



New era for startups, micro, small-scale industries has begun: LG Sinha

'PM Modi giving new impetus to build self-reliant India, investors in J&K will directly benefit from it'

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Nov 01: Asserting that a new era has begun for start-ups and micro and small-scale industries, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said that PM Modi is giving new impetus to build self-reliant India and investors in J&K will directly benefit from it.

Addressing the maiden "Self-Reliant India (SRI) Fund Outreach" event here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Entrepreneurs, investors and policy-makers are gathered here today at one place and I am confident that a new era has begun for startups and micro and small-scale industries."

He said, "The investors of



Jammu Kashmir will directly benefit from the reforms that Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji is giving new impetus to with the resolve of self-reliant India." The Lieutenant Governor said,

"We must leverage the existing strengths, better infrastructure, build strong linkages between J&K's industrial ecosystem and national financial institutions and bridge the funding gap for

MSMEs and startups."

He congratulated Union Ministry of MSME, NSIC Venture Capital Fund Limited (NVCFL), Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development

Institute (JKEDI) and J&K Department of Industries & Commerce for this landmark initiative to connect the start-ups and MSME entrepreneurs of J&K with VC firms and Institutional Investors.

The Lieutenant Governor asked the Venture Capitalists (VCs) and Investors to assess the capabilities of individual entrepreneurs, the potential of Jammu Kashmir and the business venture with full sensitivity and responsibilities. "Industrial development of Jammu Kashmir, rejuvenation of start-ups and MSMEs is not merely a business exercise. It is your duty towards the nation. The rapid development of J&K's MSMEs and Startups is the collective responsibility | More on P6

LG Sinha: Foundation Days of States, UTs boost cultural bonding

'Symbolises unity in diversity, shared trust'

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Nov 01: The Foundation Day of 13 States & Union Territories including Punjab, Chandigarh, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Delhi, Lakshadweep and Puducherry was celebrated in Raj Bhawan in presence of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor said that the Foundation Day Celebration of different States and UTs is a key mechanism of cultural

bonding. "It symbolises unity in diversity and shared trust. Our unity is the invisible power, enabling us to work with a shared vision of a strong and Viksit Bharat," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Sinha called upon the people to strengthen the cultural and spiritual bond, celebrate the shared legacy and promote a unified Indian identity. "I strongly believe that cultural, spiritual and emotional bonds forged across different languages and cultures of our great country Bharat can act as a most powerful engine for progress. We must | More on P6

Govt restored Darbar Move to correct 'injustice' with Jammu, says CM Omar

» Questions irregularities in 2014 flood relief

» Announces major road, urban dev projects in Sgr

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Nov 01: Stating that Jammu was treated unfairly, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday said the restoration of the historic Darbar Move practice was aimed at correcting an "injustice". He also questioned the alleged irregularities in the utilisation of the 2014 flood relief funds.

Addressing a gathering after laying the foundation stone for the widening and four-laning of Boulevard Road, the Chief Minister, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the Darbar Move tradition was not



the legacy of Sheikh Abdullah or his family, but existed even before 1947.

Omar said he restored the Darbar Move as Chief Minister after feeling that Jammu had

been treated unfairly. "When I saw that injustice had been done to Jammu city, I restored the Darbar Move practice. If we were to make decisions based on religion | More on P6

PM inspires children treated for heart diseases

PTI

Raipur, Nov 01: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday interacted with around 2,500 children who were successfully treated for congenital heart diseases at Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital in Nava Raipur in Chhattisgarh and emphasised that good health is essential to achieving any goal in life.

During the interaction at the event 'Gift of life', which was part of 'Dil ki Baat' programme, the PM spoke with several children who shared their experiences of recovery from heart-related conditions and their dreams for the future, an official statement said.

"A young hockey player, who had won five medals, told the PM she was diagnosed with a heart condition during a school check-up and underwent surgery six months ago. She said she has | More on P6



Valley's first Chrysanthemum Theme Garden at Botanical Garden, Srinagar offers a wide array of autumnal flowers
Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

RAHI KI VIRASAT

Stay disciplined to shape united, progressive nation: LG Sinha to youth

Urges writers, scholars, thinkers to take forward Rahi's legacy to project moral, cultural vision of India

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Nov 01: Advising youth to stay disciplined and determined in shaping a united and progressive nation, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said that no matter the challenges, the journey of knowledge, peace and resolve must never stop.

Addressing at the International Seminar "Rahi ki Virasat" (The Legacy of Dr. Rahi Masoom Raza) the legendary writer, poet and thinker, LG Sinha, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer



(KNO), said, "I am pleased that this seminar has been organised to bring the thoughts and legacy of Rahi Masoom to life, much like the sacred flow from Gangotri to the earth."

The Lieutenant Governor said that Dr Rahi Masoom Raza was undoubtedly one of the greatest writers of his time and earned a hallowed name for himself in India's literary history.

He said, Rahi's centenary year will begin on August 1, 2026, stating that his legacy is not confined to literature or films but represents a deep connection between the Ganga, Indian civilization and humanity. "If we remove Rahi from the essence of Ganga and Sanskrit, distortion will enter his legacy," he said.

The Lt Governor recalled how Rahi never compromised with his principles, even during the Emergency. "When many in Bollywood remained silent, Rahi Sahab raised his voice," he added.

LG Sinha said that Rahi's writings | More on P6

J&K sees transformation: more hospitals, record medical seats: LG

- Under PM Modi, UT scaling new heights
- High-quality healthcare accessible to all
- 90% population covered under Rs 5 lakh health coverage

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Nov 01: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said that Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a remarkable transformation in the healthcare sector over the past five years, marked by the establishment of well-equipped

Op Sindoor aimed only at terrorists: Army Chief

'Strikes avoided civilians, focused on destroying Pak-based terror hideouts'

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Nov 01: Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Saturday said that India, during Operation Sindoor, targeted only terrorist bases in Pakistan and avoided civilian or military installations.

He said the operation was conducted with precision, guided by the principles that define India's military conduct.

"Operation Sindoor was successful because we fought with the combined strength of our principles and technology. We made it a point that no innocent civilians in Pakistan suffered. We only targeted terrorists and their bosses," General Dwivedi said while speaking to reporters after attending an event at his alma mater, Rewa Sainik School, during the All India Sainik Schools National Games 2025, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

He urged citizens to contribute to nation-building and help achieve the goal of a developed India by 2047.

He said the armed forces ensured that no action was carried out during prayer hours. "We attacked only places that had the presence of terrorists. We did not target innocent civilians



or defence installations. We achieved our goal in Operation Sindoor and sent a message to Pakistan that we are not like them," he added.

Operation Sindoor was launched on May 7 in response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which killed several civilians.

The operation targeted terrorist hideouts located in territories under Pakistan's control. The airstrikes and counter-attacks continued for four days before both sides agreed to halt military actions on May 10.

General Dwivedi said Operation Sindoor remains active and will continue until the Army considers its objectives fully met.

At the same event, Madhya Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Rajendra Shukla presented mementoes of the white lion symbol of the Vindhya region to General | More on P6

Major Gen Tushar Sharma assumes command of Kilo Force in north Kmr



KNO

Srinagar, Nov 01: Major General Tushar Sharma took over charge of Counter Insurgency Force (Kilo), in North Kashmir as the 21st General Officer Commanding, succeeding Major General Vivek Narang.

Major General Tushar Sharma, an alumnus of the National Defence Academy (NDA) has tenated various staff and command appointments in varied terrain and formations

and has extensive experience in Counter Terrorism Operations, a defence spokesman said in a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

On assuming command, Major General Tushar Sharma paid homage to the Bravehearts who made the supreme sacrifice in line of duty and exhorted all ranks to reaffirm their resolve to uphold the legacy of the Formation through steadfast commitment and devotion to duty. | More on P6



hospitals, and a record increase in MBBS and nursing seats.

Speaking at the inaugural function of 200-Bedded Hospital, Amandeep BR Medicity, in collaboration with Ujala Cygnus Healthcare, here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News

Observer (KNO) said, "In a very short span of time since 2020 modern healthcare facilities were developed including well-equipped hospitals, increased record number of MBBS and nursing seats for adequate number of qualified healthcare professionals. | More on P6

Fisheries sector can become key contributor to rural economy: Javid

Inaugurates Floating Trout Feed Manufacturing Plant at Kokernag

KT NEWS DESK

ANANTNAG, NOVEMBER 01: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Departments, Javid Ahmad Dar Saturday visited Trout Fish Farming Project (TFFP), Kokernag and inaugurated 'Floating Trout Feed Manufacturing Plant/Mill', established under Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP) at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.5 crores.

The Minister was accompanied by MLA Kokernag, Zafar Ali Khatana; MLA, Rajpora, Gulam Mohi uddin Mir; MLA, Shangus-Anantnag East, Reyaz Ahmad Khan; MLA Anantnag West, Abdul Majid Bhat; MLA, Pahalgam, Altaf Ahmad Wani; Director Fisheries, J&K, Abdul Majid Tak and other senior officers of the Agriculture Production and Mechanical Engineering and allied departments.



Significantly, the newly established plant has a production capacity of 400 kilograms per hour, aimed at catering to the

growing requirement of quality feed for trout farming across the region. Following the inauguration, the Minister inspected

Kokernag Trout Fish Farm, where he was briefed about the ongoing trout cultivation activities and modern techniques being adopted for enhancing production. He also inspected the breeding section of the farm and interacted with officials and fish farmers.

Later, the Minister visited Kathsoo, Pahalgam and laid the foundation stone of NABARD-Assisted Trout Fish Farming Project.

During the visit, he interacted with fish farmers and beneficiaries, seeking their feedback and suggestions for promoting sustainable fish farming practices. He also inspected the ongoing works under the project.

Speaking to media persons on the sidelines of these events, the Minister said that the newly inaugurated trout feed manufacturing plant at Kokernag will play a vital role in ensuring the availability of high-quality feed, thereby improving trout production across South Kashmir.

VAW event held for JPDCI officials

KT NEWS DESK

DODA, NOVEMBER 1: The district administration Doda, in collaboration with Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) Jammu & Kashmir Saturday organized a Vigilance Awareness Week event at the Conference Hall, DC Office Complex for the officials of Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited - JPDCI.

The program themed "Say No to Corruption" was held under the chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Anil Kumar Thakur.

The event was attended by ASP Mohammad Aslam; DySP ACB Imran Malik; Inspector ACB, XEN JPDCI, AEE, JEEs, officials of the power department and members of civil society.

