly celebrations—(KNO)

## Autumn Flower Festival’ kicks-off in Lal Chowk

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, Oct 18: The Srinagar’s iconic Ghanta Ghar (Clock Tower) at Lal Chowk came alive on Saturday with a spectacular morning of flowers as the 3rd Gul-e-Dawood (Chrysanthemum) Show-2025, themed “Autumn Flower Festival,” was inaugurated.

Lauding the collaborative efforts of SKUAST-Kashmir, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) and Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg (IAS) said that these flowers reflect Srinagar’s growing focus on urban beautification and environmental consciousness.

He said, “Such initiatives inspire citizens to connect with nature and adopt eco-friendly practices.” The Divisional Commissioner was speaking on the sidelines of the beautiful flower show at Lal Chowk, where hundreds of colourful chrysanthemum varieties and creative floral installations transformed the city centre into a vibrant floral hub.

“Such initiatives breathe life into Srinagar’s public spaces,” the Div Com Garg said.

He said, the Gul-e-Dawood Show not only celebrates nature’s beauty but also encourages citizens to embrace floriculture and sustainable landscaping. “I appreciate the collective efforts of SKUAST-K, SMC and SSCL in



Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

making this vision a reality,” he said. Moreover, as part of a celebration of autumn hues, the historic Ghanta Ghar bloomed into a hub of colours as the festival drew residents, tourists, students, local floriculturists, and flower growers. The event aims to promote floriculture, environmental awareness, and the aesthetic enhancement of Srinagar.

The Vice Chancellor SKUAST-Kashmir, Prof. Nazir Ahmad, underlined the educational and scientific value of the festival. “Floriculture enhances urban ecosystems and generates livelihood opportunities.

Our goal is to connect science with society by promoting awareness about sustainable urban development,” he said, commending SMC and SSCL for their continued support in city beautification.

Also, the commissioner SMC, Faz Lul Haseeb (IAS) described the event as a “symbol of shared vision and civic pride.” He added, “The Autumn Flower Festival showcases Srinagar’s floricultural richness and spreads awareness about urban greening, community participation, and environmental stewardship among citizens.”

It is worth mentioning, the Autumn Flower Festival features hundreds of chrysanthemum varieties, alongside themed gardens, artistic floral arrangements and creative installations encircling the historic clock tower. The vibrant display has turned Lal Chowk into a living canvas of colour, creativity, and community spirit. Officials said the Lal Chowk exhibition serves as a preview of the ‘Grand Chrysanthemum Show’ at SKUAST-Kashmir’s campus, which begins October 20, with tickets now open for public bookings—(KNO)

## Devyani Rana files nomination for Nagrota bypoll

YOGESH

Jammu, Oct 18: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Devyani Rana on Saturday filed her nomination papers for the upcoming Nagrota Assembly by-election in Jammu and Kashmir, scheduled to be held on November 11, 2025.

Rana, accompanied by senior BJP leaders and thousands of supporters, submitted her nomination before the returning officer in Jammu.

Speaking to reporters, Rana said she felt honoured to be contesting from Nagrota and expressed confidence that the people of the constituency would extend the same support and blessings to her as they had given to her late father, Devender Singh Rana.

She said her father’s greatest legacy was his hard work, honesty, and deep respect for everyone. “Rana Sahab treated everyone with love and dignity. These are the values I wish to carry forward,” she added.

Devyani Rana, daughter of the late Devender Singh Rana, the former Nagrota MLA whose demise necessitated the by-election had joined



active politics earlier this year.

In January 2025, she was appointed as the vice-president of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM).

Meanwhile, senior BJP leader and LOP, Sunil Sharma said he is confident of Devyani Rana’s victory in the upcoming Nagrota Assembly by-election, describing her as the right candidate to represent the people and continue the legacy of late Devender Singh Rana—(KNO)

## Rana right choice for Nagrota people: LoP Sharma

YOGESH

Jammu, Oct 18: Leader of Opposition in Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Sunil Sharma on Saturday said that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate for Nagrota, Devyani Rana is the right choice for people here.

Speaking to reporter ahead of Devyani’s nomination filing, Sharma said under the leadership and guidance of Prime Minister



Narendra Modi, Rana will realise her late father, Devinder Singh Rana’s dream. “She is the right choice for the constituency and she will emerge victorious from the seat,” LoP Sharma said, adding that her father left us too early, now she will realize the dream of her father. Devyani Rana, accompanied by other BJP leaders will file her nomination papers today for the bypoll to Nagrota seat. The seat felt vacant after the demise of her father last year—(KNO)



## New GST Rates In Agriculture Sector A Blessing For Farmers, Will Help Increase Their Incomes

This Diwali, India will celebrate the festival with the theme of 'Swadeshi se Samridhhi' - lighting lamps of self-reliance in every home, echoing the chants of 'Jai Swadeshi', and moving confidently towards the vision of a 'ViksitBharat' under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Welfare of farmers remains the top priority of the central government, as relentless efforts are being made to make farming easier, reduce production costs, and increase farmers' profits. Transforming the lives of farmers and making agriculture a pillar of national prosperity is not just Prime Minister Narendra Modi's goal - it is his unwavering resolve. Every decision, every reform under his leadership, places the farmer at the heart of India's growth story. The recent revisions in GST rates are a shining reflection of this vision. The 'Next Generation Reform in GST', announced by the Prime Minister from the Red Fort on Independence Day, is now taking shape as the foundation of a new, self-reliant and prosperous India.

Keeping the interests of farmers and the common people foremost, the government has made sweeping reductions in GST rates - reforms that will energise India's agricultural system and power the progress of farmers. These are not abstract changes in policy; they touch the very soil farmers till every day. Over 10 crore small and marginal farmers will benefit directly. Earlier, agricultural equipment attracted GST rates as high as 18%; now it has been slashed to just 5%, ensuring direct savings of thousands of rupees for every farmer.

Take the case of a farmer buying a 35-horsepower (HP) tractor. What once cost around 6.5 lakh will now be available for approximately 6.09 lakh - a saving of 41,000. For a 45 HP tractor, the saving is 45,000; for a 50 HP tractor, 53,000; and for a 75 HP tractor, 63,000. Even smaller machines are now within easier reach - a



power tiller will cost around 12,000 less, a paddy transplanter 15,000 less, and a thresher 14,000 less. Equipment like power weeders and seed drills are cheaper by 5,000- 10,000. Larger machinery for harvesting and sowing - such as a 14-foot cutter bar, a square baler, or a straw reaper - will now save farmers 1.87 lakh, 94,000, and 22,000, respectively. Tools like mulchers, super seeders, happy seeders, and sprayers are also more affordable, bringing modernisation to every acre.

Mechanisation is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity for profitable farming. The tax cuts on sprinklers, drip irrigation systems, harvesters, hydraulic pumps, and spare

parts will empower even small and marginal farmers to adopt modern tools. Labor costs will fall, time will be saved, and productivity will rise. While prices may vary slightly across states and companies, the overall result remains clear: farmers will spend less and earn more.

Every step we take is guided by the singular aim of farmer prosperity. I have personally met representatives of agricultural machinery manufacturers to ensure that these tax reductions translate into immediate benefits for farmers. But this reform extends beyond agriculture; it is a powerful push for the entire economy. Lower input costs will enable farmers to generate

higher returns from their produce, in turn strengthening small and cottage industries. Cheaper raw materials will bring down production costs, boosting MSMEs and creating new employment opportunities.

Agriculture and animal husbandry are twin engines of the rural economy. The GST exemptions granted to beekeeping, dairy, animal husbandry, and cooperative societies will inject new energy into the countryside. When farmers' expenses go down and their incomes rise, they will naturally invest more in education, healthcare, and better living standards. That is how rural India's holistic development begins - not through handouts, but empowerment.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always emphasised organic and natural farming as the future of Indian agriculture. At a time when the world is moving toward sustainable cultivation and ecological balance, the government's decision to reduce GST on biopesticides and micronutrients from 12% to 5% is both timely and visionary. It will encourage farmers to transition away from chemical fertilisers toward organic inputs. The results will be transformative - richer soil fertility, a healthier planet, and reduced costs of cultivation. Given that most Indian farms are small holdings, the government continues to promote integrated farming and allied activities to ensure sustained income growth.

Value addition is equally crucial. The GST reforms have provided a strong boost to the food processing industry. With more investment in cold storage and processing units, farmers will be able to preserve their produce longer and sell it at better prices. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has repeatedly assured that no policy or agreement will ever compromise the interests

of farmers, fishermen, or livestock owners. These reforms stand as living proof of that commitment. They will also reduce India's dependence on imports and give momentum to 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

At the heart of rural prosperity are the women of self-help groups. GST reforms have reduced their operating costs, helping small-scale rural industries flourish. As new processing units, storage facilities, and transport networks emerge in villages, fresh avenues for entrepreneurship and employment will open up. Lower taxes will mean higher sales, new jobs, and a generation of youth empowered to become self-reliant in their own villages.

