



Budgam's high-stakes electoral battle heads for a photo finish

Cult loyalties, traditional vote bank, floating voters and rising discontent signal a nail-biting contest; MP Ruhullah's silence echoes loudly

Umer Maqbool

Soibugh (Budgam), Oct 08: It is 3:00 PM on Friday, and a group of youngsters begin chanting slogans from the top of a vehicle in the main square of Soibugh village in support of independent candidate Sameer Ahmad. "Why should we vote for outsiders? Why

not for our local candidate?" shouts a youngster sitting besides the candidate, who hails from Soibugh.

As Sameer and his supporters head to another village for canvassing, BJP supporters take over the venue and begin shouting slogans mocking the National Conference (NC)-led government over its



"unfulfilled" election promises ranging from employment and electricity to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's remarks on the installation of smart meters. "Naukri, Naukri-Ek Lakh Naukri! Unit, Unit -200 Soo Unit! Cylinder, Cylinder -12 Cylinder, Meter, Meter- Smart Meter!" the BJP workers chanted repeatedly.

While BJP workers were deriding NC for 2024 promises, Awami Ittehad Party leaders were waiting for their turn to hold a similar event at the same venue. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had already addressed the public at the same venue in the morning. The main contest in this segment, which goes to polls

on November 11, is between the National Conference and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)-both of which have fielded candidates from the Shia community. In this segment, with a total electorate of over 1.25 lakh voters, the Shia community accounts for 35000 to 40000 votes. The NC has [More on P6](#)

GHAZIPUR LITERATURE FESTIVAL

LG Sinha asks writers, thinkers to strengthen spirit of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat'

» Praises contribution of Indian Diaspora to humanity, global growth

» Spells out 10 resolutions to make India strong, developed nation

Raja Syed Rather

Ghazipur (UP), Nov 08: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday called upon the writers and thinkers to act as a bridge between society, perspectives and ideas and strengthen the spirit of "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat".

Delivering a keynote address at the Ghazipur Literature Festival, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) spoke about the contribution of the Indian Diaspora to humanity's all-round evolution and global growth. "With the hard work, integrity, dedication and following ancient values, the Indian Diaspora has gained global recognition and also helped in strengthening ties," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said, "Writers and thinkers hold a unique position to influence society and have a great



responsibility to strengthen social progress and unity by promoting values like equality, justice and fraternity. They must also use their creative power to drive social change and make the world more aware and sensitive to its duties."

"Literature, new ideas and perspectives give strength to the society. Without good literature and new ideas, a society

may physically exist but it will lack the intellectual and cultural tools for rapid growth and transformation of the nation," LG Sinha said.

"Literature, knowledge and critical thinking ensures that society should not become stagnant but it should be like a moving river," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He urged the [More on P6](#)

In Cong rule, terrorists freely entered, left Kashmir after carrying out attacks: Amit Shah

'India's military ops against cross-border terrorism under PM Modi shattered terrorists, sponsors'

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Nov 08: Asserting that Kashmir continues to remain peaceful under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said that during Congress rule, terrorists used to "freely enter and leave" the Valley after carrying out attacks.

Addressing a public rally in Katihar, Bihar, Shah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "During the governments of Sonia Gandhi, Manmohan Singh, and Lalu Prasad Yadav, terrorists used to freely enter and leave Kashmir after carrying out attacks."

"The government led by PM Modi responded differently and India's military operations against cross-border terrorism bear testimony to it. Military operations against cross border terrorism shattered terrorists and their sponsors," he added.

"When they attacked Uri,



we carried out a surgical strike. When they attacked Pulwama, we responded with an air strike. And when they killed our people in Pahalgam, we conducted Operation Sindoor and eliminated terrorists by entering Pakistan," Shah said, adding that under the government led by PM Modi, Kashmir has

remained peaceful, unlike during previous governments when terrorist attacks went unanswered.

The Home Minister said that Prime Minister Modi had approved the establishment of a defence corridor in Bihar, which would strengthen India's defence manufacturing sector and create local

employment. "Modi ji has ensured that a defence corridor will be established in Bihar. If terrorists dare to act in the future, their bullets will be answered with shells, and those shells will be manufactured on our land and fired on Pakistan," he said.

Shah said the government's approach towards national security is based on deterrence and direct action against cross-border terrorism. He linked this to the country's increasing defence capability and localised arms production.

He also accused opposition leaders of supporting infiltrators for political gains. "Lalu and Rahul see infiltrators as their vote bank and are afraid of them," Shah said, adding that opposition parties were running campaigns such as the "ghuspathiya bachao yatra" to protect infiltrators. "We are not afraid of their vote bank. The BJP will identify every infiltrator and drive them out of India," he said.

Shah said that the government's [More on P6](#)

POWER PERILS

J&K's hydel power generation dips by nearly 70%

Kashmir records 1742 MWs power load



Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Nov 08: In Jammu and Kashmir, hydel power generation has reduced by nearly 70 percent from the local generation plants.

An official informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the power generation from all the power plants owned by Jammu and Kashmir has decreased by nearly 800-900 Megawatts (MWs). The official also said, "The power generation from across local power plants is currently ranging from 330 MWs to 400 MWs."

It also said, "From one of the

plants from Baglihar, the power generation is ranging from 250-380 MWs and in case of another power plant of Baglihar, Kishenpur and New Wanpoh, we are generating a maximum of one MW."

The official further informed that the department is able to generate only 71 MWs from Kashmir based power plants.

About the power load and forced curtailment, the official said that there was a forecast of 1750 MWs load and forced curtailment of 40 MWs in Kashmir on Monday.

"In the morning, we recorded a power load [More on P6](#)

PDP's alliance with BJP in 2014 marked beginning of J&K's 'downfall': CM Omar

Naveed Ul Haq Ganaiee

Budgam, Nov 08: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday accused the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) of betraying the people by joining hands with the BJP after seeking votes to keep them at bay, stating that the party's alliance in 2014 marked the beginning of Jammu and Kashmir's "downfall".

Addressing a public rally at Mirgund, Budgam, CM Omar, per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that no one has caused as much damage to Jammu and Kashmir as the BJP. "We are the unfortunate people who were turned from a state into a Union Territory. The PDP went door to door in 2014 asking for votes to keep the BJP away, but after winning, they joined hands with them."

He said that the NC, unlike others, remained true to its word. "We are punished because we didn't join the BJP. We refused to compromise and we are the only party ready to fight them," he



added.

Omar accused the PDP-led government of introducing GST and said the destruction of Jammu and Kashmir began in 2014, not in 2019. "Did the PDP ever apologise for its alliance with the BJP?" he asked, adding that parties like PDP, BJP, Apni Party, and others were unfairly targeting the National Conference.

He questioned why the PDP and other parties didn't field candidates in the Nagrota by-election if they were truly against the BJP. "We even offered the seat to Congress, but they took four days and declined at the last moment, so we fielded our own candidate," he said.

Promising major development

projects for Budgam, Omar announced plans to establish a university and a new BCCI cricket academy and stadium in Kashmir. "Budgam is best suited for this — with the rail, airport and bypass nearby," he said.

He added that despite vacating the Budgam seat earlier, he never abandoned the constituency. "I worked for a year for Budgam's development, spending over Rs 110 crore on projects, including macadamisation, sports, and other infrastructure. Wherever Aga Mahmood points, work will happen — a new era of development will begin," he said.

Highlighting his government's welfare measures, Omar said, "We have fulfilled several [More on P6](#)

Army foils infiltration bid, 2 terrorists killed

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Nov 08: Army on Saturday foiled an infiltration bid by killing two terrorists along the Line of Control (LoC) in North Kashmir's Keran sector in Kupwara district, officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

They said on the basis of specific information about the infiltration attempt from the other side, the Army launched a counter-infiltration 'Operation Pimple'. "Alert troops detected suspicious movement in the area and challenged the infiltrators, who opened fire. Soldiers retaliated, leading to an exchange of fire in which



two terrorists were killed," the officials added.

Meanwhile, Army's Srinagar based Chinara Corps in a statement said that two terrorists were neutralised by the security forces in the ongoing operation, and searches are in progress.

An official [More on P6](#)

CBK files charge sheet in fraudulent appointment, salary drawal case

KNO

Srinagar, Nov 08: The Economic Offences Wing of the Crime Branch Kashmir has produced a charge sheet in a case pertaining to the fraudulent appointment, salary drawal.

As per a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the spokesman said that the Economic Offences Wing of the Crime Branch Kashmir has produced a charge sheet in a case under FIR number 95/2022, under Sections 419, 420, 409, 468, 471 read with 120-B of the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC), before the Court of Sub Judge, Chadoora, against the accused persons namely Gh. Mohi-ud-Din Gazi (Retired Headmaster), S/o Ghulam Mohammad Gazi, R/o Zaindar Mohalla, Habba Kadal, Srinagar; Mubeena

Kawsar; and Ifra Nissar.

"The case originated from a communication received from the Directorate of School Education, Kashmir, highlighting irregularities in appointments and manipulation of service records under SRO-43. Consequently, a formal case was registered at Police Station Economic Offences Wing (Crime Branch Kashmir)," the spokesman added.

Investigation revealed that the original appointee, Miss Ifra Nissar, had resigned from government service. However, the then Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) deliberately concealed her resignation and fraudulently substituted another individual in her place, continuing to draw salary against the said post, the statement reads.

During the [More on P6](#)

Police launch valley-wide operation on cross-border terror networks

OGWs, relatives of JKNOP, networks suspected of terror funding targeted: Officials

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Nov 08: Police on Saturday launched coordinated operations across Kashmir targeting networks linked to individuals operating from Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

A top official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that the drive is aimed at dismantling local support structures, tracing financial and communication linkages, and seizing materials used to aid cross-border activities.



He said the campaign seeks to disrupt coordination between

handlers across the border and their contacts in the valley.

In Bandipora, police launched a crackdown on J&K Nationals Operating from Pakistan (JKNOP) and PoK.

Acting on specific intelligence inputs, multiple Cordon and Search Operations (CASOs) were carried out across the district, targeting individuals involved in facilitating, funding, and promoting terrorism on behalf of relatives based across the border, the official said.

He said several associates and relatives of JKNOP members were booked under relevant

laws for alleged involvement in providing logistical support and aiding recruitment. "Digital devices and other materials were seized during the raids," he added.

Police said operations to dismantle such networks would continue and urged residents to report suspicious activity, assuring confidentiality.

In Ganderbal, police conducted multiple search operations at 60 locations based on credible inputs about individuals in contact with [More on P6](#)

Projects to improve road infra: Dy CM

Reviews progress on Sanat Nagar Flyover

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 08: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary Saturday visited the site of under-construction Sanat Nagar Flyover here and took on-spot assessment of overall progress and ongoing works of the project.

The Deputy CM was accompanied by MLA Chanpora, Mushtaq Ahmad Guroo; Chief Engineer R&B, Superintending Engineer, Executive Engineer, and other senior officers of the R&B department.

Taking a detailed appraisal of the work, the Deputy Chief Minister directed the officers to speed up the pace of works and ensure timely completion of works on this much-awaited flyover so that it can be dedicated to public use within



this month. He said that the project holds great significance for easing traffic congestion and improving road connectivity in Srinagar city.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister said the government is fully committed

to completing all languishing and ongoing projects across Jammu and Kashmir in the shortest possible time. "Several projects that were pending for years have now been completed, including the Qamarwari Bridge, while many

others are in their final stages. At the same time, new projects are being launched, like the widening of Boulevard Road to further improve road infrastructure and provide better facilities to the people," he said. Later, the Deputy Chief Minister also visited the Nowgam Bridge to inspect the condition of the road facility. He directed the engineers to take immediate measures for repair and maintenance to ensure smooth movement of traffic for public ease.

The Deputy Chief Minister appreciated the efforts of the executing agencies and asked them to continue working with dedication and a sense of responsibility so that developmental works are completed within the stipulated timelines.

Aijaz Asad reviews implementation of RDD schemes

KT NEWS DESK

ANANTNAG, NOVEMBER 08: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Saturday conducted a comprehensive review of implementation of Rural Development schemes across Anantnag district. During the meeting, the Secretary reviewed the progress of major programmes like MGNREGA, PMAY-G, NRLM, IWMP, and RGSA, besides assessing targets and achievements made under the UT Capex budget.

The meeting was attended by DG Rural Sanitation, Anu Malhotra; Mission Director NRLM, Shubhra Sharma; Director RDD Kashmir, Shabir Hussain Bhat; Director Panchayati Raj, Sham Lal; CEO IWMP, Rajnish Kumar; ACD Anantnag, ACP, BDOs and other senior officers.

The Secretary held detailed deliberations with the ACD, ACP, BDOs, and field officials, directing them to focus on time-bound achievement of all scheme-specific targets. Reviewing MGNREGA for the current fiscal, it was informed that 20.21 lakh person-days have been generated. The

Secretary emphasized that MGNREGA is fundamentally a livelihood security programme and directed the district administration to ensure optimal utilization of available workforce so that every household seeking employment receives its entitled workdays without delay. He stressed that creation of durable and productive assets must remain central to MGNREGA planning.

Citing the development of a Play Field at Brad Block, Khoveripora as a model of community-focused asset creation, he instructed officials to prioritize works with long-term economic benefits in water conservation, land development, and rural infrastructure, while ensuring strict adherence to quality and technical standards.