In his address, the ADC highlighted the importance of honesty, transparency and sincerity in public service. He appreciated the proactive efforts of Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh and SSP Sandeep Kumar Mehta in maintaining a strong check on corruption and ensuring accountability across departments. He urged all participants to cultivate a culture of integrity and involve the community in eliminating corruption from society.

The ADC assured that the District Administration will extend full support to the JPDCI staff in addressing challenges faced during field operations and reiterated the commitment to uphold integrity and transparency in all public services.

DySP ACB Imran Malik delivered an informative PowerPoint presentation on vigilance mechanisms and preventive measures. A documentary featuring messages from the Prime Minister of India and Lieutenant Governor of J&K was screened, highlighting the significance of vigilance, honesty and integrity in governance. An online poll was also conducted to assess public opinion on corruption and ethical conduct in administration.

Additionally, AEE JPDCI Doda presented a detailed presentation on the department's achievements, especially under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS).

The Inspector ACB elaborated on various forms of corruption, statutory functions, penalties for negligence and real cases identified in the power sector. He advised JPDCI to strengthen its internal vigilance cell for better monitoring and prevention of malpractices.

The Vigilance Awareness Week event culminated with a collective pledge by the participants vowing to remain vigilant, promote ethical behavior and contribute towards building a corruption-free society.

Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan

Teachers to play key role in saving youth: DC Srinagar



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR NOVEMBER 01: As part of the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, the district administration Srinagar on Saturday organized a training programme for Schools and Colleges Teachers on identification and counselling of students to prevent drug abuse and promote a healthy, drug-free life. The teachers were trained by the experts of IMHANS, SMHS Srinagar.

The programme was presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, who attended as the Chief Guest here at Sri Pratap College.

While Superintendent of Police, Umar Shah; Joint Commissioner SMC, Suhail-ul-Islam; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; District Social Welfare Officer, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad; Principal, S.P. College, Dr. Bashir Ahmad Sheikh, HOD IMHANS, Dr Yasir along with other Resource Persons, Experts, and Teachers from Higher Secondary Schools and Degree Colleges of the District were present on the occasion.

Addressing the participants, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the significance of the day-long training and orientation programme, aimed at equipping teachers with the knowledge, skills and understanding required to effectively respond to the growing challenge of substance abuse.

He emphasized that the teachers trained under the programme will serve as brand ambassadors in saving youth from the menace of drugs. The DC said the trained teachers will now act as vital assets to society, equipped to identify early signs of drug abuse, implement intervention strategies and provide counselling and motivation to affected students. He noted that the trained staff will also help train other staff members on the

techniques shared by the resource persons during the programme.

The DC further underlined that the true impact of this initiative lies in transforming awareness into action through teachers, ultimately helping to safeguard youth and society as a whole from the ill effects of drugs.

On the occasion, the Superintendent of Police elaborated on the legal aspects and enforcement measures in place to curb drug trafficking and substance abuse, and called for active public cooperation in the fight against this social menace.

The Joint Commissioner, SMC also highlighted the collective responsibility of society and the administration in addressing the issue of drug abuse and creating a supportive environment for youth. Earlier, Principal S.P. College extended a warm welcome to all participants.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner distributed Certificates of Appreciation among the Resource persons and Certificates of Participation among the trainee Teachers from Higher Secondary Schools and Degree College of Srinagar District.

During the event, Resource persons and Experts stressed the crucial role of teachers in the early detection of behavioural changes among students and the importance of timely counselling and awareness. Participants were sensitized about various government initiatives and community-based approaches to combat substance abuse.

The DC appreciated the efforts of all participating institutions and reaffirmed the District Administration's commitment to continue collaborative efforts with the education sector to achieve the goals of the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks presented by the District Social Welfare Officer.

Build 'Vocal for Local' brands rooted in regional identity: DC Budgam

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 01: The National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) Srinagar Saturday held its Convocation Ceremony for the graduating batch of 2021-2025 at the institute's campus auditorium. The event marked a significant milestone for students from the departments of Fashion Design, Fashion Communication, and Master's in Fashion Management, who gathered with faculty members, parents, and dignitaries to celebrate the culmination of their academic journey.

The ceremony was graced by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, as the Guest of Honour, who inaugurated the event by lighting the ceremonial lamp.

Addressing the gathering, the DC congratulated the graduating students and lauded the faculty for nurturing creative talent and professional excellence. He emphasized that NIFT Srinagar has emerged as a symbol of innovation and creativity in Jammu and Kashmir, bridging the gap between heritage and modernity. He said that Institutions like NIFT play a vital role in empowering youth



by channelizing their creativity into productive, sustainable careers. He said that the integration of local craftsmanship with modern design sensibilities not only enhances employability but also helps preserve our invaluable cultural heritage.

The DC further remarked that the global fashion landscape today demands a balance between sustainability, authenticity, and innovation, and encouraged students to be ambassadors of ethical fashion and conscious design.

He added that the institute's initiatives to revive and reimagine traditional crafts, such as Kashmiri embroidery, Pashmina

weaving and papier-mache reflect how design can be a driver of economic growth and social empowerment.

The DC also highlighted the importance of linking education with entrepreneurship, urging students to explore local opportunities and contribute to the "Vocal for Local" vision by building brands rooted in regional identity. He further said that education from NIFT gives you the power to transform ideas into reality.

He urged all graduating students to think globally, act locally, and uphold integrity, creativity, and social responsibility in whatever you do.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
(R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA.

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

NIT No: 105/EEA/R&B of 2025-26/6108-18

Dated: 31-10-2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor	Project Authority
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Construction of Lane from H/o Gulam Hassan Bhat to H/o Hilal Ahmad Wani at Bhat Mohallah Khrew.	6.94	300/-	2% of Adv cost	20 days	IDMT - MC KHREW	CEE, DEE	DULBK
2.	Construction of Lane and Drain from H/o Habibullah Sheikh to Ali Mohammad Wani at MC Khrew.	2.76	200/-	2% of Adv cost	www15 days	IDMT - MC KHREW	DEE	DULBK

Position of AAA: Accorded vide Directorate of Urban Local Bodies Kashmir order No: 776 of 2025 dated 27.09.2025

Position of funds: Committed.

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	31-10-2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	31-10-2025
3	Bid submission Start Date	01-11-2025
4	Bid Submission End Date	14-11-2025 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	15-11-2025 12:00 PM

1. Every participating contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payments shall be released by the Government Department/Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder. (As per circular No. 01(ADM) FD of 2025 Dated 08-07-2025 of J&K Finance Department)

(The participating contractor may disclose his Bank Account as per the format, devised as Annexure- A of the NIT and submit/upload the same accordingly at the time of submission of the bid).

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan (Dated between bid submission start date and bid submission end date) with NIT No., Serial No. and name of work to be deposited in M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora (Tender Inviting authority).

3. All the bidders must upload Earnest money / Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in the shape of CDR/ FDR/ BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora (Tender receiving authority) (The Date of earnest money/ Bid security should be between the Bid Submission start date and Bid submission End date, otherwise bids shall be rejected).

4. The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security @ 5% of contract value in the form of CDR/ FDR/ BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora (Tender receiving authority) as per rule-171 (1) of GFR 2017. The earnest money/ Bid security @2% shall be released to the successful bidder only on receipt of Performance Security @ 5% of Contract value which shall be released after successful completion of DLP / maintenance period.

All other terms and conditions shall be available in website www.jktenders.gov.in.

Sd/-
Draftsman

Sd/-
Technical Officer

DIPK-7678/25
Dated: 01-11-2025

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Awantipora

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE SEED PATHOLOGIST KASHMIR

AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION & FARMER'S WELFARE DEPARTMENT,

ADVISORY for the Month of November-2025.

S. No.	Crop	Disease Problem	Pathological Advisory
1.	Wheat	Seed borne diseases (Loose smut, Head Blight, Bunt, Root rot)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use Clean seeds, better varieties from reliable registered agencies or if using own saved seeds, ensure selection of healthy and disease free seed.Collect all the diseased plant debris and ensure their destruction by burning or deep burial in the soil.Seed treatment with Mancozeb 75 WP or Captan 50 WP @ 3gm/ kg of seed.
2.	Brown Sarson	Downy mildew, white Rust, Alternaria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Remove and destroy diseased crop debris.Treat the seeds with Metalaxyl MZ 72 WP or Captan 50WP@ 2-3gm/ kg of seed.
3.	Pea	Pythium seed & Seedling rot, Rhizoctonia seedling blight, Aschochyta blight, Seed Rot, Fusarium Wilt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">At optimum soil moisture condition field preparations/ sowing can be carried out.Crop rotation with non-host crops to minimize soil borne diseases.Seed treatment with Carbendazim 50 WP@1gm or Captan 50 WP@3gms per kg of seed may be carried out to avoid emergence of any seed borne disease.Avoid application of Ammonical fertilizers to reduce susceptibility of pea to Fusarium wilt.Maintain drainage channels in the fields to avoid water stagnation.
4.	Onion and Garlic	Damping off, Purple Blotch (Alternaria porri); Stemphylium leaf blight	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Avoid poorly drained soils for transplantation / sowing.Dip the seedlings/ cloves in Metalaxyl MZ 72@2.5gm/ liter of water for 30 minutes.Maintain drainage channels in the fields to avoid water stagnation.
5.	Root Crops (Radish/Turnip/ Carrot)	Alternaria Leaf Spot, Blight, Soft Rot.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Hexaconazole SEC @0.03% Or Copper oxychloride 50WP@ 0.3% may be sprayed 2 to 3 times at 12-15 days interval.
6.	Fodder crops (Oats, Barseem, Winter vetch)	Loose Smut, Leaf blight	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cultivate moderately disease resistant varieties like Sabzar, Shalimar fodder oats, etc. to reduce disease losses.Ensure field sanitation before sowing.Crop rotation by rotating oats with oilseed crop to reduce the soil borne inoculum.Treat the seeds with Captan 50 WP or Mancozeb 75WP @ 3g/ kg seed.
7.	Other Vegetables (Spinach, Methi,)	Cercospora leaf spot	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Adopt Phytosanitary measures like sowing disease free seeds.Treat seeds with Carbendazim @0.2%Maintain drainage channels in the fields to avoid water stagnation

DIPK-7704/25
Dated: 01-11-2025

Sd/-
Seed Pathologist
Agri. Prod. & Farmer's Welfare Deptt.,
Lal Mandi Srinagar

‘Saffron town sees 90% dip in production’

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Nov 01: Kashmir's famed saffron sector is once again staring at a severe crisis, with growers warning that this year's output has plunged by nearly 90 per cent.

Farmers in Pampore, known as the "Saffron Bowl of Kashmir" say that production this season is barely 10-15 per cent of normal levels, pushing thousands of families into economic distress.