I am confident these reforms will realise our collective resolve of 'Swadeshi se Samridhhi' (prosperity through self-reliance), turning India's economy into a truly "long-living economy". These changes are not just about lowering tax rates; they represent a moral and economic commitment to reinvigorate the lives of farmers, small traders, animal rearers, fishermen, and women driving the rural enterprise. Guided by the spirit of 'SabkaSaath, SabkaVikas' and 'Antyodaya', our government continues to prove that the prosperity of farms and farmers is the true measure of the nation's progress.

This Diwali, India will celebrate the festival with the theme of 'Swadeshi se Samridhhi' - lighting lamps of self-reliance in every home, echoing the chants of 'Jai Swadeshi', and moving confidently towards the vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

*The author is the Union Minister for Agriculture, Farmers' Welfare, and Rural Development, Government of India*

## AI Is Hollowing Out Higher Education

While the AI industry claims its models can "think," "reason," and "learn," their supposed achievements rest on marketing hype and stolen intellectual labor. In reality, AI erodes academic freedom, weakens critical reading, and subordinates the pursuit of knowledge to corporate interests.

Olivia Guest and Iris van Rooij

Modern AI technologies severely impede humans' ability to learn and retain skills, while also making it nearly impossible for academics and other experts to cultivate and disseminate knowledge. Many scholars, including us, have highlighted the threat posed by techno-solutionism in education: Rather than expanding our intellectual horizons, these technologies undermine the very conditions that allow us to think for ourselves.

ebnem Kalemli-Özcan argues that bond-market participants and others are consciously choosing to ignore obvious policy risks.

The corporations profiting from AI - including Microsoft, OpenAI, Nvidia, and ASML - have a vested interest in maintaining the current hype. Their oligopolistic control over both hardware and software depends on the exaggerated claim that cognitive labor can be fully outsourced to their models.

In reality, the apparent achievements of these systems rest on the wholesale theft of humans' intellectual labor. Most notably, large language models (LLMs) have been trained by scraping books and scholarly works without the authors' or publishers' consent, fragmenting and remixing them into patchwork plagiarism packaged as human-like responses.

According to the AI industry's narrative, all human creativity, innovation, and knowledge are essentially automatable, rendering people obsolete. Even advocates of "human-centered AI" assume this to be true.

Yet studies in automation and cognitive science, together with the long history of AI boom-and-bust cycles, demonstrate that sweeping claims of near-total automation are exaggerated, self-defeating, and toxic. Automation - even when it works - must operate at a much lower level than these companies suggest to succeed without eroding the skills and agency of human



operators.

Ultimately, the collective strategy of AI companies threatens to deskill precisely those people who are essential for society to function. What value, after all, is there in automating art, thinking, or reading - especially in educational and academic settings? None. On the contrary, automation of knowledge and culture by private companies is a worrying prospect - conjuring dystopian and outright fascist scenarios.

The deskilling, denigration, and displacement of teachers and scholars have historically been central to fascist takeovers, since educators serve as bulwarks against propaganda, anti-intellectualism, and illiteracy. Today, AI advocates do not

merely assume automation is necessary; they aggressively proselytize their faith, thereby paving the way for techno-fascism.

Academics exist, in part, to speak truth to power, which requires their independence from government and corporate influence. The United States today demonstrates the consequences of hollowing out academic freedom, critical thinking, and impartiality, as President Donald Trump's administration and Big Tech companies collaborate to undermine academic institutions' ability to sustain the kind of scientific work that exposes AI's false promises.

Worse still, the techno-fascist assault on universities increasingly comes from within. In recent years, the AI industry

has captured university administrations, co-opted faculty unions, and even enlisted individual teachers and researchers to promote its tools to colleagues and students. Far from offering genuine solutions, these technologies exacerbate social injustices and corrode the ecosystem of human knowledge.

In a recent position paper, we challenged the claims advanced by the AI industry. While corporations urge us to embrace - and even celebrate - their imagined, supposedly inevitable tech-driven future, academics and their allies must take a principled stand and defend universities and scholarly institutions by barring toxic, addictive technologies from classrooms.

The industry counts on us forgetting that we have been here before. Universities have long been used to whitewash harmful products, and AI itself has been repeatedly repackaged through various hype cycles. In fact, the term "artificial intelligence," coined in 1955, has always been more a marketing phrase than a taxonomic classification.

To sustain the latest iteration of the AI con, the industry relies on anthropomorphic sleight of hand - claiming that models "think," "reason," and "learn" to suggest cognitive abilities they demonstrably lack and may never develop. This rhetorical trick not only exaggerates the products' capabilities but also dehumanizes people by falsely humanizing machines, which is why many educators and students have begun to reject AI.

In response, the AI industry has lobbied government agencies to mandate the use of its products, claiming that without them, students will be unprepared for the job market. What is actually needed is the opposite: scholars with expertise in AI-related fields must have the freedom to critique these technologies, while those in other fields must be able to teach without interference by companies seeking to cash in.

Industry agendas - whether the industry is tobacco, petroleum, pharmaceuticals, or tech - rarely align with human welfare or disinterested research, especially when left unchecked and unregulated. Instead, their interests are maximizing profit and market power. The AI industry is no different, and educators should repudiate its false promises.

This commentary is based on joint work with Marcela Suarez and Barbara Müller.

Olivia Guest is Assistant Professor of Computational Cognitive Science at Radboud University. Iris van Rooij is Professor of Computational Cognitive Science at Radboud University.

*Source: Project Syndicate*

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



Kissan Mela unique platform for empowering farmers: Javid Dar

Inaugurates Kisan Mela-cum-Exhibition at Baramulla

KT News Desk

BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 18: Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar Saturday inaugurated a Kisan Mela-cum-Exhibition at Dak Banglow here, organized by department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Baramulla.

Addressing the Mela, the Minister said that this Kisan Mela serves as a unique platform to connect farmers, agri experts, agri entrepreneurs and institutions, showcasing modern technologies, government schemes and success stories aimed at empowering our farming community. He added that the mela also demonstrated improved crop varieties and animal breeds, advanced farm and agricultural machinery, displays of innovative technologies as well as sustainable agricultural practices and improved crop yields.

Javid Dar expressed confidence that the Kisan Mela would



go a long way in empowering farmers and promoting sustainable agricultural practices in the region. He urged farmers to take advantage of the event and learn about the latest technologies and schemes aimed at improving their livelihoods

The Minister stated that the department will exercise strict control over the sale of substandard pesticides and fertilizers in the markets. “We will establish a check post to regularly monitor and check the quality of

pesticides and fertilizers being sold in the markets”, he said. He warned that strict action will be taken against those found selling substandard pesticides and fertilizers.

Javid Dar urged upon the officers to work tirelessly to resolve all the issues of the farming community. He also called for conducting awareness camps at all block levels so that the farmers get benefits from all schemes run by central as well as state governments.

Earlier, Javid Dar also inspected the stalls established by Agriculture, Horticulture Sericulture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, allied sector and other stakeholders.

MLA, Baramulla, Javed Hassan Beigh; MLA Pattan, Javaid Riyaz Bedar; MLA Sopore, Irshad Rasool Kar; MLA Uri, Dr. Sajad Shafi; Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah; others District officers and larger number of farmers were present on the occasion.

2nd edition of ‘Know Your Artisan’

Ghanta Ghar to tick craft bells on Oct 25

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 18: Riding high on the resounding success of its inaugural outing, the Directorate of Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir, is all set to host the second chapter of the “Know Your Artisan” initiative under the vibrant Soulful Kashmir campaign.

Following the overwhelming response at the Jhelum River Front, where crowds flocked to witness live craft demonstrations, forge direct connections with master artisans, and snag authentic GI-tagged treasures, the spotlight now shifts to Ghanta Ghar (Clock Tower Arena), here in the city centre, on October 25.

In a press statement issued here today, a spokesman of the department, urged the people to come in large numbers to support the renowned artisans from Kashmir, whose exquisite



handmade products have set the highest standards in global markets.

“Expect an afternoon brimming with immersive experiences, hands-on interactions with a fresh lineup of renowned artisans showcasing specialties like intricate woodwork, exquisite embroidery, and timeless weaving techniques; interactive storytelling sessions revealing the soul-stirring journeys behind each creation; and vibrant display-cum-sale stalls offering exclusive deals on Soulful Kashmir-branded

masterpieces,” he added.

Giving details, the spokesman stated that as many as 10 stalls will be installed in various GI crafts during the ‘Know Your Artisan’ campaign from 10.00 am to 9.00 pm. “The campaign will also have a separate ‘Try Your Hands’ corner where visitors can have firsthand experience on pottery wheels, handlooms and spinning of Pashmina.