Calling for stronger scheme convergence, the Secretary said that assets created under MGNREGA like compost pits and segregation sheds should complement Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G). He also emphasized that individual-beneficiary works should align with NRLM to enhance agricultural productivity and support livelihoods.

CS reviews key development, flagship schemes

KT NEWS DESK

UDHAMPUR, NOVEMBER 08: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Saturday conducted an extensive tour of Udhampur district to assess the progress of ongoing developmental projects and flagship government initiatives across various sectors.

The meeting was also attended by Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai, Senior Superintendent of Police, Amod Ashok Nagpure besides other divisional and district officers of various departments. He took this occasion to instruct the district administration to focus on upgrading road connectivity and installing mobile towers in the Dudu-Basantgarh area to improve accessibility and communication infrastructure.

The Chief Secretary urged all departments to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries are covered under government schemes. He called for effective inter-departmental coordination, transparency, and dedication in execution. He stressed that officers must work with commitment and accountability, ensuring projects are completed within the specified timeframes and contribute effectively to the district's overall growth and development.

While reviewing the education sector, the Chief Secretary directed the CEO to ensure quality education across all government schools. He stressed that all teachers must mark their biometric attendance and the process be strictly monitored.

The Chief Secretary instructed all officers to undertake regular field visits in their respective jurisdictions to assess on-ground progress. He directed the DC to hold department-wise review meetings to ensure timely completion of works. He emphasized



the capitalization of SHGs, youth engagement through Mission YUVA and effective implementation of self-employment schemes. The SE PWD was asked to expedite ongoing works and ensure adherence to targets, while UEED was asked to explore measures for rejuvenating the Devika River to its original form.

While reviewing the PMGSY (I, II & III) projects, the Chief Secretary instructed the concerned officers to activate men and machinery, accelerate execution and complete works within fixed timelines.

While reviewing the progress of GMC Udhampur, the Chief Secretary directed the administration to strengthen critical care services and introduce specialties in Cardiology, Neurology and Oncology. He further advised exploring the enhancement of intake capacity and initiation of PG programs in the future.

The Chief Secretary directed bankers to conduct awareness programmes on financial inclusion and government-sponsored schemes, increase the number of loan sanctioning cases and ensure effective follow-up under Mission YUVA.

The SE, JPDCL was instructed to sensitize and motivate the public about the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana to promote household-level solar power adoption.

Later, the Chief Secretary visited the Government Medical College

and inspected the ongoing construction works. The SE PWD briefed him about the project's progress and current status. The Chief Secretary reviewed each component in detail and directed the executing agency to adopt a double-shift work schedule to ensure timely completion. He emphasized efficient mobilization of available resources and productive use of manpower to achieve quality outcomes within stipulated timelines.

At the outset, DC Udhampur presented a detailed sector-wise presentation highlighting the progress of major ongoing projects and flagship schemes being executed by various departments including Chenani-Sudhmahadev road (NH-244), integrated development of tourist facilities at Mantalai and Sudhmahadev, rectification of black spots at Gole Mela and Sangoor, construction of new GMC Udhampur, shifting of ITI building, augmentation of water supply schemes under AMRUT 2.0.

She also outlined the progress made under PWD, Social Welfare, Education, PMGSY, MGNREGA, SBM-G, RGSA, NRLM, NTEP, RDSS, PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, Mission YUVA, Agriculture, DIC, Handloom, Animal and Sheep Husbandry, HADP, JJM, Devika Project, Digitization of Land Records, and District Capex Budget among others.

GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPTT.

Ground Water Division Srinagar Baghi-Ali-Mardan, Nowshara Srinagar.

E- mail:- hakeemmushtaq.75316@jk.gov.in Tel./ Fax No:- 0194-2411285

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

GIST of Detailed e- NIT No:- 54/JS-PHE/GWDS/ Mech. of 2025-26.

For and on behalf of Government of UT -J&K, e-tenders from reputed and resourceful Contractor/Firms/Companies/ agencies/ Joint Ventures etc for "registered experienced Contractors of Electro Mechanical/ Electrical works" as per details given below The bidding process shall be completed online on www.jktenders.gov.in in two covers viz. Cover 1st consisting of Pre Qualification Criteria, General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and Cover 2nd shall consist of Financial Bid in the prescribed BQO.

S. No	Name of work	Est. Cost Rs. in Lacs	Earnest money (EMD)	Cost of Tender Document	Time of completion	Major Head / Programme	Technical Sanction	Tender Call
	02 HP Submersible Pump for Bore Well NHO Shakoordin Naginder Pampore	Rs. 0.80 Lacs	Rs.2,400/-	Rs.100/-	5 Days (after identification of site)	District Capex Budget 2025-26 (DDC Grants)	JS-PHE/ GWDS/ Distt. Capex Budget/ 203 of 11/ 2025, Dt: 06-11-2025	1 st

Position of Funds:- Available:

> Accord of Administrative Approval issued by the District Development Commissioner Pulwama Vide Order No: 141-DDCP of 2025, issued under endorsement No. DDCCS/Dev/2025-26/7420, Dated: 25-09-2025.

The Bidding Documents and other details can be downloaded from the website:

<https://www.jktenders.gov.in>

From 07.11.2025 (04:00 PM) to 13.11.2025 (11:00 AM)

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings (if any), Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms, conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the website:

<https://www.jktenders.gov.in>

As per Critical Dates/Information scheduled given below

Table-I		Table-II															
1.	Publishing Date	07-11-2025 (10:00 P.M)															
2.	Period of Downloading of Bids	07-11-2025 (10:00 P.M) upto 13-11-2025 (11:00 A.M)															
3.	Period of Submission of bids	07-11-2025 (10:00 P.M) upto 13-11-2025 (11:00 A.M)															
4.	Date of opening of Tender.	13-11-2025 (04:00 P.M)															
5.	Tender Receiving Authority: Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Ground Water Srinagar Kashmir-190011 Cost of Tender Document : Non-Refundable should be in form of DD /TR/e-challan/ via online deposited to Account Head 0215 or in the below mentioned account Number in favour of Executive Engineer (Jal Shakti) PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar(at Saddar Treasury Srinagar) (The firm shall specify the name of work for which apply)																
6.	<table><tr><td>Name of Bank</td><td>Jammu & Kashmir Bank</td></tr><tr><td>Name of Branch</td><td>Residency Road, Lal Chowk-190001</td></tr><tr><td>Name of Account</td><td>Executive Engineer PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar.</td></tr><tr><td>Account Type</td><td>Current Accounts Government.</td></tr><tr><td>Account Number</td><td>0005 0405 0004 7709</td></tr><tr><td>IFSC Code</td><td>JAKAOCHINAR</td></tr><tr><td>MICR Code</td><td>190051056</td></tr></table>			Name of Bank	Jammu & Kashmir Bank	Name of Branch	Residency Road, Lal Chowk-190001	Name of Account	Executive Engineer PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar.	Account Type	Current Accounts Government.	Account Number	0005 0405 0004 7709	IFSC Code	JAKAOCHINAR	MICR Code	190051056
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Account Type	Current Accounts Government.																
Account Number	0005 0405 0004 7709																
IFSC Code	JAKAOCHINAR																
MICR Code	190051056																
7.	NOTE: In case the firm/agency/contractor submits/uploaded scanned copy of tender document fee in the shape of DD /TR/ e-challan/ via online, the hard copies shall have to be submitted in the divisional office before opening of cover 2 nd (Financial Cover) of e-NIT Bid Validity Period: 180 Days																
8.	The bids can be downloaded or uploaded on www.Jktenders.gov.in																

Bids must be accompanied by bid security viz: Earnest Money in shape of CDR/FDR and (The date of CDR/FDR etc must not be prior to 03 months from the date of issuance of this e-NIT and Treasury Receipt (mentioning therein the NIT No., S.No. of work and Advertised Cost as per the NIT) as cost of Tender Document under Account Head 0215 to be pledged in favour of the Executive Engineer Ground Water Division Srinagar (as specified in the table (I) (Page 1st). Bid security will have to be in any one of the forms as specified in the bidding documents and shall be valid for 180 Days after opening of bid. Bids will be opened in the Office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Ground Water Division Srinagar (H.Q. Baghi-Ali-Mardan, Nowshara Srinagar) on 13-11-2025 (04:00 PM) If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

No:- JS-PHE/GWDS/25-26/Camp/11561-72
Dated:- 07-11-2025

DIPK-7908/25 DATED: 08-11-2025

Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.
Ground Water Division, Srinagar.

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

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
e- NIT No. 120/2025-26 Dated 03-11-2025

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

S. No.	Name of the Work	Block	Estim ated /Adv. Cost (In lacs)	Cost of tender docum ents (In Rupees)	EMD (In %)	Class of Contractor	Time of completion	Major head
1.	CONSTRUCTION OF PROTECTION WALL FROM LAND OF AAY BENEFICIARY BASHIR AHMAD DAR TO LAND OF GH KHANDAY AND OTHERS AT BAGI-INNAYATUL-LAH MEEJ	Pampore	1.50	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF
2.	CONSTRUCTION OF LANE FROM HOUSE OF AB GANI BHAT AND HOUSE OF FERZOZ GANI BHAT AT GABBERPORA PHASE I	Shadi-marg	2.488	200/=	2%	DEE	30 Days	CDF

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

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	03-11-2025
2.	Online Bid submission Start Date	03-11-2025 from 06:55 PM
3.	Online Bid Submission End Date	12-11-2025 up to 06:55 PM
4.	Date and time of opening of Online Bids	13-11-2025 at 09:00 AM or any convenient day In the office of the Executive Engineer REW Pulwama
5.	Note:- Fee Receipt and EMD shall be deposited after the financial bids opened. In case The original Tender Document Fee Receipt and EMD is not Deposited within 5 days after the Financial Bids Opened for all responsive bidders Who have participated online, the Department shall take action as per Rules.	

Special Condition 01:

Only the eligible contractors of respective Panchayat Halqa shall take part in the tendering process for works under District Capex with Advertised Cost 3.0 Lacs or below for District Capex works only. Bidders must upload any document viz residential certificate/ Adhar Card/ Ration Card/ Electricity Bill showing panchayat name, as residence proof that he/ she is residing the respective Panchayat Halqa (Applicable for DEE Class contractors in call 1st only).

SC02:- Contractors Strictly not eligible

The Bidders who had participated in 2023-24/2024-25 and has not completed the works within stipulated time frame/ who had left the work midway/ who had not started/taken up the works are strictly not eligible. Any such participation may lead to cancellation of their bid and No claim shall be entertained in this regard.

Xen/REW/Pul/6095-6101
Dated:- 03/11/2025

DIPK-7889/25 DATED: 08-11-2025

Sd/= Executive Engineer
REW Division Pulwama

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

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

e- NIT No. 121/2025-26 Dated 04-11-2025

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

S. No.	Name of the Work	Block	Estim ated /Adv. Cost (In lacs)	Cost of tender docum ents (In Rupees)	EMD (In %)	Class of Contractor	Time of completion	Major head
1.	CONSTRUCTION OF FOOTPATH ALONG WITH TILES AND INSTALLATION OF SOLAR LIGHT AT GOVT MIDDLE SCHOOL GUTGUNG	Aripal	1.50	200/=	2%	DEE	30 DAYS	CDF
2.	C/O IRRIGATION DRAIN AT KHULBAGH NEAR THE LAND OF GH NABI SHEIKH, MOHD MAQBOOL MIR, MOHD AKRAM AND OTHERS	Aripal	2.99	200/=	2%	DEE	30 DAYS	CDF
3.	RDDC2526101261 (CONSTIT. OF LANE WITH TILES FROM HO AB. MAJEED LONE TO HO MOHD. SUBHAN ZARGAR AT RAGMULLAH)	Pulwama	1.485	200/=	2%	DEE/OTHER	30 DAYS	PRI
4.	FIND2526108800 FENCING AND FILLING AND CHANNELLING OF GRAVEYARD NEAR RANGMULLAH MUCHPURAN A PHASE II	Pulwama	1.485	200/=	2%	DEE/OTHER	30 DAYS	DDC
5.	FINDC2526112144 INSTALLATION OF BOREWELLS AT MOHD JABAR MALI KAREWA OF NAARNAI MOHD ISHAQ MIR IN KAREWA OF GURNAAD AND AT LAND OF BILAL AHMAD MALIK AT GOREDANJ WAKHERWANI	Pulwama	3.96	200/=	2%	DEE	30 DAYS	CDF

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

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	04-11-2025
2.	Online Bid submission Start Date	04-11-2025 from 06:55 PM
3.	Online Bid Submission End Date	12-11-2025 up to 06:55 PM
4.	Date and time of opening of Online Bids	13-11-2025 at 09:00 AM or any convenient day In the office of the Executive Engineer REW Pulwama
5.	Note:- Fee Receipt and EMD shall be deposited after the financial bids opened. In case The original Tender Document Fee Receipt and EMD is not Deposited within 5 days after the Financial Bids Opened for all responsive bidders Who have participated online, the Department shall take action as per Rules.	

Special Condition 01:

Only the eligible contractors of respective Panchayat Halqa shall take part in the tendering process for works under District Capex with Advertised Cost 3.0 Lacs or below for District Capex works only. Bidders must upload any document viz residential certificate/ Adhar Card/ Ration Card/ Electricity Bill showing panchayat name, as residence proof that he/ she is residing the respective Panchayat Halqa (Applicable for DEE Class contractors in call 1st only).