Growers concern that if corrective measures are not taken immediately, the crop, which has defined Kashmir's identity for centuries may vanish.

"This year the corms haven't sprouted properly at all," said Abdul Majeed Wani, president of the Saffron Growers Association J&K.

He said, "Production is hardly 15 per cent. It isn't even half of last year's crop, which itself was only about 30 per cent of the normal harvest. Every year it is decreasing, and the government doesn't



seem serious about safeguarding this sector." Wani said the main problem lies in repeated long dry spells, lack of effective irrigation, and the poor quality of corms

available in recent years.

The growers have appealed to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and the Agriculture Minister to personally intervene and take emergency steps. They demanded immediate irrigation facilities, regular monitoring of saffron meadows, measures to stop illegal extraction and selling corms, and availability of quality corms for fresh replantation.

The area under saffron cultivation in Kashmir has shrunk from 5,707 hectares in 1996-97 to just 2,387 hectares in 2019-2020 – a reduction of 65 per cent.

Government data shows that production fell from 17.33 metric tonnes in 2021 to 14.87 MT in 2022, and marginally rose to 14.94 MT in 2023. However, last year's output has been reported to be only around 30 per cent of normal production.

However, growers argue these figures do not reflect the reality at ground level.

According to them, last year's real output was barely 20 per cent of an average harvest – and this year they expect similar or worse output.

While the National Mission on Saffron (NMS) has revived some fields through sprinkler irrigation systems and farmer awareness programs, experts caution that the impact remains limited. "The siphoning off of corms and poor land management practices continue to negate the gains achieved under the mission," said an agricultural scientist from SKUAST-K.

Pampore's saffron – prized globally for its deep colour, aromatic thread, and medicinal value – has been more than just a crop for the region. It has been a cultural marker and a source of livelihood for thousands of families.

"Revival of saffron isn't just about saving a crop; it's about preserving a tradition, a culture, and an identity," said a group of distressed growers from Pampore. "If immediate and effective measures aren't taken, by 2030 there may be no saffron left in Pampore."—(KNO)

Kashmir Marathon 2025

Terrorism can't break spirit of Kashmir: Director Tourism



RAJA SYED RATHER

Srinagar, Nov 01: Director of Tourism Kashmir, Raja Yaqoob, on Saturday said that the upcoming Kashmir Marathon 2025 will be the biggest event in the Valley since the Pahalgalam attack, asserting that terrorism cannot break the spirit of Jammu and Kashmir.

Yaqoob said participants from across India and several foreign countries will take part in the run, which aims to boost both national and international tourism. "Post-Pahalgalam incident, this is the biggest event taking place. A strong message is being sent through this marathon that no matter what kind of terrorism occurs, it cannot break the spirit of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

He added that athletes from 27 states and Union Territories of India and 11 countries, including Germany, Denmark, the USA, Ethiopia, Kenya, Japan, and Sri Lanka, will participate in the marathon. "We are expecting at least 1,500 people to run in this marathon. More than 1,200 athletes have already arrived with their families," he said.

Calling it a challenging edition due to

post-Pahalgalam advisories and a tourism slowdown, Yaqoob said the event is the reflection of Kashmir's resilience. "Tourism dipped significantly after Pahalgalam, but this marathon shows that we will rise again. Kashmir's spirit cannot be broken," he said.

He said the marathon concept was introduced last year by the Chief Secretary to promote adventure tourism in Kashmir. "The aim is to boost national and international tourism. This is our second year, and Insha'Allah, it will continue as an annual event and expand further," he said.

Yaqoob also highlighted the event's economic impact, saying thousands of room-night bookings and increased local shopping will support the hospitality and handicraft sectors. "With families, coaches, and participants arriving, we expect strong tourism and business activity. We also plan to introduce 5K and 10K runs in summer to increase local participation," he said.

The marathon will feature 21 km and 42 km categories, attracting professional athletes who have competed in prestigious events such as the Boston and London marathons—(KNO)

Running by Lake Feels Magical: Athletes



REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Nov 01: With the Kashmir Marathon just hours away, foreign athletes in Srinagar were seen soaking in the beauty of Dal Lake and the surrounding mountains, calling the Valley "one of the most beautiful marathon routes in the world."

During their media interaction in Srinagar here, the athletes admired the stunning Dal Lake and the snow-capped Zabarwan range that will frame their race on Sunday morning, expressing excitement about running alongside such natural splendour.

Thersia, an Olympic-level runner, said she felt deeply moved by the

energy of the Valley.

"The feeling here is very nice," she said with a smile during the media interaction in Srinagar. "The people are warm and welcoming and it feels peaceful and inspiring."

Another participant from Denmark said this would be her first half-marathon outside Europe. "It is really beautiful here, the lake, the mountains, everything looks like a painting," she said. "I am really, really excited about the run."

Another Danish athlete, who has visited India several times, said Kashmir feels like a new world altogether. "This is my fourth visit to India, but my first time in Kashmir," she said, adding that the culture and nature here are so different. "Running around the lake will be a wonderful experience."

Similarly, a runner from the United States, who described himself as a seasoned athlete at 58, said he has participated in marathons across Europe and America, but Kashmir offers something truly unique.

"This is my first time in India and especially in Kashmir," he said. "I have run in many places, but this valley, you should come to Kashmir. It is breathtaking."

With the second edition of the Kashmir Marathon set to begin Sunday morning, the runners have expressed immense enthusiasm and excitement ahead of the race—(KNO)

Dy CM sets stage for performance-based contest with BJP

RAJA SYED RATHER

Srinagar, Nov 01: Claiming that what BJP and PDP couldn't finish in 11 years, National Conference will complete in five years, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary Saturday questioned the powers vested with the elected government.

Talking to the reporters after laying the foundation stone for the widening of the Boulevard Road, the Deputy Chief Minister said the project was long pending and should have been completed years ago.

"Yesterday, the Chief Minister inaugurated the Qamarwari Bridge, and today, we started work on widening the Boulevard widening. These projects were delayed for over 11 years. Dalgate is a global identity of Kashmir and this road widening was extremely important. Contractors have been instructed to finish the



work within the deadline," he said.

He added that several bridges and roads, including Sanat Nagar and Qamarwari, remained incomplete for years. "What BJP and PDP couldn't finish in 11 years, we will complete in five years," he said, adding that the present government inherited a "huge backlog" and is working to complete pending works along with new commitments.

The Deputy Chief Minister asked the media to highlight the government's sincerity and development work instead of "propaganda by previous regimes."

Reacting to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's comments regarding statehood and governance, he said the elected government must be given full authority.

"LG Sahib should not confuse people. If an elected government doesn't even get protocol and officers don't stand with the cabinet, then how can you say we have full powers? Files and administration are still controlled. We do not want confrontation, but constitutional positions should remain non-political," he said. He said Jammu & Kashmir has limited resources as a Union Territory and reiterated the demand for restoration of statehood, land and job safeguards and strengthening democratic institutions.

"Our priority is to fulfil the promises made by our leadership. The media should support efforts to make J&K strong and see statehood restored," he added—(KNO)

‘One among five suffering from PCOS’

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Nov 01: Director SKIMS Soura, Prof Mohd Ashraf Ganie on Saturday presented a study revealing that nearly one in five women in India is affected by Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS).

During the "Research Dissemination Meet", he presented findings from a PCOS Task Force study, revealing that approximately 19% of Indian women suffer from this metabolic disorder, which is closely linked to lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and obesity.

SKIMS Soura launched a new monthly feature dedicated to disseminating research findings to promote awareness and share research insights with the community. This initiative began with the results of an ICMR-supported Phase I study on PCOS.

The study, which was cross-sectional and involved 9,824 women aged 18 to 40 across India, found that the prevalence of PCOS varied depending on the diagnostic criteria used.

According to the NIH 1990 criteria, the prevalence was 7.2%, while the AE-PCOS 2009 criteria showed a prevalence of 13.6%, and the Rotterdam 2003 criteria indicated a rate of 19.6%. Phenotype C was identified as the most common, accounting for 40.8% of cases.

The study also highlighted significant metabolic comorbidities among women with PCOS; 43.2% were obese, 91.9% had dyslipidaemia, 32.9% suffered from non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), and 24.9% had metabolic syndrome. Additionally, 3.4% had diabetes, and 8.3% experienced hypertension.—(KNO)

CM gets annoyed for good governance demands: LoP Sharma

PEERZADA UMMER

Srinagar, Nov 01: Leader of Opposition and senior BJP leader Sunil Sharma on Saturday launched a scathing attack on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, saying that good governance in Jammu and Kashmir has taken a back seat and that he (Omar) is making "lame excuses" every day for his failure to deliver on the ground.

Sharma while talking to reporters said that there should be no excuses for not fulfilling the poll promises made by the ruling National Conference. "The Chief Minister and his government cannot hide behind the rhetoric. You contested elections in the Union Territory. Everyone knows it. You have full authority and the right to work. You should work for the people. Why does it bother you?" Sharma asked.

He said that whenever someone tells the government to do its job, it gets angry and defensive.



"They always get angry. They never respond with an argument or a technical explanation. They just react with anger because they feel exposed. Whenever they are reminded of their promises or duties, it troubles them," Sharma said.

He said that the Chief Minister cannot use the Pahalgalam terror attack as an excuse for governance failure. "Those responsible for that barbaric act have been punished. There is no doubt that the situation there is better. But if you are held responsible for making

people suffer due to electricity shortages, rising corruption, or scarcity of gas cylinders, then using the Pahalgalam carnage as a cover makes no sense. This does not mean you will do nothing," Sharma said.

He added that the security forces and agencies have done their job in maintaining peace and deserve full credit for that. "But those responsible for governance are not doing their job. The poor are suffering. I have said this many times. There is no doubt about it," Sharma said—(KNO)

CM's advisor urges GoI to restore statehood

KNO

Srinagar, Nov 01: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister's Advisor, Nasir Aslam Wani, on Saturday said the central government must respect the mandate given by the people of the region to the National Conference (NC) by restoring statehood as promised to them. He accused the successive regimes of ignoring Srinagar for being the "bastion" of the NC.

Addressing a gathering in Srinagar, Wani said, "Earlier, there was an opposition, but now we have a non-elected opposition that claims the government has enough powers to deliver. We have been given these powers by the Constitution. The people of J&K have given a massive mandate to the Omar Abdullah-led government this time than ever before to any party. There is a need to respect this mandate. The people voted as they were promised statehood, and they should be granted it."

He said several projects have remained stalled for years since the NC government went out of power over a decade ago.

