



NIA takes over Red Fort blast case; Pulwama doctor drove explosive laden car, reveals probe



Perpetrators won't be spared, says PM Modi



HM Shah chairs meetings, directs hunting down every culprit



Those responsible for tragedy will not be let off: Rajnath

SAJID RAINA

New Delhi, Nov 11: As the investigations revealed that a doctor from South Kashmir's Pulwama district was driving the explosive laden car that killed more than 10 persons near Red Fort in Delhi on Monday evening, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) handed over the case to National Investigation Agency for probe.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir New Observer (KNO), the case was given to NIA under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the Explosive Substances Act, and sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita related to murder and conspiracy.

An official said that the investigators have traced



the car, a white Hyundai i20, to Dr Umar Mohammad, a Pulwama-based medical professional. "Preliminary

findings suggest that Dr. Umar drove the vehicle laden with Ammonium Nitrate Fuel Oil (ANFO) and detonators

before it exploded near the Red Fort," he added. "His remains are believed to be among those recovered

from the site. DNA samples from his family were collected in Pulwama to confirm his identity," the official said.

Pertinently, a few days before the blast, J&K, Haryana and UP Police had recovered a major cache of explosives, nearly 2,900 kg during a raid in Faridabad. Two Kashmiri-origin doctors were detained from Al Falah University in connection with that operation. "Dr Umar was associated with those arrested and may have gone ahead with the attack fearing imminent arrest," said an official.

Security agencies have detained another doctor, Dr Sajad Ahmad Malla from Pulwama, for questioning. Several others affiliated with Al Falah University have also been taken into custody. Searches | [More on P6](#)

LG Sinha reviews J&K security, chairs high-level meet



Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Nov 11: A day after a car bomb blast killed eight people near Red Fort in New Delhi, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday chaired a high-level meeting here to review the security situation and operational preparedness in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), was held in the backdrop of the blast in the national capital

and the recent recovery of explosives and arms from JeM and AGH terror module comprising of doctors. "Chaired a high-level security review meeting in Srinagar, earlier today," LG Sinha wrote on X.

The meeting was attended by the Secretary, Home Department, Chandrakar Bharti, Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat, Special DGP S J M Gillani, ADGP CID Nitish Kumar and IGP Kashmir Zone V K Birdi. The | [More on P6](#)

J&K leaders, trade bodies condemn Red Fort Blast LG, CM, LoP, others express grief; jailed MP Rashid announces hunger strike

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Nov 11: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and political, religious and trade leaders on Tuesday strongly condemned the devastating car blast near Delhi's historic Red Fort.

The attack, which claimed 13 lives and left many injured, has been termed "a cowardly and inhuman act" aimed at disturbing peace and harmony in the country.

As per the details obtained by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Lieutenant Governor Manoj

Sinha, in a post on X, said: "Extremely pained by the loss of lives in a blast in Delhi. My thoughts are with the bereaved families. I pray that the injured recover soon."

The Office of Chief Minister J&K, Omar Abdullah, also posted on X: "The Chief Minister has expressed deep shock over the blast in Delhi close to the Red Fort, which has claimed several lives and left many injured. He extended his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured."

J&K Leader | [More on P6](#)

Security beefed up in Kashmir Northern Army Commander visits forward areas, reviews operational readiness

Umair Gull Ganie

Srinagar, Nov 11: Following a car bomb blast near Red Fort in New Delhi, which left more than 10 people dead on Monday, authorities on Tuesday beefed up security across Kashmir as a precautionary measure.

A senior security official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that high-tech surveillance equipment was deployed and area domination exercises were carried out by security personnel.

"The security forces have increased frisking, checkpoint surveillance in major



towns and along highways. Sensitive areas in Kashmir are witnessing enhanced security, vehicle checks, security cordons and search operations," the official said.

He said a strict vigil is being maintained on anti-national elements. Checkpoints have been established in Srinagar and other district headquarters. | [More on P6](#)

J&K districts directed to maintain maximum alertness

Sajid Raina

Srinagar/Jammu, Nov 11: A day after a car bomb blast near Red Fort in New Delhi left more than ten persons dead, authorities on Tuesday sounded a high alert in Jammu and Kashmir.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that all districts have been asked to maintain maximum alertness, especially border

regions and main cities.

He said that security checks have been increased along highways, railway stations, religious sites, and public gatherings, including the Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine and Katra.