SC02:- Contractors Strictly not eligible

The Bidders who had participated in 2023-24/2024-25 and has not completed the works within stipulated time frame/ who had left the work midway/ who had not started/taken up the works are strictly not eligible.

Any such participation may lead to cancellation of their bid and No claim shall be entertained in this regard.

Xen/REW/Pul/6350-56 Dated:- 04/11/2025

DIPK-7888/25 DATED: 08-11-2025

Sd/= Executive Engineer
REW Division Pulwama

LA By-Polls

Without vote theft, NC will sweep both seats: Dy CM

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Nov 08: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary on Saturday said the National Conference (NC) would win both seats if "vote chori" (vote theft) does not take place, asserting that his government is focused on work, not self-praise.

During his visit to the Nowgam Flyover and Pirpagh-Rangreth link road in Srinagar, Choudhary reviewed the ongoing developmental works and directed officials and contractors to ensure completion by November 15.

Speaking to reporters at the site, the Deputy CM said the National Conference would win both seats if votes aren't stolen, adding that the J&K government is focused on performance rather than publicity. Our government



is "committed to its word" and will not indulge in empty praise. "We won't become 'miya mithu' (self-appreciative). The work will speak for itself," he said.

Responding to political criticism, Choudhary said the people of Naushera have already made

their decision through the ballot box. "The people of Naushera have decided who they wanted. Whether I am right or wrong will be judged by them," he said. "If someone in a high office cannot work for Naushera, he should at least try to. I am trying to

deliver, while some people are trying to stop progress. If doing work is a crime, I will keep committing it."

When asked about Srinagar's traffic issues, he said new projects are under active consideration. "Until a project is approved, I cannot promise anything. Once decisions are taken and projects are cleared, we will share the details," he added.

On corruption in public works, the Deputy CM issued a stern warning to officials. "Let me be clear, whether an officer is posted in Naushera or anywhere in Jammu and Kashmir, if there is tampering in tendering or wrongful allotments, that officer will not be spared," he said.

Choudhary further said that those working relentlessly on the ground deserve recognition for keeping projects on track despite years of delay.

"Our engineers and contractors deserve appreciation; they have been working continuously for months. The deadline we have given is November 15, and the work is already underway," he said.

The Deputy Chief Minister also took stock of repair and macadamisation works near the Cooperative Colony Bridge and directed that completed stretches be opened to traffic at the earliest.

It is pertinent to mention that during an earlier inspection of the Sanat Nagar Flyover, the Deputy CM had warned the contractor of blacklisting if the project was not completed by the November 15 deadline and had also ordered a probe into rupees 23 crore payments released despite the work remaining incomplete—(KNO)

Mehbooba accuses CM Omar of implementing BJP's agenda



NAVEED UL HAQ GANAIEE

Budgam, Nov 08: Accusing National Conference of supporting the execution of Maqbool Bhat and Afzal Guru, People's Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Saturday said that Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is implementing the agenda of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Jammu and Kashmir.

Talking to reporters after addressing an election rally in Budgam, the former J&K Chief Minister said, "We did not hang Maqbool Bhat and Afzal Guru—it was Omar Abdullah and his party NC who backed their hanging. If we ever formed governments with Congress or BJP, we did it for the welfare of the people."

She said the biggest fear of haunting the National Conference today is the PDP. "It was PDP that opened the Muzaffarabad road, abolished POTA, disbanded the Task Force, brought India's national leadership to Hurriyat's doors, and withdrew FIRs against 12,000 youth. What has Omar Sahib done till today? Instead, he is now endorsing what

the BJP has done in J&K since 2019," she said.

Accusing Omar Abdullah of maintaining silence on key public issues, she said, "When government employees are terminated, Omar Sahib is silent. When bulldozers run over people's homes, he is silent. When Vande Mataram is imposed, he remains silent. He is only running the BJP's agenda."

Mehbooba said the PDP continues to stand firm on its agenda and commitment to people's welfare. "We have said that the youth lodged in jails outside J&K must be brought back. Omar Sahib doesn't want that. We have also said that poor families living on gascharai lands should be given ownership rights, and we will continue to fight for that," she said.

Taking a jibe at Omar Abdullah's promises, the PDP chief said, "He said he would provide 200 units of free electricity, free gas cylinders, one lakh jobs, and 10 kg free ration—did PDP stop him? He hasn't looked back at Budgam for a year. What's stopping him now? The truth is, he is afraid of PDP, and rightly so."—(KNO)

NC will face humiliating defeat in Budgam: LoP Sharma

NAVEED UL HAQ GANAIEE

Srinagar, Nov 08: Leader of Opposition and senior BJP leader Sunil Kumar Sharma on Saturday said that the National Conference (NC) will face a humiliating defeat in the upcoming Budgam by-election.

Addressing an impressive public rally in the Budgam segment, Sharma predicted a crushing defeat for the NC, asserting that the BJP will emerge victorious at the hustings.

"On November 14, the people will write a new chapter in Budgam's political history. NC will face a crushing defeat, and BJP will emerge victorious because people have seen the difference between hollow promises and real development," Sharma said while canvassing for the party candidate Aga Syed Mohsin. Sharma said that the



people of Jammu and Kashmir have rejected decades of deceit and dynastic politics of the NC, and are now rallying behind Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for a developed and prosperous Jammu & Kashmir.

Launching a scathing attack on the opposition, Sharma thundered: "Those who can stop BJP in Kashmir are yet to be born. The people of Kashmir have made

up their minds—the era of fear and falsehood is over. Now, the lotus will bloom in every village and town of the Valley."

He lavished praise on Aga Mohsin, calling him a dynamic leader with strong grassroots connect and unwavering commitment to public service.

"The people of Budgam deserve a young and energetic voice like him in the Assembly who can carry forward the message of change and inclusive growth," he added.

Sharma ended his speech by saying that the days of corruption, nepotism, and emotional exploitation are over. "Now is the time for empowerment, accountability, and progress under the BJP's banner," he declared amid cheers and slogans in support of the party—(KNO)

Govt in UT set up has less powers: Sakina Itoo

Says NC will emerge victorious in by-polls; promises action against erring private schools

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Nov 08: Minister for Health & Medical Education, School Education, Higher Education and Social Welfare Departments, Sakina Itoo on Saturday said that elected government in the Union Territory setup has far less powers than it had when J&K was a state.

Talking to the reporters, Minister Itoo said, "Those who turned our state to UT are responsible for what is happening in Jammu and Kashmir currently." "As far as the developmental works are concerned, I must say that we are working very hard. We don't have the same power which we used to have when J&K was a state," she said. About the Budgam by-polls, Itoo said that people are responding very positively and are attending every event of NC. The Minister said "People are



welcoming the NC workers and the by-poll candidates. I am sure that they will emerge victorious."

"From the first day of the NC government, we have been trying hard to provide every possible facility to the people at their doorsteps," she said.

Besides, the minister also said, "We have received complaints against some private schools for violating the government norms with regard to the purchase of textbooks and other matters. We are examining the matter and whatever is required, the government will do it."—(KNO)

AIP accuses NC-BJP collusion for Nagrota seat

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Nov 08: Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) on Saturday criticised the National Conference (NC), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), saying the ongoing political developments in Nagrota reflect a "friendly contest" between NC and BJP.

Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters in Srinagar, AIP State Secretary Sheikh Ashiq said it has now become absolutely clear that what is happening in Nagrota is "a friendly match between NC and BJP."

"Omar Abdullah's token visit to Nagrota, where he barely spoke for a few moments, carried a tone that reflected softness toward the BJP rather than opposition," Ashiq said, adding that NC's entire focus remains on Budgam, not Nagrota, not development, not people's issues and only Budgam.

He also said the NC has again betrayed Budgam by sidelining the constituency and staging a managed show in Nagrota.

Ashiq also criticised NC and PDP for staying silent on the Public Safety Act (PSA). He said NC introduced the law in Jammu and Kashmir and even after the abrogation of Article 370, when most laws changed, the PSA remained. "Why are NC and PDP silent when Kashmiris are still being booked under PSA?" he asked.

He said only AIP took the protest to Jantar Mantar demanding scrapping of PSA and release of prisoners including jailed MP Engineer Rashid.

Ashiq also welcomed Aga Ruhullah's decision not to campaign for NC and urged Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, Molvi Imran Raza Ansari and Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen to support AIP candidate Nazir Ahmad Khan "for dignity and justice in Budgam."

Responding to media queries, AIP Chief Spokesperson, Inam un Nabi, said Engineer Rashid was

shifted from Jail No. 3 to Jail No. 1 after he complained against some jail officials accused of taking bribes from Kashmiri prisoners. "After the complaint, the harassment began, attacks, injuries and pressure to withdraw it. He never gave in," Inam said, reiterating the demand for a judicial inquiry.

Inam also said voters in Budgam must see through the pattern of dynastic politics. "If you vote for NC, PDP or BJP, it is the same. All three candidates belong to the same family. This dynasty has controlled Budgam for 70 years," he said.

He also said, "People trusted him, but he left Budgam and went back to Ganderbal. This is the history of betrayal."

The AIP leaders also urged the people of Budgam to "end decades of exploitation" and unite behind Nazir Ahmad Khan, calling it "the only path toward justice, political integrity and restoration of people's rights."—(KNO)

Dogs roam freely inside Botanical Garden

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Nov 08: Even as the Department of Floriculture, Gardens and Parks unveiled Jammu and Kashmir's first Chrysanthemum Theme Garden inside the beautiful Botanical Garden in Srinagar, the visitors on Saturday were greeted by an unexpected sight of stray dogs wandering freely across the lawns.

Spread over nearly 100 Kanals on the foothills of the Zabarwan range, the newly developed garden has become a major autumn attraction for both locals and tourists. However, the sight of

stray dogs moving among the flowerbeds has upset many visitors, who say it spoils the beauty and safety of the place.

"It is disturbing to see dogs running around in such a beautiful public garden. The space is meant for families and children, not stray animals," said Shabir Ahmad, a visitor from downtown Srinagar said. "We came to see flowers, not to worry about getting chased," he added.

Other visitors said the issue reflects wider civic neglect. "Almost every park in Srinagar has stray dogs now. If the Floriculture Department can

maintain exotic flower beds, surely they can ensure basic safety for visitors," said another visitor.

It is worth mentioning that on October 25, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah inaugurated Kashmir's first Chrysanthemum Theme Garden. Senior officials had also visited the site to review its development and arrangements.

However, just days after the high-profile visit, the ground reality presents a different picture with unattended dogs seen roaming near the flower installations and benches—(KNO)

FAIMA writes to union ministry

KNO

New Delhi, Nov 08 The Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA) has expressed grave concern over the hardships faced by students of Government Medical College (GMC) Handwara, Jammu & Kashmir, due to the continued absence of hostel facilities and other essential amenities.

In a formal appeal addressed to Union Health Minister Dr. J.P. Nadda, FAIMA National Executive J&K, Dr. Mohammad Momin Khan, highlighted that students are being forced to reside in unsafe and expensive private accommodations amid the freezing winter conditions of Kashmir.

The lack of proper hostel facilities has left students struggling with rent, transportation, safety and instability, turning their academic journey into one of daily survival rather than focused learning, reads the formal appeal.

"The absence of a hostel has

made life extremely difficult for these students. It is disheartening to see future doctors, who should be dedicating themselves to study and patient care, battling issues of accommodation and security," said Dr. Mohammad Momin Khan.

The situation is particularly alarming for female students, who face increased safety risks in unmonitored and insecure private lodgings. Despite government directives issued in March 2025 and the formation of a committee in May 2025, no tangible progress has been made to date.

FAIMA has urged the Union Health Ministry to take immediate action to ensure safe and affordable hostel accommodation and to expedite the construction of permanent infrastructure at GMC Handwara.

"A hostel is not a luxury—it is a necessity," Dr. Khan emphasized. "We urge the Hon'ble Health Minister to intervene urgently so that these students can live and learn with dignity and safety."—(KNO)

FDA issues fresh guidelines for hotels, restaurants

KNO

Srinagar, Nov 08: The Jammu and Kashmir Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) has issued detailed guidelines for hotels, restaurants, dhabas and other food establishments across the Union Territory under the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

According to the public notice issued by Commissioner FDA J&K, Smita Sethi (JKAS), the move aims to ensure the availability of safe and wholesome food to consumers and mandates strict compliance within one month. The directions include mandatory FSSAI licensing and registration, prominent display of Food Safety Display Boards (FSDBs) and annual medical check-ups of food handlers.

Establishments have also been instructed to maintain hygiene ratings, carry out regular pest control

operations, ensure periodic water quality testing and strictly adhere to FSSAI's RUCO guidelines for disposal of used cooking oil. As per the notice, every food business must nominate a Food Safety Supervisor (FSS) trained under the FoSTaC programme, maintain records of raw material procurement, pest control operations, water testing reports, UCO disposal records and employee medical certificates and use only food-grade utensils, containers and packaging materials.

The notice also stresses on proper storage and temperature control of perishable food items including chilled, frozen and hot foods and periodic calibration of equipment such as refrigerators, thermometers and ovens. Food establishments have been directed to procure raw materials only from licensed or registered suppliers to ensure traceability.