Issuing a fervent appeal to the visitors to become ‘Vocal for Local, the spokesman hoped that the event will rekindle our shared pride in Kashmir’s artisanal legacy while opening doors to sustainable livelihoods.

“The energy from the first event has been electric and now, we invite every Srinagarite, visitor, and culture enthusiast to join us in even greater numbers at Lal Chowk to make the event a resounding success a time,” he added.

IRCS organizes awareness programme on CPR

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 18: The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), Jammu & Kashmir branch, successfully conducted a comprehensive awareness programme on Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) for personnel of the 82nd Battalion, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) at their Srinagar camp Saturday.

The event underscored the vital importance of life-saving skills in emergency situations, empowering security forces with essential first aid knowledge to enhance safety and response capabilities in high-risk environments.

The programme was presided over by Honorary Treasurer, IRCS-J&K, G.A. Qureshi and Deputy Commandant, 82 BN CRPF, Srinagar, Munir Khan.

Speaking on the occasion, Qureshi emphasized IRCS’s commitment to equipping citizens, especially frontline workers, with practical skills to save lives, stating, “In critical moments, timely

CPR can make the difference between life and death. Such initiatives bridge the gap in emergency response across J&K.”

The awareness session on CPR was expertly imparted by Dr. Shalindra Kour, a First Aid Trainer. She delivered hands-on demonstrations covering key techniques, including chest compressions, rescue breaths. Participants engaged in interactive drills using mannequins to practice scenarios such as cardiac arrest, trauma response, fostering confidence in applying these skills during real-life emergencies.

The programme aligns with IRCS’s broader mission as an auxiliary to state authorities, focusing on disaster mitigation, health education, and humanitarian aid. By providing awareness to CRPF personnel, who often operate in challenging terrains, the initiative aims to build a resilient network of first responders capable of immediate intervention, potentially doubling survival rates in cardiac events.

DIET Doda facilities smooth conduct of exams

KT News Desk

DODA, OCTOBER 18: The Summative Assessment/ Annual Examination for Classes 1st to 9th (Session 2025) is being conducted smoothly and fairly across all established examination centres in District Doda, as per the date-sheet issued by the Directorate of School Education Jammu.

The examinations are being held under the overall supervision of Principal DIET Doda, Rajesh Kumar and under the guidance of Chief Education Officer Doda, Iqbal Hussain with the coordinated efforts of Cluster Heads and the active cooperation of school staff across the district. The entire process has been marked by discipline, transparency and strict adherence to academic standards.

To ensure fair and uniform conduct, District-Level Monitoring Teams and Cluster-Level Teams have been actively inspecting various examination centres. These visits aim to maintain



the sanctity of the examination process and verify that the question papers framed by the school authorities are in accordance with the guidelines issued by SCERT, Divisional Office Jammu.

The examination process has been widely appreciated for its smooth management, punctuality and adherence to standards of academic integrity. The joint efforts of DIET Doda, Cluster Heads and school management teams have ensured the seamless and transparent execution of the examinations.

In addition, all Cluster Heads have been instructed to evaluate the answer sheets on the same day to facilitate the timely declaration of results, enabling the commencement of new classwork from November 1st.

Principal DIET Doda, Rajesh Kumar expressed satisfaction over the smooth conduct of the examinations and appreciated the Cluster Heads, teachers and monitoring teams for their collective commitment to ensuring fairness, discipline and efficiency in the evaluation process.

Awareness programme on Breast Cancer held

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 18: An awareness programme on Breast Cancer was organised here at Immunization Center, District Hospital, under the supervision of Ayush Medical Officer, Shopian.

The programme aimed to educate women about the early detection, prevention and treatment of breast cancer.

During the session, Medical Officers and health educators highlighted the importance of regular self-examination and early diagnosis in reducing mortality associated with breast cancer. They emphasised the need for continuous

awareness among women and urged them to spread the message in their communities to ensure early detection and timely medical attention.

During the programme, a detailed presentation was delivered to provide detailed information about the causes, symptoms and importance of timely screening.

Women participants from different areas of the district attended the session and actively interacted with the resource persons.

The programme concluded with a pledge to promote health awareness and encourage women to undergo regular check-ups.

GMC Sgr organizes special health camp for differently-abled

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 18: The Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar organized a special health check-up camp for the residents of Abhinandan Home, an institute for the blind and school for the deaf and dumb in collaboration with the District Social Welfare Officer Srinagar.

The camp aimed to provide advanced medical care to specially abled individuals who may face challenges in accessing medical facilities.

Specialists from various departments, including Medicine, ENT, Ophthalmology, and Dermatology, provided thorough health check-ups to

about 200 inhabitants. Patients received consultation, medical advice, and medication as needed.

The medical college reaffirmed its commitment to providing advanced treatment facilities to all individuals, including those with special needs.

The camp demonstrated GMC Srinagar’s dedication to reaching out to vulnerable populations and ensuring they receive the medical care they deserve.

The health camp provided a valuable opportunity for the residents of Abhinandan Home to access specialized healthcare services, which might have been challenging for them to access otherwise.

DC Kathua reviews progress of PMAY-U 2.0 implementation

Stresses timely disposal of applications

KT News Desk

KATHUA, OCTOBER 18: Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rajesh Sharma Saturday chaired a meeting to review the progress under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) 2.0 here in the Conference Hall of the DC



Office Complex.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Kathua, Surinder Mohan Sharma; Chief Planning Officer

Kathua, Ranjit Thakur; Chief Executive Officer Municipal Council Kathua, and Executive Officers of Municipal Committees Basohli, Billawar, Hiranagar, Lakhampur and

Parole.

While reviewing the physical and financial progress of cases under PMAY 2.0, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers to expedite the verification and approval process of pending applications. He emphasized that all cases should be processed strictly on merit and in accordance with the scheme guidelines.

The DC further instructed the officers to ensure that deficient

applications are promptly scrutinized and rejected with due justification so that genuine beneficiaries are not deprived of the benefit. He called for maintaining transparency at every stage of implementation and ensuring timely disbursement of installments to eligible beneficiaries.

The DC urged all executing agencies to work in mission mode to achieve 100% saturation under PMAY 2.0 in urban areas of Kathua district.

DLSA Jammu holds special Lok Adalat

KT News Desk

JAMMU, OCTOBER 18: In compliance with the directions of Jammu & Kashmir Legal Services Authority, Special Lok Adalat on Cheque Bounce Cases was held Saturday, under the Chairmanship of Y. P. Bourney, Chairman District Legal Services Authority (Pr. District & Sessions Judge) Jammu here in the Court complex Janipur. As many as 18 Benches were constituted in different Courts to deal with the matter of 138 Negotiable Instruments Act cases.

The Special Lok Adalat focused specifically on the amicable settlement of cheque bounce cases in line with the broader aim of reducing pendency and promoting accessible justice for all. The Special Lok Adalat stands as a testimony to the commitment of the Legal Services Authorities to ensure that justice is not only delivered, but delivered efficiently, empathetically and economically.

It also reinforces the importance of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in strengthening the justice delivery system.

A total number of 277 cases pertaining to Cheque Bounce Cases were taken up, out of which 74 cases were settled. The total Amount recovered was Rs 2,60,38,463.

Director Horticulture inaugurates processing unit



KT News Desk

SAMBA, OCTOBER 18: A Processing Unit was inaugurated at Samba by the Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Sayed, marking an important step towards promoting value addition and employment generation in the horticulture sector.

The event was attended by MCC Kathua Anju Bala, MCC Jammu Shreshtha Gaur and HDO Vijaypur Manmohan Lal, who extended their support and shared insights on strengthening processing

activities at the grassroots level.

More than 50 farmers took part in the programme, where they were made aware of various departmental schemes and initiatives aimed at encouraging self-employment and entrepreneurship among rural youth and women. As part of the event, mobile demonstration programmes were also conducted to impart hands-on training to women, enabling them to adopt processing and value addition activities for sustainable income generation.

Symposium on POSH Act held at GDC Akhnoor

KT News Desk

JAMMU, OCTOBER 18: A Seminar cum Awareness program on sexual harassment policies was organised Saturday by CASH of Government Degree College Akhnoor under the patronage of the college Principal Dr Romilla Malla Bhatt.

The objective of the program was to sensitize students and faculty about the importance of maintaining a safe and respectful environment within the campus. The event started with a formal welcome by convener CASH Dr Monika Malhotra. She apprised the students and staff about the program, besides highlighting the challenges women and girls face at the workplace and institutions. She also talked about the importance of the POSH Act to ensure their safety and to work with dignity in an environment free

of harassment.

Six students Komal, Tamanna Sharma, Ritika Sharma (Sem 3rd) and Nisha Sharma, Radhika Sharma, Ritika Sharma (Sem 1st) representing different departments of the college spoke on the subject.