"All successive regimes after the NC government didn't look



into the issues of Srinagar city, as they knew that Srinagar is the bastion of the NC and will remain so," he said, adding that all the issues are under the active consideration of the leadership.

Wani said Omar Abdullah, after taking over as Chief Minister again last year, reviewed the ongoing and stalled works in Srinagar.

Referring to the Qamarwari

Bridge, he said the project was inaugurated after 14 years. "Similarly, Boulevard Road has been witnessing congestion, which has left the local populace irked. However, the government is making efforts to decongest the road," he said.

The CM's Advisor further said, "Mere Smart City thinking won't do." He added that the Omar Abdullah-led government, along

with the efforts of Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, will ensure developmental projects in Srinagar.

Apparently reacting to the statement of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Wani said, "Everybody is out to give sermons to us, but they don't even bother to think about what they have done. Our political opponents fought elections against the BJP and later joined hands with them, which resulted in the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, and the snatching of statehood."

He said the NC has fought elections against "divisive" political parties. "We will always remain away from them and won't join hands with them. We will continue to work for the people," he said.

The CM's Advisor said that development and employment initiatives will continue and the government will fulfil all promises over the next four years. "The people need to be patient. Our major fight is to get statehood back. The people should stand shoulder to shoulder with this government in this fight," he added—(KNO)

Mera Yuva Bharat

The Digital Engine of Youth Empowerment and National Transformation

Laying the Foundation for a Youth-led India
India stands at a defining moment in its development journey, with 65% of the population under the age of 35 and the vision of a developed India by 2047 in sight. In this pivotal era, Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat) has emerged as a landmark initiative of the Government of India — a national platform dedicated to empowering youth and transforming their energy into meaningful action for nation-building.

Launched on 31st October 2023 on Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, marking the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, MY Bharat represents a dynamic fusion of technology, governance, and public participation. It serves as an autonomous body under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, providing a technology-driven institutional mechanism that connects young citizens to opportunities for volunteering, experiential learning, leadership, and skill development.

Through this platform, youth can discover initiatives across government departments, private organisations, and civil-society partners, engaging in projects that address real-world challenges — from health, education, and environment to innovation, entrepreneurship, and social inclusion. The initiative, aligned with the National Youth Policy, primarily engages individuals in the 15–29 year age group while also nurturing adolescents between 10–19 years to cultivate early participation and civic awareness.

The initiative signifies a shift from isolated youth programmes to an integrated digital ecosystem where aspirations meet opportunities. It builds pathways for participation at every level — local, state, and national — and recognises each contribution through verified digital credentials that enhance employability and civic pride.

At its heart, MY Bharat embodies the spirit of “Yuva Shakti se Jan Bhagidari” — the belief that India's progress is most powerful when its youth are active partners in development. It captures the essence of Amrit Kaal, positioning every young Indian not merely as a beneficiary of change but as its architect, shaping a Viksit Bharat 2047.

The MY Bharat Vision
When MY Bharat was launched in 2023, it marked a timely response to India's changing youth landscape. Traditional youth programmes, built for specific rural or urban contexts, were no longer enough to engage a generation shaped by technology, mobility, and global exposure. India's young citizens today seek platforms that recognise their aspirations, amplify their voices, and connect them directly with opportunities for learning and leadership. MY Bharat bridges this gap by creating a unified, technology-driven ecosystem that brings together rural, urban, and “rurban” youth on one national platform. Its phygital (physical + digital) approach, combining



physical participation with digital access, ensures that no young person is left behind, making the initiative even more relevant today.

The Digital Ecosystem
At the core of MY Bharat lies a powerful digital ecosystem that connects millions of young Indians with real-time opportunities for growth and service. Built under the Digital India framework, it integrates cutting-edge technology with inclusive design to ensure that every youth, whether in a metropolitan city or a remote village, can access learning, leadership, and volunteering opportunities with just a click.

MY Bharat Portal (mybharat.gov.in)
The MY Bharat portal serves as a central digital gateway connecting young citizens with opportunities for volunteering, skill-building, and leadership. It enables seamless registration, digital IDs, opportunity matching, and real-time impact dashboards. As of October 2025, the platform has onboarded over 2 crore youth and 1.20 lakh organisations, creating a vibrant ecosystem of collaboration and action.

With over 14.5 lakh volunteering opportunities generated, MY Bharat now links a vast network of 16,000+ youth club members and 60,000+ institutional partners, including government bodies, educational institutions, and NGOs. Collaborations with major corporate partners such as Reliance have further expanded its reach through impactful programmes and bootcamps that channel youth energy into civic and community development.

Designed for scalability, data analytics, and integration with national digital platforms, MY Bharat stands as the technological backbone of India's youth-led development movement.

MY Bharat Mobile App (Launched October 2025):

To make youth engagement mobile-first and more accessible, the MY Bharat Mobile App was launched on October 1, 2025. The app brings together the core functions of the portal with added convenience and reach. It features multilingual support, AI-driven chatbots, voice-assist navigation, and Smart CV Builder tools, enabling young citizens to access opportunities and build verified digital profiles on the go. At the

time of launch, over 1.81 crore youth and 1.20 lakh organisations were already registered on the platform. The app also provides digital certificates and engagement badges, reflecting each participant's contributions to national and community projects.

MY Bharat 2.0 Modules:

The upgraded MY Bharat 2.0 integrates a suite of advanced digital modules, expanding the platform from a registration portal into a comprehensive youth engagement ecosystem. These include:

National Career Service: Employment and career linkages for young professionals.

Mentorship Hub: Connects youth with industry experts, innovators, and thought leaders for guided skill development.

Experiential Learning Programmes (ELPs): Enables hands-on learning through district and state-level assignments that build civic responsibility.

Fit India Integration: Encourages holistic youth well-being through health, fitness, and community campaigns.

The platform also uses AI and voice-based navigation, Smart CV generation, and multilingual delivery to enhance accessibility and inclusivity.

Common Service Centre (CSC) Partnership for Last-Mile Reach:

To bridge the digital divide and ensure universal access, MY Bharat has partnered with the Common Services Centres (CSC) network under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). This collaboration leverages more than five lakh Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) across the country to assist youth in rural, tribal, and aspirational districts in registering and accessing MY Bharat services. Through this phygital (physical+digital) model, every young person — regardless of geography — can now connect with national programmes, leadership opportunities, and community projects via their nearest CSC.

Youth in Action: Stories of Change

Every milestone of Viksit Bharat 2047 begins with a story, of young Indians who are not waiting for change but creating it. Through MY Bharat, these stories come alive as proof that when India's youth are empowered, connected, and inspired, they can transform ordinary moments into movements of national significance. From

classrooms to border posts, villages to global stages, youth across India are translating digital engagement into collective action and leaving a lasting imprint on the nation's growth story.

Viksit Bharat Run 2025: Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam
The Viksit Bharat Run 2025 became a global stage for India's youth to express unity and purpose. Spanning 150 international cities across 91 countries, the initiative saw young Indians and members of the diaspora come together to celebrate India's progress and pledge their role in building a Viksit Bharat by 2047. From Sydney to San Francisco, every stride symbolised youthful optimism and a shared belief that development is not confined by borders. The run turned into a movement of Yuva Shakti—a global reminder that India's young citizens, wherever they are, remain bound by one spirit, one vision, and one mission of nation-building.

National Flag Quiz: Quiz Se Siachen Tak!

The National Flag Quiz under MY Bharat became much more than a test of knowledge — it was a journey of pride and purpose for India's youth. Thousands of participants engaged not just to answer questions, but to rediscover the meaning of the Tricolour and the values it represents. For a few exceptional volunteers, the experience culminated in an unforgettable visit to Siachen, the world's highest battlefield, where they witnessed India's courage and unity firsthand. The initiative ignited patriotism through learning and reminded young citizens that when knowledge and spirit rise together, the nation's flag soars higher than ever.

Spearheading the Journey Towards a Nasha Mukat Bharat

The Nasha Mukat Yuva for Viksit Bharat initiative, launched in Varanasi in July 2025, brought together over 100 spiritual organisations and thousands of young participants in a shared pledge to build a drug-free nation. The adoption of the Kashi Declaration marked a defining moment — empowering youth to lead India's fight against addiction through awareness, empathy, and community action. The movement soon spread nationwide, with over 1.5 lakh youth participating in 2,000+ programmes across India on September 21, 2025. What began as a spiritual summit evolved into a people's movement led by youth, demonstrating how Yuva Shakti can transform resolve into sustained social change.

Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue (VBLYD)

The Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue brought together India's brightest youth leaders to turn the nation's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 into actionable ideas. Across ten thematic tracks — from sustainability and innovation to youth empowerment and startups — participants brainstormed bold solutions for India's future. The event captured the spirit of collaboration,

Key Takeaways

- Empowering Millions: Over 2 crore youth and 1.2 lakh organisations engaged through a unified digital ecosystem for learning, leadership, and service.
- Driving Growth Through Partnerships: MoUs with Digital India Corporation and SOUL strengthen MY Bharat 2.0 with AI tools, mentorship, and leadership training.
- Towards Viksit Bharat 2047: MY Bharat 2.0 will expand career counselling, skill mapping, and entrepreneurship support, anchoring youth-led national transformation.

confidence, and creativity that defines the country's Yuva Shakti. Commending their efforts, the Hon'ble Prime Minister noted that “India is truly blessed to have such a talented Yuva Shakti,” reaffirming the pivotal role of young leaders in driving the nation's development journey.

Journey So Far and Road Ahead

In less than two years since its inception, MY Bharat has transformed into India's largest digital platform for youth engagement, connecting over 2 crore young citizens and more than 1.20 lakh partner organisations. It has created new pathways for volunteering, leadership, and skilling while enabling young Indians to contribute directly to national priorities. The platform's success has been strengthened through key partnerships and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), that have expanded its digital and institutional reach.

A landmark MoU signed on 30th June 2025 between the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the Digital India Corporation (MeitY) paved the way for the development of MY Bharat 2.0 — a next-generation, AI-enabled, multilingual platform designed to integrate features such as Smart CV Builder, voice-assist navigation, mentorship networks, and experiential learning modules. Another major collaboration was formalised on 13th August 2025 with the School of Ultimate Leadership Foundation (SOUL), aimed at training one lakh youth leaders from diverse backgrounds over the next three years. These partnerships reaffirm MY Bharat's mission to combine technology with capacity-building and make youth engagement more inclusive and outcome-driven.

Looking ahead, MY Bharat 2.0 will expand its ecosystem to include career counselling, AI-based skill mapping, entrepreneurship support, and digital certification, positioning it as the largest youth digital network in the Global South. Planned integration with National Career Service (NCS), DigiLocker, UMANG, and the Digital India Stack will create seamless interoperability and enhance policy convergence.