—(KNO)

National Social Assistance Programme: Strengthening India's Social Security Framework Through Inclusive Assistance

The National Social Assistance Programme serves as a key pillar of India's social security system, providing essential support to citizens in need

Press Information Bureau

Introduced on 15 August 1995, the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) is a fully funded Centrally Sponsored Scheme that extends financial support to individuals living below poverty line (BPL). Implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development, the programme operates across both rural and urban areas, representing a major step towards fulfilling the Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in the Constitution. NSAP covers old age pension, widow pension, disability pension, family benefit, and food security through Annapurna for those beneficiaries otherwise eligible under Old Age Pension Scheme but not receiving its benefits.

NSAP caters to 3.09 crore beneficiaries with a scheme-wise ceiling/ cap for each State/UT on the number of beneficiaries. This includes 221 lakh elderly persons under the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), 67 lakh beneficiaries under Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS), more than 8.33 lakh beneficiaries under Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS), 3.5 lakh under National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and 8.31 lakh beneficiaries under Annapurna Scheme, across the country.

A blue pie chart with numbers and a diagram AI-generated content may be incorrect. Objectives of NSAP

To provide basic level of social security assistance to most vulnerable category of citizens, such as elderly, widow and divyangajan. Features of Schemes under NSAP

Selection: Gram Panchayats and Municipalities play an active role in identifying eligible beneficiaries under the different NSAP schemes.

Disbursement: Benefits are provided through DBT mode (94%) i.e beneficiary's bank or post office savings accounts, or via postal money orders. Disbursement through Cash at doorstep is also allowed by the scheme guidelines in extreme cases where the beneficiary is unable to go to the bank/post office for receiving the pension.

Monitoring: States and Union Territories have the flexibility to implement the schemes through any State Government department, but each must appoint a Nodal Secretary at the State level to oversee implementation and coordinate with relevant departments. Progress must be reported quarterly in a prescribed format by the 15th day of the month



following each quarter. Non-submission of progress reports is considered a lack of progress and may result in non-release of additional central assistance for the final quarter of the financial year.

Components of NSAP
The NSAP at present comprises five sub-schemes as its components -
Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)
Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS)
Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS)
National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)
Annapurna Scheme
Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)

The Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme extends financial assistance to elderly citizens aged 60 years and above who belong to families living below the poverty line by the Government of India. Under this scheme, individuals between 60 and 79 years of age receive Rs.200 per month from the Central Government, while those aged 80 years and above are provided Rs.500 per month.

In accordance with the guidelines of the National Social Assistance Programme, States and Union Territories are encouraged to supplement the Central share by contributing an equivalent or higher top-up amount. This additional support helps ensure that the beneficiaries receive a reasonable and dignified level of income. Currently, the top-up provided by States and UTs under the old age pension component ranges from Rs.50 to Rs. 5700 per month, leading to an average pension of around Rs.1100 in many of the States/UTs.

Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension

Scheme (IGNWPS)

Under this scheme, financial assistance is extended to widows aged between 40 and 79 years who belong to families living below the poverty line, as identified by the Government of India. Each eligible beneficiary in this age group receives Rs.300 per month as central assistance. For widows who are 80 years and above, the amount of central assistance is Rs.500 per month, providing essential financial support to help meet their basic needs.

Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS)

With a total of Rs.243.74 crore released to States and Union Territories under the Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) for the year 2024-25, this scheme caters individuals aged between 18 and 79 years who have severe or multiple disabilities and belong to families living below the poverty line. The beneficiaries are eligible for central assistance of Rs.300 per month. Beneficiaries who are 80 years and above receive Rs.500 per month, ensuring continued financial support to help them manage their daily needs with dignity.

National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)

Under this scheme, a household living below the poverty line becomes eligible for lump sum financial assistance in the unfortunate event of the death of its primary breadwinner, provided the deceased was between 18 and 59 years of age. The family receives Rs.20,000 as support to help them cope with the immediate financial difficulties arising from the loss.

Annapurna Scheme

Under the scheme, 10kg of food grains per month are provided free of cost to those senior

citizens who, though eligible under Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), are not receiving old age pension.

Budgetary Allocation
The budget allocation for the National Social Assistance Programme for the year 2025-26 stands at Rs.9,652 crore.

Budget allocated under Components of NSAP for the year 2025-26:

For the financial year 2025-26, the total budget allocated under the Components of the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) is 9,652 crore.

Out of this total:
The Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) has been allocated 6,645.90 crore.

The Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS) has received an allocation of 2,026.99 crore.

The National Family Benefit Scheme has been allotted 659 crore.

The Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) has a budget of 290 crore.

The Annapurna Scheme has been given 10 crore.

The Management Cell has been allocated 20.11 crore.

Together, these allocations make up the total NSAP budget of 9,652 crore for 2025-26. Digitization of Beneficiaries

The details of all potential beneficiaries have now been fully digitised, including their names, addresses, choice of pension disbursement mode, bank account information, Aadhaar numbers, and mobile numbers wherever available.

So far, under NSAP, a total of more than 2.5 crore beneficiaries have their Aadhaar numbers linked to their account ensuring secure and direct transfer of benefits. This information is accessible to the public on the official NSAP portal at www.nsap.nic.in

The digital initiative has ensured that pensions are credited directly into the bank accounts of eligible beneficiaries, with Aadhaar authentication and Public Financial Management System (PFMS) integration helping to eliminate bogus entries and promote transparency.

Aadhaar based Mobile Application for Digital Life Certification (DLC) of NSAP pension beneficiaries has been launched by Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development on 15th July, 2025. The DLC application will ease the process of annual life verification of beneficiaries which was hitherto carried out

manually by the States/UTs.

Conclusion

The National Social Assistance Programme serves as a key pillar of India's social security system, providing essential support to citizens in need. Through its various components- the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme, the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme, the Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme, Annapurna Scheme and the National Family Benefit Scheme, the programme ensures that elderly citizens, widows, persons with disabilities, and families experiencing the loss of a primary breadwinner receive regular financial assistance and food security. By integrating Aadhaar-based authentication and promoting direct benefit transfers, NSAP has improved transparency, reduced fraud, and strengthened the delivery of welfare to millions of beneficiaries. Collectively, these measures offer critical financial relief and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable social safety net across the country.

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The Three Technologies Disrupting The Global Order

The great Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter argued that you could spot a fundamental economic transition by the arrival of new types of goods, new production methods, and new forms of industrial organization. The spread of cheap drones, phones, and solar checks all of these boxes.

Mark Blyth and Daniel Driscoll

News media tend to focus on the world's major powers, because they command more resources by dint of their relatively larger economies, militaries, and energy endowments. But there are costs to such dominance. For example, a single American Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carrier costs \$13 billion, while the F-35 fighter jet costs around \$100 million. So, if you can build your military equipment for less than your opponent, you can gain a strategic advantage.

But even those advantages are slipping as key technologies reshuffle military and power asymmetries. Specifically, cheap drones, phones, and solar are disrupting the global order. The most obvious example is in the military domain, where drones are allowing "weaker" countries to inflict significant damage on larger opponents. In June 1, Russia was caught completely off guard by "Operation Spiderweb," when trucks secretly carrying Ukrainian drones unleashed their freight around Russian air bases, ultimately destroying significant numbers of Russian warplanes.

Ukraine has revolutionized drone warfare and is now churning out more than 200,000 first-person-view (FPV) drones per month. Producing them does not require a massive military industrial complex or high capital expenditures; anyone can buy commercial versions

of FPVs for under \$300. Moreover, these low costs belie the power of the technology. FPV drones can easily slip through enemy defenses and surveil targets for hours. They can deliver precision strikes or adapt to multiple roles. How many would it take to disable a Ford-class carrier, and at what fraction of the carrier's cost?

Similarly, in finance, the mobile phone is disrupting and – more significantly – extending the reach of information, markets, and products in ways that disintermediate established players. It is also transforming education, employment, and growth throughout the Global South.

In a country like Kenya, communication, information access, and financial services traditionally required significant investment in technological infrastructure and capital goods. But with over 80% of the population adopting the smartphone, that is quickly changing. Mobile financial transactions are now the norm, with usage reaching 77% and 89.7% in rural and urban areas, respectively. The economic benefits are clear. The Kenyan government estimates that the digital economy will account for nearly 10% of GDP in 2025. And as prices for phones and access continue to fall, established players in media, banking, and other services will find themselves squeezed.

When it comes to energy, the United States is the world's second-biggest producer, and under



President Donald Trump, more of that production is carbon-based. The administration's trade "deals" regularly include riders that attempt to lock allies and trading partners into long-term fossil-fuel use by accepting US exports of oil, liquefied natural gas, and other petroleum derivatives. But solar is disrupting this sector, too. While Europeans and Americans worry about China's dominance in green tech, they are ignoring energy

consumers. As the Chinese solar industry has brought prices down, many developing countries and emerging markets have capitalized on this increasingly affordable source of energy.

For example, in 2025, Algeria's solar imports from China grew 85-fold from their 2024 level. Pakistan also has taken advantage of cheap panels, generating 20% of its electrical power from solar. Across the Global South, solar offers energy security

and freedom from the current-account crunch that comes with importing energy. Especially in off-grid rural areas, solar means true energy independence, improving quality of life for millions of people.

Here, too, established players with monopoly positions are being disintermediated by cheap technologies. Even in hydrocarbon-exporting countries, the logic of solar is compelling. It protects domestic consumption from geopolitical price

shocks and allows fossil fuels to be used primarily as an export, which is far more profitable.

While these three technologies are notable and interesting on their own, together their adoption suggest that a greater global economic transition may be underway. The Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter argued that you could spot such a transition by the arrival of new types of goods, new production methods, and new forms of industrial organization. Drones, phones, and solar check these boxes.

We are witnessing not just a technological or organizational transformation within one country, but a geopolitical transformation in which the long-held advantages of the big and powerful are being undermined by cheap, shareable innovations. It remains to be seen whether AI, if it ever pays off, will reverse or reinforce this trend, but our bet is that it will accelerate it.

Mark Blyth, Professor of International Economics and Director of the William R. Rhodes Center for International Economics and Finance at Brown University, is the co-author (with Nicolò Fraccaroli) of *Inflation: A Guide for Users and Losers* (W. W. Norton, 2025).

Daniel Driscoll, Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Virginia and Nonresident Fellow at the Roosevelt Institute, is the author of the forthcoming *Why Carbon Taxes Failed* (Oxford University Press).

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Govt committed to holistic development of health infra: Sakeena

Lays foundation stone of GDC Mattan, new building for PHC Mattan

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, NOVEMBER 08: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education Sakeena Itoo Saturday laid the foundation stone of Government Degree College (GDC) Mattan and new building for Primary Health Centre (PHC) Mattan, with an aim to expand access to higher education and better healthcare facilities to public, which form the core of Governance of present Government led by Omar Abdullah.

MLA Shangus-Anantnag East Reyaz Ahmad Khan; MLA Anantnag West, Abdul Majid Bhat Larmi; Director Social Welfare Kashmir, Director Colleges, Director School Education Kashmir, Director Coordination new GMCs, Director Health Services Kashmir, other senior officers of district administration, students and large number of locals were also present on the occasion.

Addressing a mammoth gathering after laying foundation stone for college building, Minister Sakeena reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring equitable development across all sectors,



especially in rural and semi-urban regions. "Education and health form the backbone of a progressive society. Establishing a degree college and a full-fledged health centre in Mattan reflects our vision to empower the youth of this area and around it with quality learning opportunities as well as ensuring accessible healthcare for every citizen", she stated.

Minister Sakeena further remarked that education is the most powerful weapon which can bring positive changes in the world.

The Minister highlighted that the college building will be equipped with modern classrooms, laboratories, library and other advanced facilities, in

order to promote holistic learning and provide new academic opportunities for the youth.

During the address, the Minister also highlighted various achievements of the Government, adding that significant strides have been made in vital sectors of Health and Education.

She added that an ample number of posts in these departments have been referred to recruiting agencies, adding that vacancies of Principals in all Colleges have been filled almost to provide a better learning environment for the students.

The Minister further said that Doctors, Lecturers, Assistant Professors, Paramedical staff has been recruited in the last

one year and posted in deserving areas to provide best and quality educational and health care services to the students and locals.

The Minister on the occasion also announced that Bus for the students will also be provided as the college caters to a large area. She also announced that Science stream will also be started in the college from next academic session, besides other streams as per demand of students will also be started.

Reflecting on the commitment of Omar Abdullah led government to holistic development of health infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir, Minister Sakeena highlighted that advanced medical care facilities are being established in J&K, with special focus on far flung and underserved areas.

She added that the new building of Primary Health Centre Mattan will be equipped with the best and diagnostic facilities so as to ensure timely and advanced medical attention at the local level.

MLA Shangus-Anantnag East Reyaz Ahmad Khan and MLA Anantnag West, Abdul Majid Bhat Larmi also spoke on the occasion.

Later, the Minister also visited Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Seer and inaugurated the newly established Physiotherapy Unit.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Sakeena said that this facility will strengthen rehabilitative and therapeutic healthcare services in the area. She added that the unit is equipped with modern physiotherapy equipment and trained staff to assist patients recovering from orthopaedic, neurological, and post-surgical conditions.

The Health Minister on the occasion also interacted with the medical staff and local residents, assuring them of continued support in upgrading healthcare services and addressing manpower gaps. She also directed health officials to maintain high standards of patient care and cleanliness in all health facilities.

During the visit, the Minister also interacted with locals and the general public who projected various issues and problems before the Minister. She assured them prompt redressal of these issues. The locals expressed gratitude to the Minister for Government's proactive approach in bringing vital educational and health infrastructure to the area.