The event was well attended by 52 participants and 15 faculty members. The program concluded with an interactive session where the participants shared their thoughts, asked questions and discussed measures to prevent harassment.

The students were encouraged to stay informed, speak up and stand together against misconduct. The Committee members Dr Shashi Sharma, Dr Deepali Mahajan, Dr.Rajiv Katoch, Dr Pinky Manhas, Prof. Anjela Qureshi, Prof. Shreya Sharma, Prof. Suresh Kumar and Dr Rimjhim also interacted with the participants.

Govt Polytechnic Reasi organises Annual Sports Day

KT News Desk

REASI, OCTOBER 18: Government Polytechnic Reasi organised on Saturday Annual Sports Day on the College campus, featuring Badminton, Chess, Carrom, Table-tennis and Volleyball competitions. The tournaments commenced in the institute on October 13 on knockout basis prior to the interdepartmental tournament. The Principal Er. Arun Bangotra was the chief guest at the final matches of the interdepartmental tournament. Speaking on the occasion, he encouraged all participants to take part in the sports activities to stay fit and healthy and imbibe sportsmanship and leadership spirit.

The event commenced with the trials in all categories to identify the most skilled players. A number of matches were organised across multiple disciplines to determine the finalists. As many as 56 students participated in Badminton tournament’ 40 in Carrom, 15 in Chess 40 and several teams in Volleyball.

Earlier, the participants took a solemn sportsmanship pledge led by the institution sports secretary Ajay Dogra, reaffirming to uphold fairness and integrity on the field.



## LG Sinha hands over cultural artifacts to Kalmyk Museum in Russia



### KT NEWS DESK

Srinagar, Oct 18: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday handed over the exhibitions belonging to International Buddhist Confederation and the National Museum to the Kalmyk Museum at Elista, Republic of Kalmykia, Russia.

The Lieutenant Governor said it will ensure that the Lord Buddha's importance and relevance, and also visit of holy relics to Kalmykia is remembered by the people of this beautiful land.

"History, tradition, culture and spiritual wisdom shape

identity and transmit ethical values across generations and drive sustainable development. Preservation and education of heritage is essential and I am truly delighted to see this museum is a small Kalmykia in itself under one roof," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Later, the Lieutenant Governor visited the National Library at Elista, Republic of Kalmykia, Russia. The library is named after Amur-Sanan, a prominent Kalmyk writer and public figure. During the visit, the Lieutenant Governor donated several books to the library which he had collected on Buddhism.

## J&K Bank's half-yearly net profit up at Rs 979 Cr, Q2 net at Rs 494 Cr

Despite tough challenges, we are on track to achieve our annual guidance numbers: MD & CEO

### KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 18: While maintaining higher provisioning requirements owing to regulatory compliance, J&K Bank posted a net profit of Rs 494.11 Cr for the July-September Quarter (Q2) of current financial year (CFY), remaining well on course to meet its annual market guidance. The Bank's net profit for half-year (H1) witnessed an increase to Rs 978.95 Cr from Rs 966.41 Cr recorded for H1 last FY.

The Bank announced financial numbers after its Board-of-Directors reviewed and approved the quarterly and half-yearly figures during a meeting held at the Bank's Corporate Headquarters.

**Key Highlights**  
Moderated by the provisioning of Rs 92 Cr towards its investment in the Regional Rural Bank — Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank — following the amalgamation of EllaquaiDehati Bank with the erstwhile J&K Grameen Bank under Central Government's "One State, One RRB" direction, the Bank today recorded a net profit of Rs 494.11 Cr for the Q2 and Rs 978.95 Cr for H1 of the CFY.

Reflecting steady core operations, the Bank's Net Interest Income (NII) for the half-year (H1) is marginally up by 3.4% Year-on-Year at Rs 2899.43 Cr, while for Q2 NII stood at Rs 1433.99 Cr. In line with its market guidance, the Bank has maintained its NIM at 3.64% for the half-year (H1). The Bank's other income for H1 was at

Rs 405.19 Cr while the Cost to Income Ratio for the half-year stood at 60.80%.

Commenting on the Bank's Q2H1 numbers, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "In spite of widespread disruptions during the first quarter following the Pahalgam incident and the extensive damage caused by floods in the second quarter, the overall growth we have recorded is both encouraging and reassuring."

"Even though profitability for Q2 was moderated due to an additional impairment provision of Rs 92 Cr made during the quarter in compliance with regulatory requirements, the performance is better than what was anticipated under the challenging circumstances," he added. Notably, the Bank has made a total provisioning of Rs 180 Cr towards Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank during the first two quarters of the current financial year. Excluding the impact, the Bank's H1 profitability would

be upwards of 15% YoY.

**Asset-Quality**  
Despite difficult situation arising out of Pahalgam attack in Q1 and floods, landslides thereafter in Q2, the Bank has gained further stability in asset quality. During the quarter, the Bank's Gross NPA Ratio has declined 18 basis-points QoQ to 3.32% and decreased by 63 bps YoY from 3.95% recorded in September, 2024.

The Net NPA ratio has also moderated by 9 bps YoY to 0.76% from 0.85%, while declining 6 bps from 0.82% recorded for the June quarter of current financial year. Meanwhile, Provision Coverage Ratio (PCR) of the Bank continued at above 90% level, while the Return on Assets (RoA) stood at 1.17% for the half-year.

On the Bank's asset-quality, MD & CEO expressed optimism, saying, "With GNPA around 3.30% half-way through the year, I think on asset quality front, our progress is steady. And with our robust and focused

risk-management practices in place, I remain optimistic about meeting our annual guidance of below 3% GNPA by the financial year-end. Besides, our PCR is also healthy at 90.39%."

**Business Growth**  
During the quarter, the Bank's deposits witnessed growth of 10.23% Year-on-Year basis reaching Rs 152030 Cr, while as the net advances increased by 9.38% YoY to Rs 105153 Cr from Rs 96139 Cr recorded last year. Up by 18 bps in sequential terms from 45.71% recorded in Q1, the Bank's CASA stood at 45.89% for the Q2 and continues to be one of the highest in the industry.

Regarding business growth, MD & CEO said, "Marking a nearly 10% year-on-year growth in business numbers reaching Rs 2.57 Lac Cr, our Q2 performance demonstrates the Bank's operational discipline."

"Our deposit growth is at par with the industry average, while advances primarily driven by Agri/corporate segments have shown good credit growth both in sequential and YoY terms. Our CASA ratio also exhibited a slight uptick to 45.89% on sequential basis, underscoring our commitment to sustained, quality growth", he added.

He further said, "Despite tough challenges, this steady performance in the first half of the financial year affirms my confidence that we are very much on track to achieve our annual guidance growth numbers."

**Capital Adequacy**  
The Bank's Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) for the

July-September quarter stood at 15.27% as against 14.99% recorded last FY. In his remarks on capital position, the MD & CEO said, "With a CRAR of over 15 %, we remain well-capitalized and positioned to support future growth opportunities while maintaining financial discipline. Significantly, the CAR is exclusive of half-yearly profit of Rs 978.95 Cr, which would otherwise result in taking the ratio to above 16%."

**Building Business Momentum**

Commenting upon the Bank's growing operational focus in rest of the country, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee asserted, "We continue to execute our policy of expanding operations beyond J&K, strategically partnering with top-tier corporates across India. Simultaneously, through increased engagement of the Bank's leadership with the clientele across these geographies, we are in the process of sharpening our focus on building a gainful niche in the retail landscape outside J&K, particularly in the personal banking/finance segment."

Concluding his remarks, he said, "All these initiatives are tangible markers of the transformation currently underway at our Bank. However, the foundation of our progress rests on a firm triad: our people, our processes and our technology. And we are steadily strengthening all these pillars, ensuring that efficiency, resilience and excellence remain at the core of every facet of our operations."

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### 'Op Sindoor' was

of indigenous technologies so that our supply chain remains within India," he said.

The Defence Minister noted that contracts worth approximately Rs 4,000 crore have been signed with two countries in the last month. He said the Lucknow unit's turnover is expected to reach around Rs 3,000 crore in the next financial year, with GST collection around Rs 500 crore.

Rajnath Singh also inaugurated the Booster Building and observed demonstrations of the booster docking process, Airframe and Avionics checks, Pre-Dispatch Inspection, and Warhead Buildings. DG (BrahMos) Dr Jaytrith R. Joshi handed over the GST bill and cheque of approximately Rs 40 crore to the Chief Minister, representing revenue generated for the state.