Let There Be Dark

The greatest ally of the modern tribe of the illusionist — statesmen, politicians — is luminosity. Because light, not dark, helps dazzle the eyes, deflecting attention from this age's injustices.

UDDALAK MUKHERJEE

For a technology that is expected to enslave humanity, the AI algorithm — the elixir of social media platforms — can be touchingly predictable. Each year, around Dashami — the day fell earlier this month — Facebook and Instagram dutifully churn out versions of Gaganendranath Tagore's iconic Visarjan: a little more enterprise and inventiveness — are these traits not supposed to be the algorithm's forte? — could have led the technology to resurrect other vintage artworks exploring a similar theme; The Durga Puja Being Celebrated on the River Hugli, George Gidley Palmer's equally engrossing depiction of a visarjan, perhaps demands a similar afterlife on social media.

The algorithm's dumbness does not deserve commentary. But a shared — fascinating — detail in the paintings of Gaganendranath and Palmer merits introspection. Even a cursory look at the two artworks will reveal the hypnotic appeal of luminescence to the human eye. In each painting, the deity gets transformed, literally and metaphorically, into an orb of light that seems to keep at bay the gathering, inky gloom. The symbolic message is clear: divine light holding out hope amidst the dark.

This positing of light as adversarial to darkness — the supposed realm of all that is evil, sinister; a shadow land that eludes reason and understanding — can, of course, be traced back to a much older evolutionary and theological arc — anxiety — whose imprint remains deeply etched in not only humanity's creative pursuits but also social order. The discomfiture with



Othello and Caliban, the horrors associated with the dark, brooding woods in Gothic fairy tales and with that bloodthirsty Transylvanian Count, Emily Brontë's Heathcliff — his eyes like “black fiends” — Charlotte Brontë's Mrs Rochester, of Creole blood, whose majesty gives way to madness, Goya's depiction of the dark as the sphere of primordial fear and, of course, Charles Marlow's reminiscences of and struggles — physical and spiritual — with the Heart of Darkness find their perfect echoes, on the other side of the cultural sphere, in the Oriental world, in the yakshis and rakshasas of Indian myth as well as in the leyak of Bali's fables, a practitioner of the dark arts that flies with its entrails trailing it — these and many other elements in literature, art and folklore embody an instinctive, collective inclination to demonise darkness.

It would be a travesty to frame the human predisposition towards light — and all that is

not dark — as innocent. As Nina Edwards writes in her book, Darkness: A Cultural History, race and gender have been the principal social registers of the prejudice against the constituency of the dark. The stubborn malaise of looking down on those with a dark countenance — be it in a supposedly decolonised East, including India, or in America, where Black people continue to suffer the most egregious forms of social, economic and cultural violence — throws light upon this dark truth.

Given this history, the tendency to view light and darkness as conflicting binaries may appear to be natural and, thus, universal. Yet, the ideas of light and darkness are not always immutable; their supposed animosity has, at times, given way to intriguing alliances, responding to shifts in the intellectual and the cultural milieu. Consider the delicious irony in the shakto tradition of Bengal, where deepavali, the festival of lights to ward

off darkness, has, at its centre, the worship of a fierce, ebony woman. Italy, during the Renaissance, mesmerised the world by developing the artistic technique called chiaroscuro — light-dark — that enabled artists to create three-dimensional forms by employing sharp contrasts between light and dark.

Indeed, modern scholarship and intellectual thought, responding to questions of racial bigotry, have, in defiance, claimed that the much-reviled trope of darkness, in fact, contains an emancipatory blaze. In a piece for The New York Times Magazine, Teju Cole mentions the reflections on the word, ‘opacity’, by Édouard Glissant, a French philosopher, one of the canons in Caribbean thought and literature. The opaque, being resistant to illumination, transparency, has linguistic and moral associations with concealment, furtiveness. But Glissant locates in opacity — the state of being unlit, a kind of darkness — the right of the marginalised — Black, Creole, Coloured and perhaps even indentured people — to not be understood, simplified, catalogued, explained.

Nina Edwards, too, provides a unique example from mundane, everyday objects of the dark being an embodiment of righteous resistance. The dark tint of the sunglass, integral to fashion and a marker of social status, she writes, serves, for the wearer, a dual function: it protects the user from scrutiny, thereby becoming an appendage to secure anonymity, privacy, in a heavily surveilled world without impeding the user's ability — the right — to look back at, confront, scrutinise the world outside. Edwards thus argues that the sunglass is an ally in the wearer's subversive endeavour to be simultaneously

anonymous and confrontational.

There is then darkness's enduring aesthetic appeal — and not just in the world of fashion. Junichiro Tanizaki, a pre-eminent voice in modern Japanese literature, read in Japan's enchantment — entrapment — with illumination its capitulation to a problematic Western modernity and affiliated consumption. He writes, poignantly, about once venturing out to witness the autumnal moon-viewing ceremony, only to discover that electric light in five colours had devoured the fainter, but far more beautiful, lunar lustre.

Today, Tanizaki's beloved “pensive shadows” are in retreat all around the world. The World Bank and its partners have even begun to measure night-time light as an actual metric for development, leading to the metamorphosis of artificial light into a proxy for economic enlightenment. Never mind the consequences on worlds natural and human: migratory birds, sea turtles and insects veering off their course, blinded by the light; disruptions in sleep and reproductive cycles of both animals and humans; the crude flooding of the night sky with artifice that bedazzles, leading entire societies to lose their ability to appreciate, aesthetically, a nocturnal sky washed in the mellow light of stars and galaxies.

There is a peril in light continuing to devour the dark. The greatest ally of the modern tribe of the illusionist — statesmen, politicians, Wall Street wizards, Big Tech bosses, to name a few — is luminosity. Because light — not dark — helps dazzle the eyes, deflecting attention from this age's great iniquities and injustices.

Source: The Telegraph India

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

Govt empowering youth, strengthening economy: Javid

Launches stocking of imported Brown Trout Seed



KT News Desk

KULGAM, NOVEMBER 01: Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Departments, Javid Ahmad Dar Saturday visited Kulgam and launched stocking of imported Brown Trout seed across various streams of Jammu and Kashmir. Speaking after the launch, the Minister highlighted the immense potential of trout farming in the region, noting

that it can play a significant role in boosting local economy and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities. He emphasized that the Government is promoting aquaculture and self-employment avenues aimed at empowering youth and strengthening the economy through innovative livelihood initiatives. During the launch, the Minister was informed that around 3 lakh imported Brown Trout seeds from Denmark,

developed and reared at the Trout Hatchery in Tchanser Kulgam, will now be stocked across different streams of Jammu and Kashmir to enhance fish production. DDC Chairperson, Kulgam, Mohammad Afzal Parrey; MLA Devsar, Peerzada Feroze; Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan; Director Fisheries Abdul Majeed Tak and other senior officers from the district administration and Fisheries department were also present on the occasion.

Budgam admin intensifies voter awareness

KT News Desk

BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 1: As part of the ongoing Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) campaign, the District Administration Budgam, in collaboration with the School Education Department Budgam, Saturday organised a series of voter awareness activities in Gogo and Humhama areas identified as low voter turnout pockets in the district. The initiatives aimed to enhance voter awareness, promote ethical voting, and encourage greater participation in the upcoming electoral process. The day-long programmes included Nukad Natak (street plays), voter awareness rallies, distribution of informative pamphlets, and the installation of hoardings and banners carrying key messages on the importance of voting. Students, teachers, and local residents participated enthusiastically,

pledging to cast their votes responsibly and motivate others to do the same. Through engaging performances and interactive sessions, participants were sensitized about the power of the vote, the importance of informed and ethical participation, and the role of each citizen in strengthening democracy. On the occasion, officials from the District Administration emphasized that such outreach initiatives are essential for bridging voter awareness gaps and ensuring inclusive participation across all areas of Budgam. They reiterated the commitment of the administration to make the electoral process accessible, transparent, and participatory. The programme witnessed active coordination between the Education Department, Electoral staff, and local institutions, reflecting the collaborative spirit of the SVEEP mission to build a vibrant and informed electorate in Budgam.

Kathua: Unity Padyatra held

DDC Chairman, DC flag off Run for Unity

KT News Desk

KATHUA, NOVEMBER 1: The district administration Kathua Saturday organised a Unity Padyatra to commemorate the 150th Birth Anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, popularly known as the "Iron Man of India." The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, youth, citizens and government functionaries, celebrating the ideals of unity, integrity and patriotism championed by Sardar Patel. The programme, held at the Auditorium Hall of Government Degree College for Women, commenced with the lighting of the traditional lamp followed by floral tributes to Bharat Mata and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The atmosphere was filled with patriotic fervour as participants paid homage to the great leader who played a pivotal role in integrating the princely states to form a united India. The Unity Padyatra was flagged off by DDC Chairman Col (Retd.), Mahan Singh in presence of Deputy Commissioner, Rajesh Sharma, senior officers from different departments, college faculty, students and general public. The rally traversed through prominent locations of Kathua town, spreading the message of unity and patriotism, before culminating at the Auditorium of Government Degree College for Boys. At the final venue, the students presented colourful cultural performances, highlighting the rich traditions and unity of the nation. The participants

took a Unity pledge led by the Chief Guest, reaffirming their commitment to uphold the spirit of oneness and national integrity. Speaking on the occasion, DDC Chairman Col (Retd.), Mahan Singh paid glowing tributes to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, describing him as the architect of modern India whose visionary leadership and resolute determination ensured the political and territorial integration of the country. He urged the youth to draw inspiration from Patel's life and dedicate themselves to the service of the nation with honesty and unity of purpose. Earlier, Deputy Commissioner, Rajesh Sharma appreciated the active participation of students, educational institutions and line departments for making the event a grand success. He said that the Unity Padyatra serves as a reminder of Sardar Patel's unparalleled contribution to national integration and reinforces the message of unity amidst diversity. He appreciated DYO NYK Kathua, Koushal Mahajan for making efforts to make the event grand and inclusive. As a mark of encouragement, mementos were presented to the students who participated in the Rangoli competition and cultural performances, acknowledging their creativity and contribution to the celebrations. The event concluded with a collective pledge to uphold the values of integrity, brotherhood and national unity - the very ideals for which Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel dedicated his life.

PCCF inaugurates technical workshop at Dachigam

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 01: The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF), Suresh Kumar Gupta Saturday inaugurated a Day-long technical workshop for preparation of Annual Plan of Operations (APOs) for the financial year 2026-27 at NIC Dachigam.