DC Gbl reviews winter preparedness in district

KT News Desk

GANDERBAL, NOVEMBER 08: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore Saturday chaired a meeting of district and sectoral officers to review winter preparedness of different departments in the district.

During the meeting, the DC reviewed availability of men and snow clearance machinery, stock position of essential commodities besides action plans prepared by the concerned departments to prevent interruption in road connectivity and services during this winter season.

The DC instructed officers to prepare a comprehensive and meticulous snow clearance and winter preparedness plan to avoid any inconvenience to people by extending a prompt response. He also called for better coordination in dealing with snow clearance operations and to ensure smooth power, water supply and other essential supplies.

He directed the officers from R&B, Mechanical, BRO, PMGSY and MC Ganderbal for deployment of snow clearing machinery and equipment for snow clearance on essential, main and internal roads besides far-flung routes as and when required. He also directed the departments to ensure all stage contracts are in place latest by 20th of November.

The DC directed the Health department to ensure sufficient stock of medicines and medical supplies, especially in remote areas. KPDCL was directed to enhance buffer stocks of Transformers and other equipment.

AD FCS&CA was directed to maintain adequate reserves



of LPG cylinders, rations and other essential commodities to avoid any shortage during heavy snowfall. It was also given out that the forest department will publicize dates and venues for distribution/sale of firewood.

Fire and Emergency Services, SDRF and other agencies concerned were directed to remain on high alert to tackle any eventuality. F&ES was also directed to deploy Quick Response Teams in Sonamarg during the winter season.

He also directed SDM Kangan and Tehsildars to take review of winter preparedness within their own jurisdictions for efficient and timely response to adverse weather conditions.

The meeting was attended by the Additional District Development Commissioner, CEO Sonamarg Development Authority, Additional SP Ganderbal, S. Engineers of KPDCL, PHE, Hydraulics, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, SDM Kangan, Assistant Commissioner Development, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Ex. Engineers of KPDCL, R&B, PHE, Hydraulics, Chief Medical Officer, Tehsildars, BDOs, AD FCS&CA, AD F&E, ARTO, Dy.SP Traffic, Dy. SP SDF, EO MC Ganderbal, besides officers from MET, BSNL, BRO etc.

DC Kulgam inaugurates 2-day Science Fest



KT News Desk

KULGAM, NOVEMBER 08: Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan Saturday inaugurated a two-day Mega Science Festival organized by Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV) Aamnoo Kulgam.

The festival witnessed enthusiastic participation from students who showcased innovative scientific models and projects, reflecting creativity, curiosity, and practical learning.

Addressing the gathering, the DC said that the two-day Science Festival is a commendable initiative that provides students an opportunity to learn, explore, and present their innovative ideas.

He emphasized the importance of such events in nurturing scientific temperament and creativity among young

learners, encouraging schools to actively promote participation in these educational activities.

While interacting with students and inspecting their science models, the DC appreciated their creativity, innovation, and understanding of scientific concepts. He congratulated the participants and teachers for their efforts in making the event successful and inspiring.

The Science Festival will continue tomorrow with more exhibits, demonstrations, and interactive sessions aimed at enhancing students' interest in science and innovation.

The event was also attended by Commanding Officer, 18th Battalion CRPF, Jitendra Mohan Shilswal; Additional Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Riyaz Ahmad Shah; Chief Education Officer Kulgam, Shabir Ahmad; Principal KV, Kapil Singh and other officers.

150th anniversary of 'Vande Mataram' celebrated

KT News Desk

DODA, NOVEMBER 8: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Bhaderwah, in collaboration with Tehsil Social Welfare Department, organized a grand event to mark 150th anniversary of the patriotic song 'Vande Mataram.'

The celebration aimed to honour the spirit of patriotism and recall the song's historical significance in inspiring India's

Freedom Movement.

The event witnessed the participation of members of DLSA, staff of TSWO Office, Childline, ICDS and civil society members.

Participants expressed their deep respect and pride for India's rich cultural and national heritage. The program concluded with a vote of thanks and a collective pledge to uphold the values of unity, freedom and national service.

SMC celebrates 150th year of 'Vande Mataram'

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 8: Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) Saturday celebrated the 150th year of the iconic patriotic song 'Vande Mataram' with great zeal and national fervor at the SMC Headquarters, Karan Nagar, Srinagar.

The event was organized under the directions of the Commissioner, SMC /CEO, Srinagar Smart City Ltd., Faz Lul Haseeb, in synchronization with the instructions issued by the Divisional and district administration.

The celebration aimed to commemorate the historic legacy of the national song that continues to inspire generations with its message of love, unity and devotion to the motherland.

The program began with the unfurling of the National Flag and the playing of the National Anthem, followed by the screening of a short film and the National Song 'Vande Mataram', presented with dignity and pride.

On the occasion, the Department of Information also participated enthusiastically, expressing their respect and admiration for the song that played a vital role in shaping India's freedom movement.

Joint Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, Suhail Ul Islam presided over the function and highlighted that 'Vande Mataram' is not merely a song but a profound symbol of India's unity, strength, and spiritual essence. He elaborated on the historical significance of the National song 'Vande Mataram', which became a rallying cry for freedom fighters during India's struggle for independence, a lyrical embodiment of devotion to the motherland and the spirit of sacrifice, he added.

He emphasized that the song's message of "Mother as the Nation" continues to



remind every citizen of their duty towards the country. He urged SMC officials to imbibe the spirit of patriotism, honesty, and dedication reflected in the song while serving the people of Srinagar.

Cultural Officer Kashmir also shared insights into the historical and emotional resonance of 'Vande Mataram'. He noted that the song, adopted as the national song of India, continues to serve as a reminder of unity in diversity, binding people across regions, faiths, and languages in the shared spirit of nationhood. He commended SMC for organizing the celebration with such devotion and respect for the country's cultural legacy.

The speakers emphasized that such occasions reinforce collective responsibility, harmony, and national integrity that are essential for societal progress and nation-building.

Multiple activities held across Bandipora

KT News Desk

Bandipora, November 8: As part of the ongoing Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas 2025, a series of health and awareness activities were conducted across various locations in Bandipora district.

Health check-ups were conducted at different locations in Block Gurez at Primary Health Centres and AAM Centres. During the screenings, various national health programmes were implemented, which included Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) screening and collection of sputum samples besides, free medicines were distributed among the beneficiaries.

In observance of Jan Jatiya Gaurav Diwas, dedicated medical camps were also organized at Village Dardpora and Chittay Bandy to extend essential healthcare services to tribal communities.

A comprehensive range of services were provided during the camps, including general health check-ups, screening for NCDs (BP and Diabetes), maternal and child health services, distribution of essential medicines, health awareness and counseling, screening for anaemia and nutritional deficiencies, and awareness regarding Ayushman Bharat and other government health schemes.

A large number of beneficiaries availed services at both locations, reflecting strong community participation. Special focus was laid on early detection of illnesses and promotion of preventive healthcare among tribal families. The initiative aimed to strengthen healthcare access

in remote tribal areas in line with the government's vision of empowering tribal communities and recognising their invaluable contribution to the nation.

As part of the educational activities under the Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas 2025, a debate competition was held at the Gujjar and Bakarwal Boys Hostel Bandipora. The participating students spoke about the life and contributions of Bhagwan Birsa Munda and discussed various aspects of Gujjar tribal culture.

An awareness programme at Government High School Chanpal, aimed at spreading awareness about various tribal scholarship schemes, hostel admissions, and other beneficiary-oriented initiatives for tribal students was also organized.

Speakers emphasized the importance of education and government support schemes in empowering tribal youth and encouraged students to take advantage of the opportunities available for their educational and personal growth.

These series of activities formed part of the broader celebration of Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas, which commemorates the rich legacy and invaluable contributions of tribal freedom fighters and communities.

Through health outreach, educational programmes, and cultural engagements, the district administration reaffirmed its commitment to empowering tribal populations, preserving their heritage and ensuring inclusive development across all sections of society.

Admin steps up measures to combat drug menace

KT News Desk

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 8: Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan Saturday chaired a crucial meeting of the District-Level NCORD Committee at the DC Office Complex to review and reinforce anti-drug measures across the district.

Taking a comprehensive review, the DC inquired about enforcement actions under the NDPS Act, including arrests, financial investigations and detentions. She directed enforcement departments to maintain meticulous revenue



records related to drug cases to prevent any misuse of property documentation.

Emphasizing a holistic approach to tackle the

drug menace, the Deputy Commissioner called for intensified awareness campaigns, strengthening addiction treatment facilities and enhanced inter-departmental coordination to create a robust prevention and rehabilitation ecosystem. She directed for strict enforcement of guidelines regarding computerized billing at all pharmaceutical outlets, while mandating regular inspection of medical shops to prevent drug diversion.

Highlighting the critical need for community involvement, Sudan called for a collective

action to eradicate illegal cultivation of contraband crops such as bhang and poppy, while ensuring heightened surveillance at vulnerable locations.

The meeting, attended by Senior Superintendent of Police, Virender Singh Manhas, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Jagdish Singh and other senior district officers, reflected the administration's unwavering commitment to creating a drug-free Samba through coordinated enforcement, prevention and rehabilitation efforts that safeguard the youth and secure the district's future.

Nutritional kits distributed among TB patients

KT News Desk

DODA, NOVEMBER 08: To mark Nikshay Diwas, the Health Department Doda organized a special programme at the Conference Hall of CMO Office. The event aimed to support and encourage Tuberculosis (TB) patients by distributing nutritional kits under the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP).

A total of 50 beneficiaries received free nutritional kits, which will support them for a period of six (06) months.

The programme was attended by Dr. Sat Lal Manhas, Deputy



Chief Medical Officer; Dr. Raj Kumar Sharma, District Health Officer; Dr. Farooq Runyal, Eye Specialist GMC Doda and Umar Anayat, Epidemiologist. Among others present on the occasion were Irshad Malik, Arshad Latif Natnoo, Zubair Ahmed, Kousar Hussain and Mudassar Ahmed from the TU AH GMC Doda team.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Raj Kumar Sharma briefed patients about the nutritional kits and highlighted the importance of proper diet and treatment for complete recovery from tuberculosis. He also educated the beneficiaries about the government's continued efforts to eliminate TB and ensure better health outcomes.

The event reflected the Health Department's commitment to strengthening community engagement and providing holistic care to TB patients as part of the national mission to achieve a TB-free India by 2025.

High turnout '65-volt' shock to Oppn: Modi as he concludes Bihar poll campaign

PTI

Sitamarhi/Bettiah, Nov 08: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday claimed that people have given the opposition INDIA bloc a "65-volt jhatka" in the first phase of assembly elections in Bihar, and now they are spending "sleepless nights".

Modi wound up his extensive campaign for assembly polls in Bihar, where he cautioned voters that if the RJD-led opposition came to power, it would order them to hold their "hands up" by placing a "katta" on their head.

The PM seemed confident of an NDA win, claiming that the high turnout in the first phase was in favour of the ruling coalition.

"You have given a 65 volt shock to the opposition which is now having sleepless nights", said Modi, referring to the 65.09 per cent turnout registered across 121 assembly segments where voting was held on November 6.

He urged the electors to "break the record of the first phase on November 11" and ensure that the NDA not just wins "all the seats but established a lead in every booth".

Modi, who addressed a total of 14 rallies across the state, besides a roadshow in Patna, packed in a timespan of less than one month, reflected on his

campaign at his final election meeting in Bettiah, where he also promised to be back again "for swearing in ceremony of a new NDA government".

"I had started my campaign by visiting the birthplace of Bharat Ratna Karpoori Thakur, and today I am bringing it to a close at the land where Babu Gandhi transformed into the Mahatma", said Modi, in West Champaran district, recalling his first rally at Samastipur.

"My campaign ends today but canvassing will continue tomorrow. But voters' job begins on the day of polling. I will come again for the swearing in of an NDA government," said the Prime Minister.

Modi, whom Chief Minister Nitish Kumar accompanied only at his inaugural rally in Samastipur, providing some cannon fodder to the opposition, showered encomiums on the JD(U) supremo for having put an end to "jungle raj".

The PM, who has popularised "katta" as a metaphor for the RJD's alleged high-handedness, charged the main opposition party with having pointed a country-made, unlicensed pistol at the head of the Congress when the ally was refusing to back Tejashwi Yadav as the Chief Ministerial candidate.

Asserting that the people of Bihar "do not want a katta



sarkaar", Modi voiced alarm over the RJD's poll campaign, in which children came on stage declaring that they wished to become "rangdaar" (street bullies), armed with unlicensed pistols and double barrel guns (dunaali).

"People are not voting for jungle raj wallahs because they know if these people come to power they will hold a katta at the head of the public with the order to hold hands up. People of Bihar do not want hands up but start ups, which only the NDA can facilitate," he said.

Although the Prime Minister refrained from mentioning leaders of the RJD and the Congress by names, he made ample references to "royal families" running these, "one most corrupt in the

country" and the other "most corrupt in Bihar".

Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi was lampooned as a "Congress ke naamdaar" who was "practising drowning", a tongue in cheek reference to Gandhi's jumping into a muddy pond last week to interact with fishermen.

Gandhi's allegation of "vote theft" was dismissed as "net practice for finding excuse, following a defeat in Bihar", while his criticism of Modi's aborted plan to take a dip in Yamuna on Chhath was called an "insult" to the most popular festival of the state.