The Lucknow facility completes the full assembly, integration, and testing of BrahMos missiles, making Uttar Pradesh a key hub in India's indigenous defence manufacturing and reinforcing the operational readiness of the armed forces. (KNO)

### LG Sinha thanks

Kalmykia.  
The Lieutenant Governor, who is leading the Indian delegation, was received by the First Deputy Chairman of the Government of Kalmykia, Tserenov Erdni Nikolayevich, Deputy Chairman Dzhambinov Ochir Vladimirovich and India's Deputy Chief of Mission Nikhiles Giri. The delegation will accompany the Holy Relics back to India on October 19th 2025.

Earlier in the day, LG Sinha announced his departure for Kalmykia, saying he would lead the delegation entrusted with bringing back the holy relics of Lord Buddha. In a post on X, the LG's office said, "Leaving for Kalmykia, Russia, where I will lead the delegation to bring back holy relics of Lord Buddha after a week-long exposition. I sincerely thank Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for this sacred opportunity. 'Om Mamo Buddhaya'.

Meanwhile, a communique issued by the PIB said, "Powerful display of spiritual devotion and shared cultural heritage, the exposition of sacred relics of Lord Buddha from India has drawn an unprecedented response in the Republic of Kalmykia, Russia. As of today, over 90,000 devotees have paid their reverent homage to the relics, enshrined at the iconic Geden Sheddup Choikorling Monastery, popularly known as the "Golden Abode of Shakyamuni Buddha."

"The sacred relics, recognize as a National Treasure of India, were brought to the capital city of Elista by a high-level delegation, led by Keshav Prasad Maurya, Deputy Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, and including senior Indian monks. The delegation is conducting special religious services and blessings for the predominantly Buddhist population of Kalmykia, the only region in Europe where Buddhism is the predominant religion," it said, adding, "This historic exposition, the first of its kind in the Russian Republic, is a testament to the deep civilizational bonds between India and Russia. It revives the enduring legacy of the 19th Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, the revered Buddhist monk and diplomat from Ladakh, who was instrumental in reviving Buddhism in Mongolia and reigniting interest in the Buddha Dharma in Russian regions like Kalmykia, Buryatia, and Tuva."

"The event has been organised by the BTI

section of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, in collaboration with the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), the National Museum, and the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA). The exposition will continue in the capital city of Elista until October 18, 2025," the statement added. (KNO)

### Linking Pahalgam attack

manifesto will be fulfilled in five years," he said while replying to a query on 12 gas cylinders and an increase in ration quota as promised ahead of the 2024 Assembly polls.

Installation of smart meters  
The Chief Minister talked about the issue of smart meter installation, saying the National Conference never promised to do away with the smart meters in its manifesto. "We had promised 200 free units to the people, which can only be possible when the smart meters are installed. If these meters are not installed, then promises can't be fulfilled as there would be no process to gauge the load of consumers," he said.

He said that the government has been trying to ensure the people have better supplies and a reduction in the power bills. This, he said, has been possible only after the smart meter installation. "The (power) department tried to ensure better supply during winter, and during recent floods, the electricity supply was restored. I want to ensure better supply to people, infrastructure to fulfil our promises," he added.

Omar said that, as far as poor consumers are concerned, proper assessment of the load has resulted in a reduction in their electricity bills. "We want to ensure free units to the poor, reduction in bills and better supply to the consumers," he said.

**Statehood promise**  
On statehood, the Chief Minister said that the Centre never promised its restoration only after the BJP comes into power. "We will have to hope for it. But, it is a fact that statehood has been linked with the Pahalgam (terror attack), which is an injustice to the people. The elected government was not responsible for it, and the people also didn't support the attack. Even those involved in the attack and later killed by the security forces were not from J&K."

He added, "We have been promised in the Parliament and the Supreme Court that first delimitation, then election and later statehood will be restored. Two promises have been kept so far, while the third is still pending. We hope it will be fulfilled and the (J&K) government will be empowered."

Abdullah said that linking the statehood restoration with an alliance with the BJP is out of the question. We have been suffering the after-effects of the unnecessary alliance between the BJP and the PDP. Therefore, we won't repeat the mistake that others have made in the past," he said.

**Cabinet expansion**  
The CM said the constraints of being a Union Territory and an "artificially" low number of ministers that were allowed to be inducted have their bearing in terms of areas and communities that can find representation within the government. "But, this belief that unless you are a minister you can't work for an area is incorrect. I am not the Chief Minister of Ganderbal, Sakeena is not the minister for Noorbabad, but of the entire J&K," he said.

He said there is still the possibility of having

a few more ministers. "It is something I am actively considering. Once by-elections are held, we will see what happens," he said.

**Promise of scrapping PSA**  
The Chief Minister said the party has promised to remove the Public Safety Act (PSA). "But for that, we will need statehood, and the elected government should have law and order in its hands. If that happens, I won't wait for the assembly but pass an ordinance to remove the PSA," he said.

**J&K by-elections**  
Omar said only a few candidates have been announced for the by-elections (in Budgam and Nagrota), and there are still a few days left. "The discussion is going on, and in the next 24 or 48 hours, our candidate will be announced, who will file the nomination papers," he said.

For Nagrota, he said the Congress has been formally approached, and the NC is ready to keep the seat for them. "Earlier, the seat was fought by NC, and in 2024, the party emerged victorious. Since we have an alliance with Congress, we want them to have a strong base in Jammu. We won't have any issues if they want to come up with a candidate. We will extend our support," he added.

The CM also reacted to a query about the consultation with the party's Member of Parliament (MP) Aga Ruhullah on the Budgam seat, saying that the leaders, who have been authorised to give a mandate, know whether he has been taken on the board or not.

**Absence of Advocate General**  
About the absence of Advocate General, Abdullah said, "The government, soon after assuming the office, had appointed an Advocate General; in fact, the existing Advocate General was asked to continue, but he was stopped from attending work. I don't know for what reason he was asked to stop. I believe the authority to appoint an Advocate General is with the elected government."

He said the absence of the Advocate General is not good for J&K. "He (AG) is the legal face of the government. We are probably the only state or UT in the country that doesn't have an Advocate General to attend the court," he said. "Some disagree, but we continue to press this case. We are also pressing for the clarity of the Business Rules that were cleared by the cabinet in March this year. Hopefully, when those go ahead, we will be able to address this."

**Centre's statehood consultation**  
The Chief Minister rejected the reports that the central government is consulting with the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) administration regarding the restoration of statehood. "I first heard about it when the Supreme Court was informed about this," he said.

**Becoming a party in statehood case**  
Abdullah said he has had conversations with very senior lawyers both in J&K as well as in Delhi about the possibility of becoming a party in this case as the Chief Minister of J&K. "I don't think anyone understands the disadvantages that we are put to by being a UT than I do, because I am the only person in the entire country with experience of being a Chief Minister of both the State and a Union Territory. This issue is being actively discussed with a legal team, and based on their opinion, there is a possibility that I will make myself the party of the case," he said.

**Fight for statehood and special status**  
Omar said the government in the first Assembly Session passed the resolution of

special status and the statehood restoration, which was sent to the central government and has not been dismissed or thrown into the bin so far. "At one point in time, if not with this government then maybe with the next government, it will become a base for the discussion on the issue," he said.

Also, in the first cabinet meeting, the resolution was passed for statehood restoration, which was handed over to the Prime Minister by him personally, he added.

The CM said the accusations are being made by the people who sought votes from the people to keep the BJP away, but later joined hands with them.

**Promotion of tourism**  
The Chief Minister said that the J&K government has been trying its best to promote tourism here. "We know that lakhs of people are earning from it. We want tourism to reach the heights as it was before Pahalgam. We sent our teams to outside countries as well, and also within the country. We want the tourists to return. Our efforts are still on and we can't say that the centre has not supported us," he said.

Abdullah added, "In J&K, we are speaking in two voices. On one hand, we have been putting efforts to promote tourism, while on the other hand, the unelected government has kept many destinations closed for tourism. It has not been done in the last 35 years. In the peak of militancy, these destinations were not closed. At this juncture, we need to open them so that there is no confusion, and we will make further efforts to promote tourism."

**About bills in Assembly session**  
CM Omar said that any bill is the property of the Speaker before being introduced in the House. "There is a procedure to introduce the bill. If there are enough bills, then the draw of lots takes place. If any bill is introduced meant for the public's well-being, our government will not create any hurdles. But nobody knows whose bill is introduced in the Assembly Session," he said. (KNO)

### 'Reservation report can't

report would be made public within days, but, "I had said that the cabinet sub-committee's report will be prepared in the shape of a cabinet memo and sent to the Lieutenant Governor for approval."

He said it is illegal to make the report public before it reaches the LG. "It will not happen overnight. No government works under pressure, and I am the last person who you can pressurize."

There is a procedure that is being followed. It is not only impropriety but bordering on illegality to release the information that has not even reached the Lieutenant Governor yet," he said. He, however, said there is no attempt to hide anything. "Let the cabinet memo be finalized, let it be signed, let it reach the Lieutenant Governor. There is no attempt to hide and delay anything."