The workshop was aimed to guide the implementing Agencies in preparation of scientific, output oriented and people centric APO for the next financial year. The PCCF stressed on having meaningful consultation with panchayats in formulation of APOs so that the demands of local communities for fodder, medicinal plants and firewood and other forest produce are met from CAMPA plantation closures. He also stressed on making scientific proposals in accordance with the working plan prescriptions. The PCCF also released two booklets viz. "CAMPA Success stories, The Seeds of Hope" and "Forest Fire Management Plan of JV Forest Division". Speaking on the occasion, he highlighted the significance of Compensatory Afforestation Management and Funding Agency (CAMPA) in Rehabilitation of degraded forests, Soil and moisture conservation practices, Forest Fire Management, Human Wildlife Conflict management, Conservation of protected areas and Biodiversity projects. PCCF directed the implementing agencies to



prepare APOs as per the CAMPA guidelines. Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF), Kashmir, Irfan Rasool Wani in his address highlighted the achievements made under CAMPA since its inception in the year 2010-11. He inferred that under CAMPA 18000 hectares of degraded forest land has been treated so far with planting of 2.25 crore quality saplings. He said, Forest Department has also established 56 nurseries with an annual plant production potential of 75 lakh conifer and broadleaved plants. He stressed on improving the survival percentage of planted saplings with focus on economically viable plants, diversification of species and modernization of nurseries. Chief executive officer CAMPA, Dr. K.S. Jaychandran advised the implementing agencies to prepare Technically correct APO's within the prescribed timelines with focus on greening

activities, soil and moisture conservation works and other ancillary activities. He asked the forest officers to adopt a landscape and watershed approach in the treatment of forest areas in a holistic manner. The workshop showcased various success stories of CAMPA presented by respective Conservators of Forests of respective Forest Circles. Field officers including DFOs also spoke on quality plant production and modern practices in nursery management, development of muck dumping sites, Forest Fire management and Habitat improvement for Wildlife and Management of Human Animal Conflict. The workshop concluded with a brainstorming panel discussion involving all participating officers. Officers from different departments including Forest Protection Force, Social Forestry, Wildlife and other sister departments also participated in the technical workshop.

Bhaderwah: Distribution of sanitary napkins held at Thanala

KT News Desk

DODA, NOVEMBER 01: Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women (Sankalp HEW) and One Stop Centre (OSC), under the guidance of the District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO), organised a menstrual hygiene awareness programme Saturday at Thanala, Bhaderwah. During the event sanitary napkins were distributed among women and adolescent girls. The initiative aimed to promote safe menstrual practices and eliminating the stigma associated with menstruation, particularly in rural areas. During the programme, participants were sensitised about the importance of maintaining menstrual hygiene including regular changing of sanitary pads and proper disposal

to prevent infections and health complications. The team also highlighted the importance of educating adolescent girls about their menstrual cycle and encouraging open conversations to foster awareness and confidence. Myths and misconceptions related to menstruation were addressed to develop a healthy and informed mindset within the community. The session also raised awareness about various government schemes aimed at improving women's health and welfare, motivating them to benefit from these initiatives. Residents of the area participated enthusiastically, acknowledging the significance of adopting hygienic menstrual practices. The initiative not only provided essential supplies but also empowered women and girls with vital knowledge and dignity.

71 PMGSY projects completed in Kishtwar, work on 46 in progress

KT News Desk

KISHTWAR, NOVEMBER 01: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Pankaj Kumar Sharma Saturday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of road infrastructure projects being executed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) across all subdivisions of the district. During the meeting, the Executive Engineers (PMGSY) briefed the Deputy Commissioner on the current status, physical achievements and challenges encountered in the execution of various projects. A detailed PowerPoint presentation was also given outlining project-wise progress and timelines. It was informed that in Division Kishtwar, out of 99 sanctioned projects, 58 have been completed, while work on

41 are in progress. In Marwah Division, 13 out of 21 schemes are complete and work on 5 others is underway. The DC took a detailed review of the road projects taken up under different phases of PMGSY implementation, including the road projects from Gahan to Chandali, Ikhal to Lopara, Margi to Sukhnai, Cherji to Semna Bhata, Hidyao to Hargadi, Afani to Jar, Shashoo to Sazar, Shiwas to Ongayee, Atholi to Palali and Kandni to Ohli, among others. The progress of bridge projects taken up under the scheme was also reviewed. The Deputy Commissioner directed the PMGSY engineers to ensure timely completion of all works while maintaining strict quality standards. He directed them to take disciplinary action, including blacklisting against non-performing contractors. He directed the Engineers to submit

the list of contractors who have abandoned or delayed works, so that appropriate action can be initiated against them. Emphasizing the importance of environmental protection, the DC directed the Executive Engineers to ensure proper disposal of muck at identified locations to avoid any damage to forest areas during the construction. He strictly directed to safeguard forest land during the execution of works and stressed the need to undertake plantation drives along road alignments to maintain ecological balance. Reiterating the district administration's zero-tolerance policy towards substandard work, the DC underscored the need for rigorous quality monitoring and accountability to ensure durable, sustainable and environmentally responsible rural connectivity in the district.

Will ensure quality sports infrastructure across J&K: Satish

Lays foundation stone for upgradation of playfield at Dooru

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, NOVEMBER 01: In a major stride towards the holistic development of sports infrastructure in South Kashmir, Minister for Youth Services and Sports, Food Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, IT, Transport, Satish Sharma Saturday laid the foundation stone for the upgradation of the Playfield at Dooru Verinag here. MLA Dooru, G. A. Mir; Secretary Sports Council Nuzhat Gul; senior officers of Youth Services and Sports Department, local representatives, and a large gathering of locals, students, and budding sports persons were present on the occasion. Addressing the gathering, Satish Sharma said that the Government is steadfast in its mission to transform Jammu and Kashmir into a vibrant hub of sports activity by ensuring state-of-the-art infrastructure at the grassroots level. He emphasized that sports not only foster discipline, teamwork, and physical



well-being but also empower youth to lead meaningful and purpose-driven lives. "The vision of the Government is to ensure that every district and block has quality sports infrastructure so that our youth can train, compete, and excel at state, national, and international levels," the Minister remarked. He further assured that Verinag's upgraded playfield will serve as a cornerstone for nurturing young talent in the area and

inspire greater participation in games and fitness activities. In his address, MLA Dooru, G. A. Mir expressed gratitude to the Minister for prioritizing aspirations of youth of Dooru Shahabad. He said the upgraded facility will not only enhance sports culture in the area but also contribute to the overall well-being and social development of the younger generation. Pertinently, the upgraded playfield will feature modern

turfing, boundary fencing, spectator stands, changing rooms, and other amenities essential for hosting inter-school, inter-district, and regional-level tournaments. The project has been conceived to provide a safe, inclusive, and well-equipped environment for sports enthusiasts across the area and after completion it is expected to become a vibrant centre for sporting excellence and youth engagement in the Verinag area.

K2K Cycling Expedition flagged off from Sgr



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 1: The much-awaited Kashmir to Kanyakumari (K2K) Cycling Expedition was ceremoniously flagged off Saturday from TRC Stadium, Srinagar, by Secretary, Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council, Nuzhat Gul. The event marks the celebration of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's 150th birth anniversary, symbolizing the spirit of national integration and unity that the Iron Man of India envisioned. A total of 150 cyclists from across India have embarked on this remarkable journey, including 20 women and one cyclist from Kashmir, Rafiq Ahmad. Speaking on the occasion, Nuzhat Gul said, "The K2K expedition is not just a test of endurance but a tribute to the spirit of unity and the diversity that makes India truly great. Starting this journey from the land of Kashmir the crown of India gives it even deeper meaning. It reflects the nation's strength, inclusivity, and collective resolve to stay united and fit." Over the next 18 days, the cyclists will traverse 4,249 kilometres pedaling through

diverse terrains, climates, and cultures as they move from the serene valleys of Kashmir to the southern tip of Kanyakumari. The expedition embodies the message of "One Nation, One Spirit, One Journey", inspiring youth across India to embrace fitness, resilience, and national pride. The event has been organized with the support of the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council, Fit India Movement, Sports Authority of India, and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. The expedition also aims to promote the Fit India campaign and raise awareness about the importance of an active lifestyle. The K2K Cycling Expedition stands as a vibrant symbol of how sports continue to connect hearts and bridge distances from the snowy mountains of Kashmir to the sunlit shores of Kanyakumari uniting India in motion, spirit, and purpose. The flag-off ceremony was attended by young athletes, sports enthusiasts, and local citizens, who cheered the cyclists as they began their long journey from the heart of Srinagar, carrying with them the hopes, blessings, and goodwill of the entire nation.

LG Sinha visits Chrysanthemum Theme Garden in Sgr



Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Nov 01: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday paid a visit to the Chrysanthemum Theme Garden at the Botanical Garden in Srinagar. Spanning over 100 kanals, Jammu Kashmir's first Chrysanthemum Theme Garden, developed by the Department of Floriculture,

Gardens & Parks, offers a major autumnal floral attraction for both locals and tourists. The Lieutenant Governor was accompanied by Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor; Zubair Ahmad, Commissioner/Secretary, Department of Floriculture, Parks and Gardens; Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar; and other senior officials.

It's good, pressure is not only around cricket but also for WC final tickets: Harmanpreet

PTI

Navi Mumbai, Nov 01: India women's skipper Harmanpreet Kaur on Saturday welcomed the unusual "pressure" of arranging tickets for their World Cup final against South Africa here, calling it a positive sign for the game's growth. The demands and requests for players to arrange tickets for matches have been a constant with the men's team, and Harmanpreet said she and her teammates were now experiencing something similar after pulling off a record chase to oust seven-time champions Australia. "You know how it is. There are rarely a few days when there's pressure for these things," Harmanpreet told the media on

the eve of the final here. "I think it's good that not only (there is pressure related to) cricket but there is pressure for tickets also," she said. Recalling India's campaign in the 2017 ODI World Cup, when they finished runners-up to England, the skipper said: "The last time when we reached the finals, after coming back we saw a big change in India. Women's cricket has progressed, and we see a lot of girls on the ground now," she said. "I'm sure that when we win this final, we will see many more changes and cricket will see more improvements, not only on international level but also on domestic level. We are really looking forward to that moment, where women's cricket will get more seriousness and

Div Railway Manager conducts comprehensive inspection of Jammu-Katra Rail section

KT News Desk

Jammu, Nov 01: Divisional Railway Manager Jammu, Vivek Kumar conducted a thorough inspection of the Jammu-Katra rail section. Additional Divisional Manager, Akshay Kumar Marantu, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Uchit Singhal, Senior Divisional Operations Manager, Arish Bansal, and other senior divisional officials were present during the inspection. The primary objective of the inspection was to assess the operational status of the Jammu-Katra rail section and evaluate critical infrastructure for future development projects. During the inspection, the Divisional Railway Manager thoroughly inspected the railway tracks, signaling systems, tunnels, bridges, and other infrastructure along the approximately 80-kilometer Jammu-Katra rail section. Stations along this section, including Bajalta, Sangar, Manwal, and Shaheed Captain Tushar



Mahajan, were thoroughly inspected in which its commitment to improving passenger facilities and operations at these stations was highlighted. Along with this, passenger facilities and safety standards, such as the condition of platforms, structural safety of flyovers and advanced safety systems were also inspected. During this inspection, railway tunnels and railway bridges on the rail section

were inspected to ensure their structural stability and the condition of the railway tracks was also assessed. Signalling and telecommunications play a vital role in train operations. As a result, a detailed inspection of the functioning of signalling interlocking systems and telecommunications equipment was carried out for safe train operations. The Divisional Railway

Manager, Jammu, while inspecting the Jammu-Katra rail section, said, "Passenger safety is our top priority. This comprehensive inspection drive is part of our regular process to ensure the strength and reliability of our infrastructure." He further stated that this comprehensive inspection has been conducted to ensure the safe and reliable operation of rail services during the upcoming harsh weather conditions.