The PM, whose penultimate rally was at Sitamarhi, the birthplace of goddess Sita, also deftly used the Hindutva card to question the INDIA bloc's pro-deprived caste stance.

He alleged that reluctance of INDIA bloc leaders to visit Ayodhya, which housed not just the Ram temple but also shrines dedicated to Maharshi Valmiki, Mata Shabri and Nishad Raj was on account of their "hatred for Dalits and backwards".

The opposition coalition was also repeatedly charged by the PM with "protecting infiltrators", driving whom out was, according to the government at the Centre, the aim of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls that was completed in the state days before

polls were announced.

The opposition has sought to repudiate the charge citing that no infiltrator was detected during the SIR exercise and that "ghuspaithya" was a term used as a dog whistle to target Muslims, who are nearly 17 per cent of Bihar's total population and have a sizeable presence in the Seemanchal region.

Modi's speeches during the assembly polls also had references to the abrogation of Article 370 and Operation Sindoor, and the opposition was charged with "capitulation before religious extremists" for not supporting the government on Triple Talaq and Waqf laws.

He also touched upon the problem of migration, which has been made a major poll issue by Jan Suraj Party founder Prashant Kishor.

The PM promised that in its next innings in power, the NDA will ensure "sons of Bihar get employed on the home soil and make their motherland proud".

Modi had also been chuffed at the sight of women turning up in large numbers at rallies and at polling booths on the day of voting.

"Our mothers and sisters have been the worst sufferers of jungle raj," Modi said at many of his rallies and remarked that high turn out of "Matri Shakti" meant they had "built a fortress around polling booths, to keep jungle raj at bay".

'Vote chori' allegation baseless, Rahul should approach EC with evidence: Rajnath



PTI

Sasaram, Nov 08: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday dismissed Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's allegation of 'vote chori' as "baseless", and said he should approach the Election Commission if he has a complaint with evidence.

Addressing two election rallies in Rohtas district, Singh said Congress was facing a dearth of issues, and that's why Gandhi was levelling such allegations.

"If Rahul Gandhi thinks that votes are being stolen in Bihar, he should file a complaint with the EC. He is not doing that; he is simply levelling baseless allegations against a constitutional body. He is simply lying," he alleged.

Singh alleged Congress creates rift among the people over

caste, creed and religion, as it believes in "divisive politics".

Rahul Gandhi is raising the issue of reservation in the defence forces. Our defence forces are above all these. He should not drag them into politics," he said.

BJP supports reservations. We have given reservations to the poor and other eligible sections of the society," he added.

Hailing the armed forces for their success in Operation Sindoor, Singh said it has been "halted and not stopped".

"If terrorists attempt to attack India again, we will retaliate strongly. India does not provoke anyone, but if anyone provokes us, we will not spare them," he said.

"India is no longer a weak country. We are now known as a powerful country in the world," he added.

Centre invested Rs 21,000 cr in Northeast's edu sector in 11 years: FM Sitharaman

PTI

Gohpur (Assam), Nov 08: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday claimed that the central government has invested Rs 21,000 crore in the education sector in the Northeast in the last 11 years. Connectivity has also received a boost in the region during the period, with new states put on the railway map and several greenfield airports constructed, she added.

Sitharaman, who was on a two-day visit to Assam since Friday, was speaking after laying the foundation stone for the state's first university focussed on technical and vocational education and training at Bholaguri

in Gohpur in Biswanath district. The 'Swahid Kanaklata Barua State University' will be built at a cost of Rs 415 crore on a total area of 241 acres, with a built-up area of 7 lakh sq ft.

"Since 2014, the Centre has invested Rs 21,000 crore in the education sector in the Northeast. Over 850 new schools have been opened. The first AIIMS in the region has become operational, and over 200 new skill development institutes have been operationalised. The country's first sports university is also coming up in the region," Sitharaman said.

In Assam alone, 15 new medical colleges have been built, while South Asia's largest cancer care centre is coming up in

the state and the state will also soon have the region's second IIM, she added.

"To boost the education sector, the Centre is working in coordination with the state governments of the region," the Union minister said.

Besides developing roads, bridges and tunnels, the Centre is also working on the aviation and railway sectors in the region, Sitharaman said. She said that in the last 11 years, 10 new greenfield airports have been built in the region. Manipur and Meghalaya have been added to the country's railway map for the first time during this period, she added.

Paying tributes to freedom fighter Kanaklata Barua,



Sitharaman said, "At the age of 17 years, when she should have been entering a university to

study, she sacrificed her life for the nation to keep our national flag high. A university in her

name should have come up a long time ago."

Barua was a member of the 'Mrityu Bahini' during the freedom struggle and was killed in police firing while leading a procession to hoist the national flag at Gohpur police station on September 20, 1942, during the Quit India Movement.

Sitharaman said that while conserving the Gohpur police station or building a memorial there will attract people, the university in her name will inspire generations of youth, and lauded the initiative as a step in the right direction.

She maintained that it was a privilege for her to lay the foundation stone of a varsity

dedicated to the memory of Barua and exhorted the youth who will enroll to carry in them the essence of deep patriotism that Barua and other freedom fighters of the area embodied.

The university will offer courses in various technology domains, including artificial intelligence and machine learning, cyber-security, blockchain, drone and navigation technology, quantum computing, brain computer interface, internet of things, and smart cities and smart environments. It will feature academic blocks for 2,000 students, hostels for 1,620 students, residential quarters, a guest house and a student facility centre.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Budgam's high-stakes

fielded Aga Mahmood, a former minister, while the PDP has nominated Aga Muntazir Mehdi, son of Agha Hassan.

Muntazir is the younger son of Aga Syed Hassan, who heads one faction of the Anjuman-e-Sharie Shiayan, while Mahmood is the uncle of Aga Syed Hadi, who leads another faction of the same organisation.

Their followers are respectively known as Mustafais and Muhammadis. The Mustafais are more in numbers than Muhammadis in this segment.

Srinagar MP Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, who enjoys pan-Kashmir appeal due to his stance on Article 370, also draws his core support from Mustafais.

All eyes will be on Ruhullah Mehdi's supporters especially as he remains at odds with the NC over several issues, including the rationalization of reservation.

Ruhullah, who has chosen to stay away from electioneering, has kept his cards close to his chest. His voters could shift towards the PDP, as both Muntazir and Ruhullah draw their core support from the same base.

Despite his broader appeal, the outcome in Budgam could impact Ruhullah's political career.

Outside the Shia-dominated areas, voters are largely divided among the NC, independent candidates Jibran Dar and Muntazir Mohiuddin, Awami Ittehad Party-backed independent Nazir Ahmad Khan, and PDP's Muntazir Mehdi. Besides them, other key candidates in the fray include Aga Syed Mohsin (BJP), Deebea Khan (Aam Admi Party), Mukhtar Dar (Apni Party) and Sameer Ahmad (independent).

An interaction with people by a team of reporters from news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO) revealed that the main contest is between the NC and the PDP, though Nazir Khan and Jibran Dar are expected to secure a significant share of votes. "NC has a loyal support base in the segment. Their workers will come out and vote for the party irrespective of who the candidate is. While there are many candidates in the fray, the main contest is between Aga Mahmood and Aga Muntazir," a group of elders listening to Sameer Ahmad's speech in Soibugh told KNO.

The NC's biggest advantage remains its traditional support base in the segment-something other parties lack. However, disillusionment over its alleged failure to deliver on the 2024 electoral manifesto, and the rift with Ruhullah, could prove to be major setbacks.

On the other hand, Peoples Democratic Party, banking on Mustafais, lack an organizational

network in the segment. Other than cult vote, it is mainly eyeing floating vote, which can play a decisive role in outcome of the election.

Our interactions indicated that the basic governance issues resonate more with voters than broader political narratives. "I have to pay Rs 2100 monthly electricity. Jibran Dar met me and assured help. I will vote for a new face," says 40-year-old Farooq Ahmad Najjar of Narkura, who sells masala bread at Naraspora, Budgam.

41-year-old Abdul Hamid of Wadwan, who describes himself as a victim of the reservation policy, says the villagers are divided on their voting preferences. "Candidates from the National Conference, Peoples Democratic Party, Nazir Khan, and Jibran Dar will each get their share of votes from our village," he says.

He adds that he is fed up with politics and remains undecided about whether he will vote. "I hold an MPhil and a PhD in Urdu. I had applied for the post of Urdu typist in the Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, but a candidate from a reserved category was selected. I can no longer apply for government jobs as I have crossed the age threshold," he says.

He supports Ruhullah's decision to stay away from electioneering. "What else should he have done when the government didn't fulfill its promises? He is right in his decision," he said.

The campaigns of major political players has revolved around BJP-links to electoral promises. While the National Conference has tried to target the PDP for its past ties with the BJP-a weapon they tested in every election since the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, the Peoples Democratic Party and other parties have mainly targeted the NC for "failing" to fulfill promises made to the electorate in the 2024 polls.

In this electoral battle, politicians like Imran Reza Ansari of Peoples Conference and Hakim Muhammad Yasin of the Peoples Democratic Front, who command sizeable influence in the constituency, could play a significant role in the outcome of the polls.

The proscribed Jamaat-e-Islami(Jel) also has impressive influence in a few pockets of the segment. The Justice and Development group, comprising former members of Jel, has also kept its cards close to its chest. (KNO)

LG Sinha asks writers,

writers, thinkers and citizens to focus on 10 resolutions to make India a strong and developed nation.

"We must work on preservation of knowledge and accurate history, propagation of moral values in society, promotion of social change, building bridges between diverse perspectives,

promote critical thinking, inspire progress in the science and technology sector, strengthen the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, inculcate a sense of pride among the people for shared heritage, empower youth with new ideas, focus on innovation, foster emotional unity, good governance and Jan-Bhagidari," the Lieutenant Governor said.

LG Sinha also released a publication "Bhojपुरi Kahavato ki Duniya" by Shri Sanjeev Kumar Gupta.

Pertinently, the festival, organised by Bharat Dialogues, brought together authors, scholars, artists and policymakers from the Indian diaspora in Mauritius, South Africa, Suriname, Fiji, Norway, and many other countries to celebrate shared heritage and ideas and identity. High Commissioner of South Africa in India, Prof Anil Sooklal and Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, Dr Sangeeta Balwant were among the special invitees at the event. (KNO)

In Cong rule, terrorists

focus remains on strengthening internal security, border protection, and the defence sector.

He said the establishment of the defence corridor in Bihar would be part of a larger effort to make India self-reliant in defence production. (KNO)

PDP's alliance

promises — free bus rides for women, increased marriage assistance, changes in the exam calendar, and waiving stamp duty taxes. The opposition is worried because we are delivering on our commitments."

Urging people to vote for National Conference candidate Aga Mahmood, Omar said, "You are not choosing your Chief Minister, but your MLA. Budgam's votes will not make or break the government, but they will shape Budgam's development. On November 11, press the NC button and say Bismillah."

"I still consider myself Budgam's MLA — it's buy one, get one free. Vote for Aga Mahmood, and you get me too," he added.

Meanwhile, speaking to the media persons, the Chief Minister said that north Kashmir had no representation since the Member of Parliament from Baramulla constituency, Engineer Abdul Rashid continued to languish in the jail.

Reacting to the statement of Er Rashid's son, Abrar Rashid over rigging elections in 1987, Omar said that he was not even born at that time. "Let he speak about his statement wherein he stated that his father would come out of jail after winning the election. However,

as he won the election, the people in North Kashmir were left without any representation. Therefore, we decided to nominate Choudhary Muhammad Ramzan for Rajya Sabha to represent the people there," he said.

He also reiterated that if the people are not willing to install smart meters then they can opt out, but they won't be able to get benefits of 200 free units of electricity. (KNO)

J&K's hydel power

of 1742 MWs in Kashmir division and 1036 MWs in Jammu division respectively," the official said.

Pertinently, Jammu and Kashmir was generating over 1100 MWs of power from the total generation capacity of 11974 MW during the peak season.

Earlier in the last week of October, the official had informed KNO that there were additional 800 MWs allocated from the centre. "From this year, we have 1300 MW from the central pool. We have started banking with other states."

Pertinently, till the third week of February, 2025 an official had said that Jammu and Kashmir was relying on more than 85 per cent of coal and solar power amid acute deficit of hydro power generation.

Officials of PDD department had claimed that local hydro power generation from the local power plants have reduced by nearly 90 per cent.

An official had informed that "At present Jammu and Kashmir is 85-90 percent dependent on coal and solar energy that is being procured from the other states because as of now we don't have a local power generation." (KNO)

Army foils infiltration

said that the operation, launched jointly by the Army and the Border Security Force (BSF), involved the use of drones and other surveillance equipment to monitor the terrain.

He said troops along the LoC remain on high alert. "Security forces have foiled every infiltration attempt so far and continue to maintain strict vigil," the official added. (KNO)

CBK files charge

investigation, both documentary and oral evidence substantiated the allegations, establishing a criminal conspiracy and misappropriation of government funds. Accordingly, offences under the relevant provisions of the Ranbir Penal Code were proven, and a charge sheet has been filed before the Court for judicial determination, it added.

Meanwhile, the Crime Branch Kashmir reiterated its unwavering commitment to ensuring

People fear RJD-led oppn will put 'katta' at their heads if it comes to power: Modi

PTI

Sitamarhi (Bihar), Nov 08: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday claimed that people were not voting for the RJD-helmed opposition in Bihar as they fear that if the INDIA bloc was voted to power, the regime would put a 'katta' (country-made firearm) at their heads.