We have completed our process. It is a matter of days that the Lieutenant Governor signs the cabinet memo, and all information will be put before the people, but we are not going to bypass the procedure just because somebody thinks they can exert pressure," he said. (KNO)

### Rajya Sabha polls

The Speaker, however, didn't take any action against them.

Six of them were later reinstated in the party in 2014.

Another surprising result emerged in 2009 when Panthers Party with just 3 MLAs managed to send its candidate, Syed Rafiq Shah, to the Upper House of the J&K legislature, thanks to support from the PDP and BJP. "I got 34 votes from PDP and BJP MLAs more than the required number," he told KNO.

Rafiq, who is currently associated with BJP, said that he didn't expect victory in the election.

"Panthers Party founder late Prof.Bhim Singh, BJP's Chaman Lal Gupta, and PDP founder late Mufti Muhammad Sayeed, played a significant role in my victory," he said. (KNO)

### Div Com invites

Proper arrangements have been made at all prominent destinations, and we warmly welcome every visitor to the Valley," he said.

He added that the administration has also activated helplines and snow clearance mechanisms to ensure hassle-free travel for tourists and residents alike. (KNO)

### CM Abdullah seeks

"The dedication and expertise of SKIMS professionals have positioned this institution among the best in the country. It continues to be a benchmark in healthcare and medical education," he remarked.

Secretary, Health & Medical Education, Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, highlighted the critical role of communication skills in preventing medical errors. He urged doctors and healthcare workers to prioritise patient communication as a cornerstone of safety.

"Most medical errors are preventable through effective communication. Conferences like these should focus on translating discussions into measurable, on-ground improvements," he said.

Founder Director SKIMS, Prof A.K. Nagpal, expressed gratitude to the SKIMS administration for organising the conference and reiterated the importance of academic engagement in improving healthcare delivery.

"Academic conferences such as this are essential for nurturing a culture of continuous learning and improving patient safety standards," he said.

Director SKIMS and EOSG, Prof M. Ashraf Ganie, welcomed all dignitaries and spoke about the institute's sustained efforts to enhance patient care, research, and education. He highlighted the optimal use of budgetary allocations and the strengthening of institutional infrastructure under his leadership.

Organising Chairman, Prof G.H. Yattoo, Head of the Department of Hospital Administration, said the conference aims to foster dialogue on improving hospital safety protocols and patient-centred care practices. Organising Secretary, Dr Shah Nawaz Hamid, delivered the vote of thanks, extending gratitude to the Chief Minister, dignitaries, and participants for their valuable contributions.

Following the inauguration, scientific sessions were held where national experts deliberated on multiple dimensions of patient safety, including hospital infrastructure, communication systems, and risk management in clinical settings. The deliberations will continue on October 19, focusing on strengthening patient safety mechanisms and promoting a culture of accountability and continuous improvement across healthcare institutions in Jammu and Kashmir. (KNO)



# Infiltration stopped in Assam, but illegal immigrants getting 'red carpet welcome' in Bengal: Shah

PTI

Patna, Oct 18: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday claimed that while infiltration has stopped in BJP-ruled Assam, it was continuing in adjoining West Bengal because the government there was giving a "red carpet welcome" to illegal immigrants.

Addressing a media conclave in Patna, he also mocked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for having given up the diatribe on "vote theft", reiterating that Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls would weed out "infiltrators".

"It is baffling that the opposition has been getting a bellyache over an exercise launched by the Election Commission, which would weed out infiltrators. I am fully in support of the SIR exercise, which would eventually take place in the entire country," he said at a conclave.

Shah, however, bristled when reminded of the opposition charge that if there were infiltrators in the country, the blame ought to be on the Narendra Modi government at the Centre, which has been in power at the Centre for 11 years.

"People sitting in Lutyens Delhi have no idea of what the borders are like. The border with Bangladesh has dense forests and mighty rivers,



which are in spate during the monsoons. Fencing is impossible, and so is round-the-clock vigil. Boats for security personnel manning the borders also tend to get washed away," he said. "My point is, when a person from the neighbouring country enters our territory, can it not be known to the local police station and the patwari? Why do these officials not raise an alarm? Because they are under orders from above to give a red carpet ('lal jaajim') welcome to these infiltrators. This is the reason why infiltration is rampant in West Bengal but has been checked in Assam," he added.

Urging the people of West Bengal

to vote out CM Mamata Banerjee in next year's assembly polls, he promised to "drive out every infiltrator" from the state.

Claiming that Gandhi has forgotten the allegation of "vote chori", Shah said in the last 15 days, "on the very few occasions that he has been seen in public", he has never made the charge.

"Perhaps the people of Bihar have made him give up on the charge. He must have been under advice based on some feedback," he said.

The allusion was to the 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' that Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, took out in Bihar a couple of months

ago, in protest against SIR, which, the INDIA bloc has been alleging, aimed at disenfranchising a large number of voters.

The former BJP president also dismissed the opposition charge that the 130th Constitutional Amendment Bill, which provides for the removal of ministers, including the PM and CMS, if they spent 30 days or more in jail, was aimed at destabilising governments in states not ruled by the party.

"I had stepped down when a case was pending against me in the court, and did not accept a post until I was acquitted. We have seen, in the recent past, governments being run by people behind bars. That cannot be allowed. Why is the opposition so scared? The Bill does not stipulate that a minister be removed as soon as his name comes up in an FIR," he said. Shah also raked up the "insult to the then Prime Minister Sardar Mannohan Singh" by Gandhi, who tore off a copy of an ordinance that would have prevented politicians from automatic disqualification upon conviction.

It was widely believed that the ordinance had been brought to "save" RJD president Lalu Prasad, a fodder scam convict, who had served as the railway minister in the UPA 1 government.

## Gold, Silver see sharp correction after record rally

Experts say fall is due to profit booking

ANI

New Delhi, Oct 18: After a bumper rally over the past few weeks, the precious metals market witnessed a sharp correction on Friday, as both Gold and Silver prices tumbled on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX).

The decline came amid a profit-taking wave triggered by specific external market factors that temporarily eased geopolitical and economic anxieties.

Gold prices of 24 kt on MCX, which had recently touched a record high of Rs 1,32,294 per 10 grams, fell by around 3 per cent to Rs 1,25,957 per 10 grams.

Silver saw an even steeper fall, declining by more than 8 per cent, slipping from Rs 1,70,415 per kg to Rs 1,53,929 per kg.

Market experts described the correction as a healthy and expected development following an extraordinary rally in recent months.

Ajay Bagga, Banking and Market Expert, told ANI that Friday's price fall was a "necessary tactical retreat" driven by short-term sentiment shifts and natural profit-taking after a historic rally.

He pointed out that one of the key factors behind the sudden pullback was the more conciliatory tone from U.S. President Donald Trump regarding the threatened high tariffs on China, which helped ease global tensions.

"The strategic case for Gold and Silver remains highly compelling, supported by structural factors including global de-dollarization, persistent supply deficits in Silver, central bank accumulation, and an environment of low real interest rates and



high geopolitical risk," Bagga added.

He advised investors to view the correction as an opportunity to establish or add to long-term positions.

According to Bagga, Silver's outlook remains even stronger than Gold's due to its dual nature as both a precious metal and a critical industrial metal.

"Given the recent speculative frenzy and physical market dislocation, traders must be cautious. However, the long-term trend remains firmly upward, supported by industrial growth," he said.

MCX, which stands for Multi Commodity Exchange of India, is India's first listed electronic commodity derivatives exchange where online trading of commodity futures and options takes place.

It functions similarly to stock exchanges like the BSE and NSE, but focuses on commodity contracts such as gold, silver.

Echoing a similar sentiment, Ajay Kedia, Founder and Director of Kedia Commodities, told ANI the sudden fall was on expected lines.

"Just as we witnessed a parabolic rise in the last two months, this correction was overdue. From August till now, we've seen the biggest rally in nine weeks — a one-sided surge," he explained.

## Need for airport agencies to sensitise their officers in prevailing laws: SC

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 18: There is an imminent need for jurisdictional agencies, handling affairs at international airports, to sensitise their officers in the prevailing laws before taking the drastic step of detention and arrest of an international traveller, the Supreme Court has said.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta made the observations while quashing the arrest and criminal proceedings against NRI Rocky Abraham, an Indian citizen settled in Italy for over two decades.

He was detained at the Delhi airport in January 2025 for allegedly carrying a deer horn in violation of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Abraham was arrested after airport officials found the horn in his baggage and registered an FIR under Sections 39, 49, and 51 of the Act.

He remained in custody for nearly two weeks before securing bail with onerous conditions, including a ban on leaving India.