US urges ASEAN to be firm in countering China in the South China Sea

AP

Kuala Lumpur, Nov 01: US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on Saturday urged Southeast Asian nations to stand firm and strengthen their maritime forces to counter China's increasingly "destabilizing" actions in the South China Sea. Speaking at a meeting in Malaysia with his counterparts from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Hegseth reiterated US concern over what he called China's aggression in the disputed waters that intensified in recent months, citing incidents such as ramming of vessels and the use of water cannons. The South China Sea remains one of Asia's most volatile flashpoints. Beijing claims almost the entire region, while ASEAN members the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei also claim ownership of coastal areas and features. The Philippines, a key US ally, has had frequent clashes with China's maritime fleet. Manila has repeatedly urged stronger regional response, but ASEAN has traditionally sought to balance caution with economic ties to Beijing, the region's largest trading partner. Hegseth criticized Beijing's recent declaration of Scarborough Shoal, which China forcefully seized from the Philippines in 2012, as a "nature reserve." "You don't put platforms on nature reserves," he said, describing China's activities on the uninhabited shoal. He told the meeting it was "yet another attempt to coerce new and expanded territorial and maritime claims at your expense." Hegseth said China's provocative actions challenged and threatened territorial sovereignty in the region. While stressing that Washington values continued dialogue with Beijing, Hegseth said the US will monitor China's behavior closely.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

New era for startups

of investors," the Lieutenant Governor told the VCs and Investors. He also called for providing better resources and opportunities to the young and budding entrepreneurs of Jammu Kashmir. He said the event will build awareness about the SRI Fund and inform the entrepreneurs about its active role in bridging the funding gap for MSMEs. Pertinently, the main objective of SRI Fund is to enhance access to equity capital for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)/Startups and extend the reach of venture capital to emerging regions. The SRI Fund, launched under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, is Rs. 50,000 crore Fund of Funds Scheme designed to promote growth-oriented MSMEs through a Mother Fund-Daughter Fund structure. The event will introduce J&K-based enterprises to venture capital mechanisms and promote equity-based financing options for business growth and expansion. Mercy Epao, Joint Secretary, Ministry of MSME, Government of India; Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce department, J&K; Dr Subhranshu Sekhar Acharya, Chairman, NVCFI; Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; Khalid Jahangir, Director JKEDI; Mussarat Zia, Director Handicrafts and Handlooms, Kashmir; senior officials, members of NSIC Venture Capital Fund Limited, officials of Industries and Commerce, JKEDI, business leaders, Venture Capitalists, investors, representatives of MSMEs and entrepreneurs were present. (KNO)

Op Sindoar aimed

Dwivedi and Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh Tripathi. In return, the Army Chief presented a model of the BrahMos missile, and Admiral Tripathi presented a model of a naval ship to Shukla. Students from 36 Sainik Schools across the country participated in the event, where both service chiefs distributed awards to the winners. General Dwivedi said India's response under Operation Sindoar reflected the country's capability to combine technology with restraint, ensuring that the strikes remained confined to terrorist infrastructure and avoided civilian harm. (KNO)

Govt restored Darbar

or elections, I didn't get a single MLA from Jammu city, yet I opened the office there again, because injustice had been done to Jammu," he said. "What compelled the closure of the Darbar Move? It was not our legacy. This system existed long before us. We revived it to correct injustice, and we will continue to do what is right," he added. The CM said obstacles would come in their path of restoring fairness, but the government remains committed. "We will not be intimidated. Our intentions are right, our eyes are fixed on Allah, and I believe He will guide us to our destination," he said.

Moreover, the Chief Minister said that despite repeated assurances, no major flood-mitigation measures had been taken after the devastating 2014 deluge. "Tell us what immediate steps were taken to protect Srinagar from floods after 2014? What project was built? Where did the money we secured from the World Bank go?" he asked. He sought details of dredging works in the River Jhelum and Flood Spill Channel, and questioned who was responsible for handling the funds. "Who embezzled money meant for the dredging of Jhelum and Wular projects?" he asked, adding that the PDP and BJP-led government must be held accountable. Referring to recent heavy rains in Srinagar, Abdullah said the city was on the verge of flooding again. "It didn't even rain for two days, and the embankments started giving way. If it had rained 24 hours more, Srinagar would have drowned," he said. On traffic congestion along the Boulevard stretch near Dal Lake, Omar said the administration was exploring the construction of a tunnel between Dal Gate and Nehru Park. "We will seek central assistance. If tunnels can be built in Jammu, Poonch and Kishtwar, why not in the heart of Srinagar?" he added. Reiterating his government's commitment to public welfare, he highlighted schemes like free bus rides for women and said his administration does not discriminate on religious or regional grounds. "We work for rights, not religion, caste or community. Our intention is honest, and we will fulfil our promises," he said. The Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for the widening and four-laning of Boulevard Road from Nehru Park to Kral Sangri (RD 2000 m to RD 7000 m), marking a major milestone in the government's ongoing efforts to strengthen Srinagar's scenic and tourism infrastructure. The prestigious project, being executed by the Public Works (R&B) Department at an estimated cost of Rs 19.94 crore, aims to improve road connectivity along Kashmir's most iconic lakefront stretch. Speaking at the event, Omar said that the widening of the Boulevard stretch would not only decongest traffic but also enhance the aesthetic and tourism value of the Dal Lake precincts. "Travelling on Boulevard Road has become torturous; it takes hours to reach one's destination," the Chief Minister said, adding that his government was planning a series of projects to decongest Srinagar's road network and provide much-needed relief to residents and tourists alike. The Chief Minister said that for over a decade, Srinagar had not been given due attention, but that "all wrongs will now be corrected and undone under our government." He said this was not limited to Srinagar alone. "Even Jammu city has not received its due. The neglect faced by both cities in the past ten years will be set right by my government. We do not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, or region." Touching upon urban housing challenges, the CM said his government was seriously planning for vertical housing solutions in Srinagar. "Land in Srinagar is shrinking, and we must now go

vertical. Sustainable housing and city planning are top priorities for us," he stated. Referring to the footbridge near Silk Factory Rajbagh, Omar Abdullah said that the bridge was originally conceived as a motorable structure during his earlier tenure but was later downgraded to a pedestrian bridge "for reasons best known to successive regimes". "We now plan to make it motorable again. A two-storey bridge with one level for pedestrians and another for vehicular movement," he announced. (KNO)

Major Gen Tushar

He further emphasised the critical importance of combat readiness to effectively thwart all hostile and nefarious designs of inimical forces in North Kashmir. (KNO)

PM inspires

since returned to the field and continues to play hockey. When Modi asked about her aspirations, she replied that she wants to become a doctor and treat children. When he asked if she would also treat elders, she responded confidently in the affirmative," it said. Another child shared that she too had undergone heart surgery a year ago and dreams of becoming a doctor to serve others. When the Prime Minister asked if she had cried during the procedure, she said no and went on to recite a motivational poem, which he warmly appreciated, the release said. "A boy from the audience shared that he had undergone surgery in 2014 at the age of 14 months and is now healthy and actively plays cricket. The PM asked if he continued regular health check-ups and was pleased to hear that he did and had no health issues Another boy said he was never afraid of hospital visits or injections, which helped him recover faster. When asked about his school performance, he said his teachers praised his academics, earning a smile from Modi for his honesty," the release said. A girl studying in Class 7 said she believed education is key to nation-building and wanted to become a teacher and provide free education to poor children. During the interaction, Modi asked the children if they knew whose centenary year had begun, and informed them it was that of Shri Sathya Sai Baba. He recalled how Shri Sathya Sai Baba had addressed the issue of water scarcity in Puttaparthi and nearby areas, ensuring drinking water supply to over 400 villages. The PM further underlined the importance of water conservation and tree plantation, mentioning his campaign 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam', which encourages people to plant a tree in their mother's name, the release said. A child named Abhik from West Bengal said he aspired to join the Indian Army to serve and protect the nation, which elicited praise from the PM for his patriotism and determination. "The PM expressed happiness in meeting the children, emphasizing that good health is essential to achieving any goal in life. He encouraged

them to practice Yoga, maintain discipline, and adopt healthy habits, urging them to take a personal pledge to care for their well-being," the release said.