In contrast, the PM told a rally in Sitamarhi district of the poll-bound state that the NDA was facilitating start-up enterprises, in addition to better education and growth in spheres like sports.

"I shudder to hear that the RJD, in its campaign, is getting children to say that upon growing up they wish to become 'rangdaar' (street bully). Bihar definitely does not want a government which has 'katta', 'kushasan' (misgovernance), 'kroorta' (cruelty) and corruption to offer", said Modi. The PM, who has addressed over a dozen rallies since elections were announced in the



state, said, "Wherever I go, I find the prevailing sentiment is - we do not want a 'katta' sarkar, we want an NDA sarkar again".

"This is because the people do not want a regime that would put a 'katta' on their heads and ask them to hold their hands up. People do not want hands up, but start up, which the NDA will facilitate. The

NDA shuns 'katta' and promotes school bags, computers, cricket bats and hockey sticks", Modi said.

The Prime Minister expressed delight over the high voter turnout in the first phase of elections two days ago, when, according to the Election Commission, 65.08 per cent of electors had exercised their franchise. "You have given a big

shock (zor ka jhatka) to the opposition. They are getting sleepless nights", said Modi, who has been insisting that the high turnout was indicative of an overwhelming support of the NDA.

Modi also referred to the 'Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyami Yojana', launched by him over a month ago, under which Rs 10,000 each has been transferred into accounts of over a crore women.

"This would never have been possible under the 'jungle raj' wallahs. Because, in the words of the father of the 'naamdaar of Congress, the then Prime Minister, out of every rupee sanctioned by the government, only 15 paise reached the people. You all know the blood-stained hand (khooni panja) that was responsible for the loot", said Modi, referring to Rahul Gandhi, late Rajiv Gandhi and the poll symbol of the opposition party.

Modi also referred to the

Punaaura Dham project in Sitamarhi, the birthplace of Goddess Sita, as an example of the NDA's regard for "heritage (Virasat)" and lambasted the "naamdaar of Congress" for "insulting the faith of mothers and sisters by calling Chhath festival a drama, a nautanki".

"Is it not an insult to our sentiments? Should they not be punished? In a democracy, the best way to punish is through the power of your vote. These people have been contemptuous of Maha Kumbh and the Ram temple at Ayodhya", alleged Modi.

"Because of their vote bank politics, the RJD-Congress has boycotted not just the Ram temple, but even shrines of Mata Shabri, Maharshi Valmiki and Nishad Raj in Ayodhya. Those who are guided by the politics of vote bank can never do good for the state. Their vote bank politics has led them to even protect infiltrators", Modi claimed.

Final turnout in first phase of Bihar polls 65.08 pc, highest in state's history: EC



PTI

Patna, Nov 08: The final turnout in the first phase of the Bihar assembly polls is 65.08 per cent, the highest in the state's history, the Election Commission said.

A total of 3.75 crore people were eligible to cast their votes at 45,341 polling stations, including 36,733 in rural areas, on November 6 to decide the electoral fate of 1,314 candidates, of whom 1,192 are men and 122 women.

As per the latest update provided by the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Bihar, the "historic" turnout of 65.08 per cent is 7.79 per cent more than the consolidated polling percentage of the previous assembly polls held in 2020, when 57.29 per cent of the electors had cast their votes. Of the 3.75

crore voters, 1.98 crore are men and 1.76 crore women. Women had come out in large numbers to exercise their franchise in the November 6 polls.

Two districts - Muzaffarpur and Samastipur - recorded over 70 per cent voting. While Muzaffarpur registered 71.81 per cent turnout, it was 71.74 per cent in Samastipur.

Besides, other districts that recorded a high polling percentage were Madhepura (69.59), Saharsa (69.38), Vaishali (68.50) and Khagaria (67.90). Patna district recorded 59.02 per cent voting, while Lakhisarai registered 64.98 per cent, Munger 62.74 and Siwan 60.61.

The remaining 122 seats of the 243-member assembly will vote on November 11, while the counting will take place on November 14.

Bareilly violence case

Court rejects bail plea of Maulana Tauqeer, five others

PTI

Bareilly (UP), Nov 08: A court in Bareilly has rejected the bail applications of Ittehad-e-Millat Council chief and five others arrested for attacking police personnel during the September 26 violence over the "I Love Mohammad" posters controversy.

Additional District Government Counsel (ADGC) Mahesh Pathak told PTI on Saturday that IMC chief Maulana Tauqeer Raza had called on members of the Muslim community to gather at the Islamia Maidan on the day of the violence despite prohibitory orders imposed in the city. When police intervened, the mob resorted to stone-pelting, he said.

The rioters also stole the rifle of the gunner of the Superintendent of Police (city) and a wireless set from a police jeep, the ADGC added.

Ten FIRs were registered at the Kotwali, Baradari, Premnagar, Cantt, and Qila police stations. These cases have more than 125 named and over 2,500 unidentified accused.

Currently, Raza is lodged in the Fatehgarh jail, while the other accused are in

the Bareilly jail.

The IMC chief's lawyer had filed a bail application in the case pertaining to the violence that took place in Shyamganj under the Baradari police station area.

Pathak said the application was heard in the court of Additional District and Sessions Judge (Bareilly) Amrita Shukla on Friday, who rejected the bail applications of Raza, Faizan Sakalani, Takim, and Munir Idrishi (all residents of the Bareilly district) and Harman and Nematullah, residents of the Purnea district in Bihar.

Raza has been lodged in jail since September 27, a day after violent clashes erupted in Bareilly following the controversy over "I Love Mohammad" posters.

The violence broke out soon after a gathering of Raza's supporters, during which a mob allegedly attacked police personnel.

He was initially named as an accused in seven of the 10 FIRs; his name was added to the remaining three during the investigation.

The IMC chief is also an accused in older cases related to the 2019 anti-CAA-NRC protests.

Gold records 3rd weekly loss amid fading hopes of US Fed rate cut

IANS

New Delhi, Nov 08: The price of 24-carat gold (10 grams) dipped by Rs 670 over the week, impacted by a stronger dollar and reduced expectations for another US Federal Reserve rate cut.

The price of 10 grams of 24-carat gold closed the week at Rs 1,20,100 down from Rs 1,20,770 last week, according to data published by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA). International bullion remained around \$4,000 for the week, facing pressure following Fed Chair Jerome Powell's hawkish remarks, even as the US Fed delivered a second 25 bps cut this year.

Market expectations for another cut in December slipped from around 90

per cent to near 60 per cent, pressuring bullion, while the dollar index held close to 100 and USD/INR climbed toward 89.

Analysts said that the longest US government shutdown on record has delayed official data, increasing reliance on private surveys. ISM manufacturing and services PMIs fell below 50, indicating contraction, while private payrolls rose by 42,000, complicating the Federal Reserve's outlook.

Meanwhile, US-China trade tensions eased after US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to tariff trimming in exchange for Beijing'sentanyl curbs, renewed soybean buying, and continued rare-earth exports, muting safe-haven demand.

India signs deal with General Electric to buy 113 jet engines for Tejas fighters

REUTERS

New Delhi, Nov 08: India signed a deal on Friday to buy 113 engines from General Electric to power an advanced variant of its home-produced Tejas fighter jets, in a sign of warming ties with the U.S. following months of tariff-induced tensions.

The Tejas Mk-1A fighters are crucial for India's efforts to shore up its air force's depleting fighter squadrons and replace ageing jets in the face of neighbouring China's growing military strength and support for New Delhi's arch-rival Pakistan.

But the rollout of the fighter has been delayed due to slow deliveries from GE of 99 engines ordered in 2021, of which only four have arrived so far. GE has blamed supply chain issues following COVID-19.

Friday's deal is a follow-on order to power more of the fighters, with the engines expected to be delivered over five years from 2027, Indian state-owned warplane maker Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd said in a statement after the signing. It did not mention the deal value.

India's relations with the U.S. had soured after President Donald Trump doubled tariffs on Indian

goods to 50% in August as punishment for New Delhi's purchases of Russian oil, which led New Delhi to pause purchases of U.S. defence equipment.

Trump said last month that he planned to reach a trade deal with India, and on Thursday told reporters in Washington that trade talks were going well, and he could visit India next year.

The comment followed a reduction in purchases of Russian oil by



Indian refiners after U.S. sanctions last month on Russia's top two producers.

Trump was due to visit India this year for the summit of leaders of the Quad grouping, which comprises Australia, Japan, India and the United States.

But Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said last month that the summit would likely be held in the first quarter of 2026, and that Trump "has a busy period" ahead in 2025.

Govt plans AI-based eKYC, global credential verification in DigiLocker

IANS

New Delhi, Nov 08: The Ministry of Electronics and IT on Saturday announced plans for AI-based eKYC and global credential verification in the DigiLocker platform. The platform has evolved from a secure document storage service into a trust layer that connects citizens with ministries and departments, according to an official statement.

National e-Governance Division (NeGD), Ministry of Electronics and IT organised the National Conference on DigiLocker to discuss and showcase how DigiLocker evolves into a cornerstone of trust, convenience, and efficiency across government, education, and industry sectors.

The conference underscored the transformative role of DigiLocker in facilitating paperless governance, inclusive education, and secure digital services.

"DigiLocker serves as the trust layer connecting citizens, ministries, and departments—enabling secure, interoperable, and accountable digital governance. Our vision is a future where every digital interaction is



trusted, every citizen empowered, and every institution accountable" said S. Krishnan, Secretary of MeitY, who chaired the conference.

Krishnan said that the platform advances India's digital journey from connectivity to capability, service delivery to self-reliance and now from digitalisation towards trust.

Abhishek Singh, Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Electronics and IT, outlined the future of DigiLocker with AI-based eKYC and global credential verification, positioning it as a global model for

paperless governance.

Presentations were made on integration of DigiLocker with Pension and Treasury systems in Maharashtra and with over 500 services through Sewa Setu Portal in Assam, the statement noted.

Seven states, including Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Kerala, Maharashtra, and Mizoram, have been recognised as "DigiLocker Accelerators" for their distinct achievements. DigiLocker allows citizens to access, verify, and share IDs, financial credentials and certificates securely.

'Vande Bharat sleeper coach maintenance facility to be ready by June 2026'

PTI

New Delhi, Nov 08: The country's first Vande Bharat train sleeper coach maintenance facility will be ready by mid-2026 at Jodhpur in Rajasthan, according to a senior North Western Railway official.

North Western Railway's Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer Major Amit Swamy said the state-of-the-art facility at Bhagat Ki Kothi Railway station is being constructed at a cost of Rs 360 crore.

The first phase of the maintenance and workshop depot, which includes a 600-metre track facility to maintain 24 sleeper coaches of Vande Bharat trains, will be ready by June, 2026.

The second phase, with a 178-metre track, including a workshop and simulator facility, will be completed by June, 2027, he told reporters.

The facility will also house a dedicated wheel rack system and a specialised testing laboratory, including latest simulators for training and evaluating high-tech equipment, highlighting Indian Railways' focus on precision, safety and performance, he said.

The first phase will cost Rs 167 crore and the second phase Rs 195 crore, he said. The project is being executed by the North Western



Railway with Railway Vikas Nigam Limited and Kinet Railway Solution, a joint venture between Russia and India, as technology partners.

This facility will maintain only the sleeper coaches of Vande Bharat which are being introduced shortly, Swamy said, adding that the project includes a three-tier inspection facility for Vande Bharat coaches. "The depot will be capable of inspecting and maintaining three trains at the same time. The workshop in the depot will have advanced machinery for lifting entire train rakes, transferring bogies using a drop

pit table, and wheel-turning systems that will ensure uninterrupted maintenance of the Vande Bharat trains," he said.

Four more such facilities are being established at Bijwasan railway station (Delhi), Thanisandra railway station (Bengaluru), Anand Vihar (Delhi) and Wadi Bandar (Mumbai). Swamy said that the facility in Jodhpur will have the capacity for maintenance of eight to nine trains daily.

Vande Bharat coaches will have to be brought for maintenance at any of these facilities after four days or after travelling 3,500 km, he said.

Global study estimates India had second highest chronic kidney disease cases in 2023

PTI

New Delhi, Nov 08: India had the second-highest number of people with chronic kidney disease in 2023 at 138 million, following China at 152 million, according to a global study published in The Lancet journal.

The condition was the ninth-leading cause of death and claimed nearly 15 lakh lives globally the same year, researchers led by those at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington and other institutes in the US and UK found.

The highest prevalence was seen in North Africa and the Middle East at 18 per cent each, nearly 16 per cent in South Asia and over 15 per cent in each of Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Chronic kidney disease is a major contributor to heart disease and accounted for almost 12 per cent of cardiovascular deaths around the world in 2023. It ranked as the seventh leading cause for heart-related mortality, ahead of diabetes and obesity, the team said.

Fourteen risk factors for chronic kidney disease were detailed in the study, with diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity driving the highest loss in healthy living.

"Chronic kidney disease is both a major risk factor for other leading causes of health loss and a significant disease burden in its own right. Yet, it continues to receive far less policy attention than other non-communicable diseases, even as its impact grows fastest in regions already facing the greatest health inequities," senior author Theo Vos, professor emeritus at IHME, said.

The researchers analysed data from



the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) 2023 study, tracking trends in disease, injuries and health risk factors across 204 countries and territories from 1990 through 2023. The IHME coordinates the GBD study.