The top court noted that the article recovered from the petitioner upon DNA analysis was a reindeer horn, which does not infringe any provision of law pertaining to forest or wildlife in India.

"This court feels an imminent need to require the jurisdictional agencies concerned, handling affairs at the international airports, to sensitise their officers in the prevailing laws before taking the drastic step of detention and arrest of an international traveller.

"Needless to state that any such step should not be taken in haste and must



be proceeded by appropriate legal opinion and with a pragmatic approach," the bench said.

The apex court said such ill-advised actions tend to bring the reputation of the country to disrepute in the international fora, in addition to bringing the conduct of the concerned officers into breach of the human rights guarantees.

"Consequently, we hereby declare the arrest of the petitioner and so also the FIR and all proceedings sought to be taken thereunder against the petitioner to be unlawful. The same are hereby quashed.

"The writ petition pending before the High Court and the proceedings, if any, pending before the jurisdictional trial Court shall also stand closed. The petitioner is given liberty to avail a suitable remedy seeking damages before the appropriate forum," it said.

## GST rate cut benefits fully passed on to consumers, govt monitoring prices: FM

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 18: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said the government is monitoring the prices of 54 daily-use items, and the benefits of GST rate cuts effective September 22 have been fully passed on to consumers in the form of reduced prices.

Addressing a press conference on 'GST Bachat Utsav', she also said in quite a few cases, a "more-than-expected" price reduction due to GST reforms has been passed on to end consumers.

"On these 54 items on which we have been getting inputs from the zonal areas... we are convinced that on every such item the benefits are being fully passed on to consumers," Sitharaman said in a joint conference with Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnav.

Effective September 22, Goods and Services Tax (GST) have become a two-tier tax structure of 5% and 18%, and a special 40% rate for ultra-luxury items. Prior to this, GST was taxed at rates of 5%, 12%, 18%, and 28%, plus a compensation cess on luxury items.

This has resulted in slashing of prices of as many as 375 items, ranging from



toothpaste and shampoo to cars and television sets.

Giving data on auto sales, Sitharaman said the GST rate reduction has helped in increasing consumer purchases.

GST rates on small cars has been slashed to 18%, while on large cars and SUVs the rate has been brought down to 40%. Prior to GST rate cut, the total tax incidence on cars, depending on engine capacity and length, ranged from 29% for small petrol cars to 50% for SUVs.

Sharing data of price reduction post GST rate cut, Sitharaman said in items like shampoo, talcum powder, face powder, table, kitchenware, and utensils made of iron, steel and copper, besides toys, umbrellas—all saw more-than-expected price reduction. Sitharaman said, except for the Portland

variety of cement of one or two brands, all cement companies have reduced prices. GST on cement, which is the largest input cost in construction activities, was cut from 28% to 18%. Sitharaman also said the Department of Consumer Affairs has received 3,169 complaints related to non-reduction in prices commensurate with the GST cut. Of this, 3,075 complaints have been forwarded to nodal officers in the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC). Total 94 complaints have been resolved by the department. The department will enable a functionality on the grievance reporting portal so that the complaints can be forwarded to the chief commissioners of the respective zones from where complaints have come in, the minister said. In his

Independence Day address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced that the next-gen GST reforms, which included rate cuts and pruning of slabs, and removing inverted duty structure, would be implemented before Diwali. The GST Council, comprising Centre and states, decided to implement the reforms from September 22.

The reforms came into effect from the first day of Navratri -- September 22 and I feel the people of India have received it well, Sitharaman said. Answering a question on opposition terming GST reforms a course correction, Sitharaman said the Modi government set the course for GST and implemented it.

"The Opposition neither brought GST nor even dared to attempt it. What we are doing today is not a correction, but a conscious decision - a reflection of cooperation between the Central government and the GST Council to pass on greater benefits to the people. During the Congress era, they didn't even attempt a course correction. They kept the income tax rate above 90 percent," she said.

Talking about benefits of the recent cut in GST rates, Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said as soon

as the GST announcement came in, foreign investors quickly realised that this is a bonanza and demand will go up massively.

When asked if some e-commerce firms have not passed on the benefits of GST cut to consumers, the minister said that normally all companies have passed on the benefits and above that they have announced cash bonuses and discounts also. "But if any site or platform has not passed on the benefits...consumer affairs (department) can take action...all industry and businesses have assured me that full benefit will be passed on to consumers," he added.

IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said when GST reform was announced there were different estimates of rise in consumption. Last year, the GDP size was Rs 335 lakh crore, of which Rs 202 lakh crore was from consumption and Rs 98 lakh crore from investment.

Because of GST reforms consumption will be significantly increasing and quite likely that the consumption will increase more than 10 percent this year, which means there is possibility of about Rs 20 lakh crore extra consumption this fiscal compared to last fiscal.

## This common nutrient in meat and fish could be linked to depression

TOI HEALTH

New Delhi, Oct 18: Feeling low might have more to do with your dinner plate than you think. Recent findings from the Girona Biomedical Research Institute (IDIBGI) and Pompeu Fabra University (UPF) suggest that a common nutrient found in meat and fish could subtly influence mood and even increase the risk of depression in some people. The key player is proline, an amino acid naturally present in foods like beef, fish, and gelatin. Scientists believe that the way our bodies, and more importantly our gut bacteria, process this nutrient may affect how we feel. It is a new and fascinating chapter in the growing story of how the gut and brain communicate to shape our mental health.

**When eating turns depressing**

Depression has long been linked to lifestyle factors such as sleep, exercise, and stress, but food is quickly becoming part of that conversation. While we often hear about nutrients that boost mood, such as omega-3s and vitamin D, researchers are now uncovering others that might have the opposite effect. Proline, once thought of simply as another amino acid, is emerging as a potential culprit. People with



higher levels of proline in their blood tend to report more depressive symptoms, but the link is not as straightforward as it seems.

Some individuals can consume proline-rich foods without feeling any impact on mood, and that difference appears to come down to

the gut microbiome, the vast ecosystem of bacteria living inside us.

**The gut-brain connection behind low mood**

Our gut microbes do more than just digest food; they also produce chemicals that interact with the brain. In the case of proline, certain bacteria can influence how much of it enters the bloodstream and eventually reaches the brain. People whose gut bacteria efficiently metabolise or transport proline seem less prone to depressive moods, suggesting that the microbiome acts as a kind of emotional filter.

In experiments, mice given gut bacteria from people with higher proline levels showed more depression-like behaviour, while those with bacteria that broke down proline properly remained more resilient. This finding suggests that our gut could literally be shaping our state of mind, one molecule at a time.

What fruit flies can tell us about sadness

The connection between food and mood does not stop with mammals. Even fruit flies can reveal surprising emotional parallels. When scientists fed the insects bacteria linked to proline metabolism, their behaviour changed. Flies that consumed Lactobacillus,

associated with a lower risk of depression, acted more motivated and persistent. However, those fed Enterobacter, linked to higher proline levels, became listless and withdrawn.

In a striking twist, flies that could not transport proline to their brains did not show any signs of low mood, suggesting that blocking proline's access to the brain might protect against depression.

**Food, feelings, and the future**

While it is too early to declare proline a "bad nutrient," the discovery adds weight to a growing belief that mental health begins in the gut. Diets heavy in certain amino acids could, in some people, tip the balance of brain chemistry depending on the bacteria they host.

Dr José Manuel Fernández-Real, one of the lead researchers, says the study highlights "the importance of considering both diet and microbiota when addressing mood disorders."

Still, experts caution that this research is in its early stages. There is no evidence yet that reducing proline intake can prevent depression. For now, the takeaway is more about awareness: the foods we eat do not just fuel our bodies; they may quietly influence our minds.



# 'No Kings' rallies expected to draw millions across US in protest against Trump

REUTERS

New York, Oct 18: More than 2,600 "No Kings" protest events are scheduled to take place on Saturday in all 50 US states, a mass mobilization against President Donald Trump's policies on immigration, education and security that organizers say are pushing the country toward autocracy.

The protests — big and little, in cities, suburbs and small towns across the US — follow similar demonstrations in June and will gauge the frustration level of opponents of a conservative agenda that has rolled out quickly.

Since Trump took office 10 months ago, his administration has ramped up immigration enforcement, moved to slash the federal workforce and cut funding to elite universities over issues including pro-Palestinian protests against



Israel's war in Gaza, campus diversity and transgender policies.

Residents in some major cities have seen National Guard troops sent in by the president, who argues they are needed to protect immigration agents and to help combat crime.

"There is nothing more American than saying 'we don't have kings' and exercising our right to peacefully protest," said

Leah Greenberg, co-founder of Indivisible, a progressive organization that is the main organizer of the No Kings marches.

Trump has said very little about Saturday's protests. But in an interview with Fox Business aired on Friday he said that "they're referring to me as a king — I'm not a king." More than 300 grassroots groups helped organize Saturday's marches, Greenberg said.