J&K sees transformation

These initiatives strengthened healthcare in remote areas." He called for a strong collaboration between the public and private sectors to improve health outcomes and ensure access to quality healthcare for all. "Under the leadership of PM Modi, we built new medical colleges, health and wellness centres, launched universal health insurance and created a high-quality and accessible healthcare for people of J&K UT," he said, adding, "Around 90 percent of the population in Jammu Kashmir is covered under the universal health coverage of Rs 5 Lakh. Our health infrastructure is better and we are also attracting private investments in health sector." He also called for judicious utilisation of the existing resources to meet the needs of patients with compassion, sensitivity and dedication. Amandeep BR Medcity hospital inaugurated by LG Sinha is equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure and advanced medical technology. Sunil Sharma, Leader of Opposition (LoP) in J&K Legislative Assembly; Dr Darakhshan Andrabi, Chairperson, J&K Waqf Board; Dr Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Secretary, Health and Medical Education; Dr. Amandeep Kaur, Founder Director, Amandeep Group of Hospitals; Nitin Nag, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer, Ujala Cygnus Healthcare Services, members of Amandeep Group of Hospitals and Ujala Cygnus Healthcare Services, senior officials, doctors and staff of the hospital attended the inaugural ceremony. (KNO)

Stay disciplined

inspired the youth to introspect and act with sincerity. "He wrote, Nayi nasal humari nasal se peechhe hai; hamare paas khwab nahi the, inke paas jhoothe khwab hain" and through that he challenged the youth to find purpose beyond illusion," he said. Stressing the role of young people in shaping India's future, the Lt Governor said, "Whatever happens, the journey must not stop. The youth have wings, but they must also have strength and discipline to continue the journey of peace and resolve. "No one should be allowed to break that spirit." He said that in recent years, a new consciousness has awakened across the country and every citizen wants to stand and contribute to 'Viksit Bharat'. "I appeal to writers, scholars and thinkers to take forward Rahi's legacy, to project the moral and cultural vision of India before the world," he said. The Lt Governor said India is now the world's fourth-largest economy and will soon become the third-largest. "Our traditions have always valued unity and brotherhood, even as some people try to divide us on caste or religion. Such forces must be defeated by the collective will of our youth,"

he said. He described Rahi Masoom Raza's contribution to Indian culture as timeless. "Rahi brought the Mahabharata closer to millions, even to those who never read it. His journey is one of truth, compassion and continuity and that journey must never stop," LG Sinha said, adding, "Rahi was deeply rooted in the spiritual and cultural traditions of the country and always believed in shared humanity that transcended Individual differences. He always promoted interconnectedness, inclusivity and peaceful coexistence and harmony among different faiths." The Lieutenant Governor said that the tangible and intangible legacy of Raza is priceless and a beacon of light to young generations. "I believe the rich legacy of Dr. Rahi Masoom Raza will guide our society toward progress and prosperity by providing valuable ideas, ideals and fostering shared identity and social cohesion," he added. The Lieutenant Governor highlighted numerous important tasks before society and the nation today and called for strong national identity and the revival of wisdom of our priceless heritage to spur all-round development. "Our cultural heritage can foster a collective identity, build resilience and solidarity among diverse groups to drive economic growth. We must learn from the past to gain self-confidence and let the historical lessons, wisdom, ideals guide us towards future opportunities for growth and innovation," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor said, for holistic development, we must blend tradition with technology and focus on modern advancements in developmental journey to ensure equal opportunities to all. "Our sole aim is to foster peace and prosperity to achieve the goal of Viksit Bharat," he further said. Prof Nilofer Khan, Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir; Prof. Naveen Chandra Lohani, Vice Chancellor, Uttarakhand Open University; Sameer Anjaan, Film Lyricist; Brij Mohan Sharma, Principal Secretary, Culture department; Asif Azmi, Director IDEA Communications and Convenor of the Seminar; Prof. Pervez Ahmed, Dean, Student Welfare Department; University of Kashmir; senior officials, prominent literary personalities and youth in large number attended the inaugural session at University of Kashmir. (KNO)

LG Sinha: Foundation

transform our diversity into a multiplier force of resilience and innovation to achieve the collective goal of peace, progress and prosperity," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor complimented the artists for their excellent presentation of folk songs and folk dances of various States and Union Territories. Officials of Civil and Police administration, Students, and the people of Punjab, Chandigarh, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Delhi, Lakshadweep and Puducherry were the special invitees.

Day not far when every corner of Chhattisgarh & India will be free from Maoist terror: PM Modi



PTI
Raipur, Nov 01: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the number of Maoist-affected districts has fallen to three from 125 in the last 11 years, and the "day is not far" when the whole of Chhattisgarh and the country will be freed from the Naxal menace.

was "deeply satisfied" that Chhattisgarh was breaking free from the clutches of Naxal violence which had caused immense suffering to the state for over five decades, the prime minister said.

teachers were killed. Those who ruled the country for decades abandoned you while they enjoyed life in their air-conditioned offices," Modi said. He could not just stand by and watch his tribal brothers and sisters being destroyed by violence, he further said.

he said. "I guarantee that the day is not far when every corner of Chhattisgarh and India will be completely free from Maoist terror," the prime minister added. In the past few months, dozens of Maoists, including many carrying rewards of lakhs and crores of rupees on their heads, have surrendered across the country, Modi noted.

Electricity reached Chikapali village of Bijapur for the first time in 70 years, while a school opened for the first time since Independence at Rekawaya village in Abujhmad region, he said.

Bihar Assembly polls
'Jungle raj' will return if RJD comes back to power, says Amit Shah



PTI
Patna/Gopalganj, Nov 01: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday raked up the "high-handedness" of Sadhu Yadav, former Bihar CM Rabri Devi's estranged brother, to warn people of the poll-bound State that "jungle raj" will come back if RJD returned to power.

from Gopalganj, was known to wield tremendous clout while her sister was the Chief Minister of the state. One of the incidents blamed on him was forcefully driving away with cars from a showroom during Rabri Devi's eldest daughter Misa Bharti's wedding in 1999. The incident was mentioned by PM Modi at a rally earlier this week, even as he did not name anyone.

"This election is an opportunity to decide who should be entrusted with the future of Bihar. On the one hand are those who had ushered in 'jungle raj'. On the other hand is the duo of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and CM Nitish Kumar, who have brought development," he said. "The people of Gopalganj have never voted for the RJD since 2002. I am sure they will keep up the trend.. Nobody knows the misdeeds (kaarnaame) of Sadhu Yadav better than the people of Gopalganj," he added.

Another incident in which Mr. Yadav's name had cropped up was the Shilpi Gautam murder case that took place in the same year. It was recently in the news when Jan Suraj Party founder Prashant Kishor alleged the complicity of Samrat Choudhary, then an RJD leader who is now with the BJP and currently the deputy Chief Minister of the state, in the case. The Home Minister also listed the names of the villages in central Bihar which had made headlines during the RJD rule for massacres that took place in an era when several districts of the state were in the throes of a bloody feud between outlawed Naxal groups and private militias of upper caste landlords.

Automobile sector's Oct boom: Toyota sales jump 39%, Kia India surges 30%



PTI/AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 01: India's auto industry went full throttle in October. Festive demand, new launches, and the tailwind from GST 2.0 reforms pushed car and two-wheeler sales to record highs, marking one of the strongest months the sector has seen in recent years.

Trump seeks clarification on funding food aid during shutdown after court ruling
Asks democrats to 'cut this charade'

ANI

Washington, Nov 01: US President Donald Trump has instructed his administration's lawyers to seek clarification on how the government can "legally fund" the food stamp benefits during the shutdown after two US federal judges ruled to tap into the emergency funds to cover benefits for November.



Trump argued that the government do not have the "legal authority" to pay for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). He urged Democrats to "cut the charade" and "reopen the government."

Democrats refuse to do the right thing and REOPEN THE GOVERNMENT," Trump said in a post on Truth Social. He further said, even if he receives immediate guidance from the court, there is still not enough time to provide aid for November.

how we can legally fund SNAP as soon as possible. It is already delayed enough due to the Democrats keeping the Government closed through the monthly payment date and, even if we get immediate guidance, it will unfortunately be delayed while States get the money out. If we are given the appropriate legal direction

by the Court, it will BE MY HONOR to provide the funding, just like I did with Military and Law Enforcement Pay," he said. "The Democrats should quit this charade where they hurt people for their own political reasons, and immediately REOPEN THE GOVERNMENT. If you use SNAP benefits, call the Senate Democrats, and tell them to reopen the Government," he added.

needs, CNN reported "There is no doubt that the contingency funds are appropriated funds necessary to carry out the program's operation," said US District Judge John McConnell in Rhode Island. "The shutdown of the government through funding doesn't do away with SNAP, it just does away with the funding of it," he added during a hearing. Officials warned that despite the rulings, millions of beneficiaries could face delays, as the Department of Agriculture and state agencies require time to process and distribute payments, which were originally scheduled to begin on November 1.

American Hindu group asks VP Vance to 'engage with Hinduism'

PTI

Washington, Nov 01: Vance is facing criticism over his comments regarding his interfaith marriage after saying he eventually hopes that Usha, who grew up in a Hindu household, "is somehow moved by the same thing that I was moved in by church." Hitting back at his critics, Vance on Friday said it was his wife who encouraged him to re-engage with Christianity.



Responding to Vance's remark, the Hindu American Foundation (HAF) issued a statement on Friday calling on him to engage with "Hinduism too." "With respect to the Vice President, if your wife encouraged you to re-engage with your faith, why not reciprocate that and engage with Hinduism too?" said the HAF. "Hinduism doesn't share the need to wish your spouse comes around to see things as you do in terms of religion," the HAF added.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT WELFARE OFFICER, PULWAMA

Subject: - Relaxation of qualification bar under Marriage Assistance Scheme for Poor Girls.

NOTICE

In pursuance to Govt. Order No:-245-31(SWD) of 2025 dated:- 27-10-2025 the relaxation of minimum qualification bar under Marriage Assistance Scheme for Poor Girls has been conveyed alongwith the instruction with regard to those beneficiaries who could not process their cases as well as those applicants whose applications were rejected due to minimum qualification bar w.e.f 01.04.2025 to 27.10.2025.

In this connection it is notified for the general public particularly those poor girls whose marriages were solemnized between April 1, 2025 till the date of issuance of Government Order but were unable to apply due to qualification bar, their applications shall be accepted via offline mode through Tehsil Social Welfare Office concerned after proper verification.

Further for those poor girls whose applications were rejected or not considered due to minimum qualification bar, their cases / applications shall be reviewed in terms of all conditions outlined in the scheme guideline and only those applications which were rejected solely on the basis of the qualification bar between April 1, 2025 till the date of issuance of Government Order shall be considered.

District Social Welfare Officer Pulwama

No: DSWO/Pul/Estt/2025/935-41
DIPK-7688/25
Dated: 01-11-2025

Dated: 30-10-2025

Movies Schedule
Sunday, 2nd November

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 BAAHUBALI - THE EPIC (UA16+) HINDI - 11:30 AM, 02:00 PM	 KABHI HAAN KABHI NAA - RE RELEASE (U) HINDI - 03:00 PM
 THAMMA (UA16+) HINDI - 12:00 PM, 06:40 PM	 EK DEEWANE KI DEEWANIYAT (A) HINDI - 11:00 AM, 03:55 PM, 06:20 PM
 JOLLY LLB 3 (UA16+) Hindi - 06:55 PM	

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Flowers Speak, Leaders Explore

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday visited the Valley's first Chrysanthemum Theme Garden at the Botanical Garden here, after it was recently opened for the public. The garden, developed by the floriculture department, offers a wide array of autumnal flowers on display for both locals and tourists.

Pics: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