Dietary factors, such as a low intake of fruits and vegetables and a high consumption of sodium, also made substantial contributions towards one's risk of chronic kidney disease, they said. The authors said that in 2023, most people with chronic kidney disease were in the early stages, highlighting the importance of screening programmes and strategies addressing disease risk.

The measures can help reduce heart-related deaths due to kidney disease and delay one's requirement of replacement therapies, usually seen in advanced stages of the disease, the team said.

Because access to kidney replacement therapies, including dialysis and transplantation, remains limited and uneven worldwide, a greater emphasis is needed on preventing disease progression and ensuring equitable care, they added.

Improving access to diagnosis and affordable care, tackling key risk factors, and investing in strategies that prevent the disease from advancing will be essential to address the growing burden of chronic kidney disease on patients, families, and health systems worldwide, the researchers said.

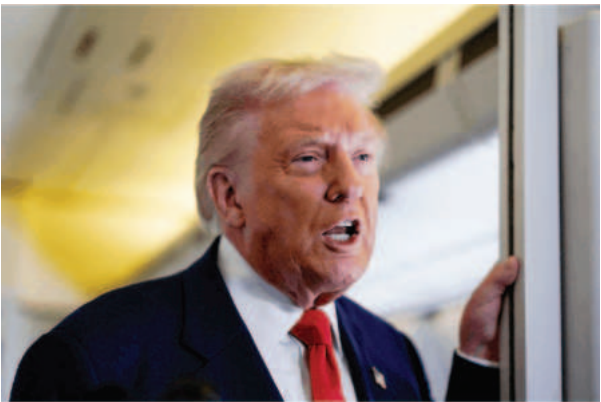
Trump calls G20 in South Africa a ‘disgrace’, says no US official will attend summit

PTI

Washington, Nov 08: US President Donald Trump said it is a “total disgrace” that the G20 will be held in South Africa later this month, announcing that no American official will attend the Summit as long as “human rights abuses” against the ethnic minority group of Afrikaners continue in the country.

Earlier this week, Trump had announced that he would not be attending the G20 Summit in South Africa, as he questioned the country’s membership in the grouping of major economies.

“It is a total disgrace that the G20 will be held in South Africa. Afrikaners (People who are descended from Dutch settlers, and also French and German immigrants) are being killed and slaughtered, and their land and farms are being illegally confiscated,” Trump said in a post on Truth Social on Friday. “No US Government



Official will attend as long as these Human Rights abuses continue. I look forward to hosting the 2026 G20 in Miami, Florida!” he added.

In February this year, just weeks after being sworn in as US President for a second term, Trump issued an order condemning South Africa’s “shocking disregard” of its citizens’ rights by enacting legislation that enabled the South African government to seize ethnic minority Afrikaners’ agricultural property without compensation. In the

wake of this, Trump had said that the US shall not provide aid or assistance to South Africa and shall promote the resettlement of Afrikaner refugees escaping government-sponsored race-based discrimination, including racially discriminatory property confiscation.

In his remarks at a business forum in Miami, Florida, on Wednesday, Trump said, “I am not going. We have a G20 meeting in South Africa. South Africa shouldn’t even be in the

Gs anymore because what’s happened there is bad. I’m not going. I told them I’m not going. I’m not going to represent our country there. It shouldn’t be there.” South Africa assumed the year-long G20 Presidency on December 1, 2024, and will host the grouping’s leaders for a Summit meeting in Johannesburg from November 22 to 23, the first time that the G20 Summit will be held on African soil. The US will take over the Presidency of the G20 from South Africa and head the grouping from December 1, 2025, through November 30, 2026. Trump has previously said that he will host the G20 leaders for the 2026 summit at his golf club near Miami.

India was the President of the G20 from December 2022 to November 2023 and hosted the 18th G20 Summit in New Delhi in September 2023. Then-US President Joe Biden had travelled to India to attend the Summit.

The G20 comprises 19

countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as the European Union and the African Union.

It was under India’s G20 Presidency that the African Union officially joined the grouping of the world’s major economies as a permanent member.

In his remarks on Wednesday, Trump said that Miami has for generations been a haven for those fleeing communist tyranny in South Africa.

“I mean, if you take a look at what’s going on in parts of South Africa, look at South Africa. What’s going on. Look at South America. What’s going on....Take a look at what’s happening in different parts of South America. Take a look at what’s happening in different parts of the world.”

‘Immigrants with underlying health conditions may be denied US visas’

PTI

New York, Nov 08: The Trump administration is understood to have directed American consular offices across the world to deem those individuals seeking to enter and live in the US ineligible if they have certain medical conditions, saying these people could end up relying on public benefits. A report by KFF Health News said that foreigners applying for visas to live in the US “might be rejected if they have certain medical conditions”.

The report cited a guidance issued in a cable sent by the State Department to embassy and consular officials.

“You must consider an applicant’s health...Certain medical conditions – including, but not limited to, cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, cancers, diabetes, metabolic diseases, neurological diseases, and mental health conditions – can require hundreds of thousands of dollars’ worth of care,” according to the cable cited by KFF.

The cable also advises visa officers to consider conditions like obesity in making their decisions, noting that the condition can cause asthma, sleep apnoea and high blood pressure. The officers are advised to take into consideration the medical

conditions to assess whether an immigrant could become a public charge and “require expensive, long-term care”.

The new guidance directs “visa officers to deem applicants ineligible to enter the US for several new reasons, including age or the likelihood they might rely on public benefits”. “The guidance says that such people could become a ‘public charge’ – a potential drain on US resources – because of their health issues or age,” the KFF Health News report said. The cable directs visa officers to also assess if applicants are financially stable to pay for their medical treatment without help from the US government. “Does the applicant have adequate financial resources to cover the costs of such care over his entire expected lifespan without seeking public cash assistance or long-term institutionalisation at government expense?” the cable reads.

The guidance also directs visa officers to consider the health of family members, including children or older parents. “Do any of the dependents have disabilities, chronic medical conditions or other special needs and require care such that the applicant cannot maintain employment?” the cable said, according to the news report.

Chinese firm bags contract to print Nepal’s Rs 1,000 bank notes



PTI

Kathmandu, Nov 08: A Chinese company has bagged a contract to design and print 430 million pieces of Nepal’s ₹1,000 denomination banknotes, officials said on Saturday (November 8, 2025).

Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) issued a letter of intent to the China Banknote Printing and Minting Corporation on Friday (November 7, 2025) for the design, printing, supply and delivery of the notes, the bank officials said.

The total project cost has been fixed at \$16.985 million, according to the Currency Management Department of the bank. The Chinese company was selected on the basis of the lowest evaluated bid. The firm has previously printed Nepalese banknotes of ₹5, ₹10, ₹100, and ₹500 denominations, the officials said.

Trump admin launches over 100 investigations into H-1B visa prog

IANs

Washington, Nov 08: The US Department of Labour (DOL) has launched at least 175 investigations into potential abuses within the H-1B visa programme, as part of a broader effort by the Trump administration to crack down on the foreign worker visa system, Fox News reported on Friday.

The initiative, dubbed “Project Firewall,” was launched in September to target companies allegedly exploiting the visa system, which allows US firms to hire foreign workers in speciality occupations such as information technology, engineering, and healthcare.

“The Department of Labour is using every resource at our disposal to put a stop to H-1B abuse and protect American jobs,” the DOL Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer said in a post on X. She added that “Under the leadership of @POTUS, we’ll continue to invest in our workforce and ensure high-skilled job opportunities go to



American Workers FIRST!”

The White House also shared the news report on the investigations, with Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt posting on X, “Trump admin reveals over 100 investigations into H-1B abuses as it pledges ‘every resource’ to protect US jobs”

It is the latest measure in a series of actions by the Trump administration and Republican leaders to target the H-1B visa programme. In September, US President Donald Trump signed a proclamation, imposing a fee of \$100,000 on new H-1B visa applications.

In October, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis announced that he was directing the state’s Board

of Governors to end the use of H-1B visas across state universities, saying that positions currently held by visa holders should be filled by Florida residents. “Why are we bringing people in to assess our accreditation on an H-1B visa? We can’t do that with our own people?” DeSantis said, adding that the practice amounts to “cheap labour” and calling on university leaders to reassess hiring practices.

Days later, the White House reiterated that President Donald Trump’s priority in reforming the H-1B visa programme is to put “American workers first” and vowed to fight lawsuits filed against the administration’s crackdown. The

administration’s H-1B visa policy has faced broad opposition from lawmakers and legal challenges with two major lawsuits filed in courts, including the one by the US Chamber of Commerce, the country’s biggest business organisation.

On October 30, five US lawmakers wrote a letter to Trump, urging him to reconsider his September 19th proclamation on H-1B visas due to its “potentially negative impacts” on the India-US relationship.

The letter was co-signed by Congressmen Ami Bera, Salud Carbajal, Derek Tran and Congressman Julie Johnson. No Republican lawmaker signed the letter. They defended the H-1B programme, highlighting how “many of America’s most successful companies were founded or led by former H-1B holders” who create “new businesses, job creation, and keep the United States at the forefront of technological progress.”

Cricket in 2028 LA Olympics will have six-team men’s, women’s T20 events: ICC

IANs

New Delhi, Nov 08: The International Cricket Council (ICC) said the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles will see both the men’s and women’s T20 formats set to take place with six teams each. The combined schedule will include 28 matches, marking a historic milestone for the sport’s global expansion and its re-entry into the Olympic fold after more than a century.

The IOC approved cricket’s inclusion for LA28 last year, and it will mark the sport’s second-ever Olympic appearance, 128 years after its debut in Paris 1900, when Great Britain claimed gold in a one-off match against France.

“To accelerate the global growth of cricket, ICC also said the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics will have both the men’s and women’s T20 events, which will feature six teams each, comprising 28 matches in total.”

“The Board reviewed the ICC’s ongoing engagement



with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games (LA28), as cricket deepens its footprint in the global multisport landscape. It commended the efforts being made to include Cricket in regional multi-sport games, which would mean increased participation opportunities for countries,” said the ICC.

Each gender has been allocated 90 athlete quotas, allowing participating nations to field squads of 15 players. T20 competitions for the men’s and women’s categories at the Olympics will run from July 12

to 29, 2028. The medal matches will be held on July 20 (women’s) and July 29 (men’s), respectively. All matches will be staged at the Fairgrounds in Pomona, about 50 km from downtown Los Angeles.

ICC also confirmed that cricket will feature across multiple multisport events through to the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics – Asian Games 2026 (Aichi-Nagoya, Japan), African Games 2027 (Cairo, Egypt), and PanAm Games 2027 (Lima, Peru), where cricket will make its debut.

MS Dhoni will play for Chennai Super Kings in IPL 2026, says franchise CEO



IANs

New Delhi, Nov 08: Indian cricket legend Mahendra Singh Dhoni is set to play in the 2026 edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) for five-time champions Chennai Super Kings (CSK), said franchise CEO Kasi Viswanathan on Friday. Dhoni, who has been synonymous with CSK since the league’s inception in 2008, was back as their captain midway through the 2025 IPL, after newly-appointed captain, opener Ruturaj Gaikwad, was ruled out of the competition due to an elbow injury.

It was a season to forget for CSK as they finished at the bottom of the points table with just four wins from 14 matches. “He is likely to play, that is the (current) status. We have a feeling that he will play in this upcoming IPL,” Viswanathan told IANS on Friday. Barring the franchise’s suspension for the 2016 and 2017 seasons, Dhoni has been a constant

person in the CSK set-up. A return for IPL 2026 will mark his 17th season with CSK and 19th overall in the competition. So far, Dhoni has played 248 matches for CSK, amassing 4,865 runs and captaining CSK to five IPL titles in 2010, 2011, 2018, 2021, and 2023. Overall, Dhoni has made 5439 runs in 278 matches – with 158 catches and 47 stumpings against his name.

Meanwhile, with November 15 being the IPL retention deadline, the eyes of everyone in the cricketing ecosystem will be on any big name being traded to another franchise. Since July, reports have emerged of wicketkeeper-batter and Rajasthan Royals (RR) skipper Sanju Samson being potentially traded to either CSK or even Delhi Capitals (DC). When specifically asked by IANS if there’s any likelihood of CSK being involved in trading Samson from RR, Viswanathan’s response came as, “No, not likely, not likely.”

Raahul V S becomes India’s 91st Grandmaster



PTI

New Delhi, Nov 08: Indian chess player Raahul VS has become the country’s 91st Grandmaster after winning the sixth ASEAN Individual Championship with a round to spare. The 21-year-old, who is also an Asian Junior champion, had attained the title of International Master in 2021, when he secured his fourth and fifth IM norms before crossing the 2400 mark in live ratings. “Heartiest congratulations to Raahul V S for clinching the ASEAN Individual Championship with a round to spare and, in the process, becoming the 91st Grandmaster of the nation! Wishing you many more milestones ahead and continued success in making Bharat proud,” All India Chess Federation (AICF) President Nitin Narang posted on X.

Raahul’s latest triumph at the ASEAN Individual Championship in Philippines confirmed his final GM norm, completing the requirements for the prestigious title.

He becomes India’s second Grandmaster in as many weeks, following young prodigy Ilamparthi A R, who achieved the feat on October 30.

Movies Watchlist Sunday, 9th November. Includes movie posters for Haq (UA15+), Predator: Badlands (U/A16+), Deewanayat (A), Thamma (UA16+), and Devdas (RE RELEASE U/A).