The American Civil Liberties Union said it has given legal training to tens of thousands of people who will act as marshals at the various marches, and those people were also trained in de-escalation. No Kings ads and information have blanketed social media to drive turnout.

Senator Bernie Sanders, a progressive independent, and Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a progressive Democrat, have backed the marches along with former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton who lost the 2016 presidential election to Trump. An array of celebrities also has backed the movement.

In June, over 2,000 No Kings protests took place, mostly peacefully, on the same day that Trump celebrated his 79th birthday and held a military parade in Washington.

# Israel identifies dead hostage returned on Friday

AFP

Jerusalem, Oct 18: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said on Saturday that the body of a deceased hostage Hamas returned overnight has been identified as 75-year-old Eliyahu Margalit. The Israeli military "informed the family of the abductee Eliyahu Margalit... that (the body of) their loved one has been returned to Israel and his identification has been completed," Netanyahu's office said in a statement.

It added that "we will not compromise... and will spare no effort until we return all of the fallen abductees, down to the last one."

The remains of the hostage who died in captivity were transferred to Israeli security forces in Gaza via the Red Cross, and returned to Israel for identification at a medical analysis center, the premier's office said on Friday night. The Israeli military said on Saturday that the remains had been returned to Margalit's family.

Margalit was killed at Kibbutz Nir Oz during Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack that sparked the war in Gaza, according to a military statement.

"Eliyahu, 75 years old at the time of his death... leaves behind a wife, three children, and grandchildren. His daughter, Nili Margalit, was also



abducted and returned (under) the hostage release agreement in November 2023," the statement said.

"Hamas is required to fulfil its part of the agreement and make the necessary efforts to return all the hostages to their families," it added.

Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem said in a statement Friday night that the militant group "continues to uphold its commitment to the ceasefire agreement... and it will continue working to complete the full prisoner exchange process." Under a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas

spearheaded by US President Donald Trump, the Palestinian militant group has returned all 20 surviving hostages and the remains of 10 out of 28 known deceased ones.

Under the terms of the agreement Hamas was to hand over all of the hostages, dead and alive, before Monday at 0900 GMT.

Israel returns bodies of Palestinians  
Israel returned the bodies of 15 Palestinians to Gaza on Saturday, bringing the total number handed over to 135, the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory said.

# AUS vs IND first ODI Nothing has changed in my relationship with Rohit, Virat, says Gill



PTI

Perth, Oct 18: India's new ODI captain Shubman Gill says his bond with the Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli is as strong as ever despite contrary narratives floating on social media in recent weeks, insisting that he will not hesitate to approach the two stalwarts, if he is in a fix during a match.

Gill replaced highly successful Rohit as India's new ODI skipper. The future of the two legends has become a matter of intense speculations since then. Gill's first assignment is three-match series against Australia, starting in Perth on Sunday (October 19, 2025).

Standing on the banks on Swan river — quite an unusual setting for a pre-match media conference — Gill sought to dispel the doubts. "A narrative is run on the outside but nothing has changed in my relationship with Rohit. He is very helpful whenever I feel I need to ask him anything, may be input on nature of the track," Gill told media on the eve of the series-opener.

"I go and ask 'What do you think? If you would have been leading what would you do?' I have great equation with Virat bhai and Rohit bhai and they never hesitate in giving suggestions," Gill said, seeking to clear the air about the misconception that the two seniors haven't taken the decision well. The 25-year-old skipper understands that these are "big shoes to fill" and he would need a lot of support from the two former skippers.

"I have had numerous conversations with Virat bhai and Rohit bhai on how to take team forward. What kind of culture they wanted to take the team forward, and those learnings and experience will help us. "These are big shoes for me to fill in

because of the legacy created by Mahi bhai (MS Dhoni), Virat bhai and Rohit bhai, so many experiences and learnings. The kind of experience and skill-set that they bring to the team is massive."

In his growing up years when ODI cricket still ruled the hearts and minds of Indian fans, it was but natural that Gill grew up on a staple diet of hundreds scored by Kohli and Rohit.

So how would it be to lead them?

"Obviously, when I was kid, I used to idolise them for the game they played and hunger they had which inspired me. It is a big honour for me to lead such legends of the game.

"When I am in a difficult situation I wouldn't shy away from getting any suggestions from them," Gill said making it clear how he felt about the presence of the two seniors.

When questioned what specific traits would he like to pick from Rohit and Virat, Gill harped on "messaging and communication".

"There are some things I observed and really liked as a player when I played under them. How they converse and what kind of messaging helped me get the best out of me when I played under them.

"That's the kind of captain I would want to be where all my players feel secured, and the job they have to do and communications would be clear."

Experience they say can't be bought from a supermarket and that is where exactly the duo stands out.

"They have served Indian cricket for close to 20 years and I have learnt a lot when I played under them, the experience that they bring can't be replicated, the runs that they have scored all over world." On a personal front, Gill believes that more the responsibility entrusted upon him, better he gets as a player.

# Pope Leo visits 'school of peace' sailing the Mediterranean

AFP

Ostia (Italy), Oct 18: Arm in arm, young people of different faiths perform the dabke, an Arabic folk dance, in the Italian port of Ostia, elated by a visit from Pope Leo XIV.

Behind them is the Bel Espoir, a schooner vessel on which the youths — whether from Libya or Egypt or France and Bosnia — have been sailing the Mediterranean to promote peace.

"For me especially it means a lot that the pope believes in the project and he wants to come and meet us," Jesus Marro, a 30-year-old Spaniard, told AFP.

"He believes in peace and building bridges together."

Since March, the ship, built in 1944 and recently restored, has welcomed some 200 young people aged 19 to 35 from different cultures and religions, making voyages across various points of the Mediterranean.

The current trip began in Naples and was headed to



Marseille, the eighth and final stop.

Hailing from all parts of the Mediterranean and involved in community projects in their home countries, the youth onboard say they see the voyage as an opportunity to promote dialogue in the face of what they called a worrying rise of conflict.

On Friday afternoon, during a visit to the three-masted ship docked at the port of Ostia outside Rome, the US pope sought to encourage them to listen in "a world that is increasingly

prone to violence, hatred and separation." Greeted by singing, the head of the Catholic Church came aboard, inspected the cabins and shared pastries in the boat's small dining room.

"Today's world needs signs and testimonies that give hope more than words," he said in an impromptu speech in English on the main deck.

'Life is short'

While sailing, the participants, who include Muslims, Orthodox Christians, Catholics and those without religion, help

with chores such as cooking, cleaning and night shifts, providing a feeling of closeness.

Christina Hilana, a 27-year-old Palestinian from a village near Ramallah in the West Bank called the experience "very moving."

"These two years have been very painful, and leaving my country in this situation has not been easy at all," said the young woman wearing a black and white keffiyeh headdress and a gold cross around her neck.

Fatima Al-Wardi, a 30-year-old Iraqi Muslim who runs a humanitarian project in Baghdad, had never seen the sea before the voyage.

"I wasn't ready, I'm afraid of water, I can't swim, but life is short and when you get a chance, you have to take it," she said.

"Iraq has seen the American army, then civil war between Sunnis and Shiites, and now there's Daesh. We've been through many incessant conflicts, but we still need peace because we believe in humanity," she said.

# It'll be great experience for our group in packed out stadiums against India: Marsh

PTI

Perth, Oct 18: Australia captain Mitchell Marsh on Saturday said playing in "packed out stadiums" against India who will have Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli back in the ranks will be a "great experience" for his group.

With Australia's focus fixated firmly on the Ashes starting next month, they will take on India across three ODIs and five T20Is starting with the 50-overs game in Perth on Sunday.

"Had the privilege of playing against them quite a lot over the journey," Marsh told the media talking about playing against Rohit and Kohli. "They're obviously legends of the game, Virat is the greatest chaser ever in this format. I think you can see by the ticket sales that a lot of people want to come and watch them."

"To see the stadium packed out against India, it's going to be a great experience for our group," he added. Marsh said the series will be a high-scoring one against India.

"I believe it's going to be a high scoring affair, but getting through the first 10 overs for both teams will be a challenge and maybe where the game's won and lost," he said.

Marsh said Matthew Short is set to bat at No 3 for Australia in the opening fixture.

"We know he opens for Victoria and Strikers and in T20 cricket around the world. But we see no difference opening the batting and No 3. We're comfortable with him batting there," he said.

# Heroes Never Die

HC Jagbir Singh

SG Ct Balvinder Singh

SG Ct Jaswant Singh

SG Ct Tariq Hussain

They made the supreme sacrifice while combatting Pakistani terrorists, at Suffain, Kathua, on 28 Mar 25.

# J&K Police in Service of the Nation since 1873

DATED: 18-10-2025  
DIPK-7302/25