The official said that the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway is witnessing strict vehicle screening, while in Pulwama, Special Operations Group (SOG) teams have been conducting | [More on P6](#)

By-elections: Budgam records 50.01% voter turnout, Nagrota 74.82%

Budgam set for close finish; Devyani dominates Nagrota battle

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Nov 11: The by-elections in Jammu & Kashmir recorded an impressive turnout on Tuesday, with the Budgam Assembly segment registering a moderate 50.01 percent turnout and Nagrota recording a high 74.82 percent turnout.

According to official figures released by the Election Commission of India (ECI), the 27-Budgam segment recorded a turnout of 50.01%, while the 77-Nagrota constituency saw 74.82% voter participation.

"As per data received till 7:30 PM, 27-Budgam Assembly Constituency has recorded a turnout of 50.01%



and 77-Nagrota Assembly Constituency has recorded 74.82%," said Joint Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, Anil

Salgotra, as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

He added | [More on P6](#)

2 elections in 13 months, Budgam votes in frustration

KNO Correspondent

The patience of voters was tested on Tuesday as the Budgam Assembly segment went for polling once again for the second time in the span of 13 months, with many voters describing the by-elections as 'unfortunate'. The majority of voters who had turned out at the polling stations today told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO)—that the people across | [More on P6](#)

Sgr, Anantnag GMCs order locker labeling by Nov 14 after AK-47 recovery

'Unmarked lockers at SMHS, other hospitals to be removed after verification'
Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Nov 11: Following the recovery of an AK-47 rifle from a locker at Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag, authorities at GMC Srinagar and GMC Jammu have issued strict directions for all doctors, paramedical staff, and students.

As per separate directives issued by the Administrator of GMC Srinagar and the Medical Superintendent of GMC Anantnag, doctors, students, and staff have been asked to personally identify and label



their lockers with their name, designation, and code by November 14, 2025.

"It is impressed upon all faculty members, heads of departments, paramedical staff, and students to personally identify their lockers and label them with their name, designation, and code. This exercise should

be completed by the 14th of November, 2025. After that, the Medical Superintendents of Govt SMHS Hospital Srinagar, the RMO's of respective floors, and the Estates cum Transport Officer of GMC Srinagar will carry out inspections and sort out extra surplus lockers that are unnecessarily occupying space in hospital corridors and medical college building corridors at various locations," reads a circular issued by the Administrator of GMC Srinagar, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

"No chance will be given to any employee to claim any locker that is not identified after the specified period," it further states.

The Section | [More on P6](#)

Ventilator shortage hits Kashmir's Super Speciality Hospital; patients face hardships Govt in process of procuring more machines: Medical Superintendent

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Nov 11: The severe dearth of ventilators at Kashmir's super specialty hospital in Srinagar is leaving patients high and dry, with several high-risk patients asked by the hospital authorities to defer surgeries due to the unavailability of ventilators.

According to details obtained by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), in Srinagar's Super Speciality

Hospital, run under Government Medical College Srinagar, several surgeries have been postponed due to a lack of ventilators, causing severe hardships to the patients.

In the past month, many patients prepared for their scheduled surgeries and arrived at the hospital on the appointed date, only to be told at the last minute that their surgeries could not be performed because the ICU was occupied and ventilators were unavailable.

"We have been coming here since yesterday. Twice, we were told ventilators are available, but when we arrived, the OPD was full. After a while, they said, 'Wait, if a ventilator becomes available, you will get your turn.' We came at 7 a.m., but by 3 p.m., they were still telling us there were no ventilators available," said a patient hailing from central Kashmir. "I am just a single patient, and at this specialty hospital—especially for critical patients—those who



need ventilators should be given priority. But ventilators are still not available."

Another aggrieved patient said he visited the hospital four times in the last 15 days, and every time he was told to come back tomorrow or the day after.

"How can one predict when someone will need a ventilator in an emergency? The hospital reportedly has only four ventilators. When we went in the morning, as soon as we mentioned the ventilator, we were

told it wasn't available. At the very least, the administration should be informed of this situation," he said.

Dr Rubina Shaheen, Medical Superintendent of the Super Speciality Hospital, when contacted, told KNO that for serious emergencies, the hospital never refuses ventilator support. "In all emergencies, ventilator support is provided when needed. However, for elective surgeries, we have to schedule based on ventilator | [More on P6](#)

DC Kulgam for expediting ongoing health projects



KT NEWS DESK

KULGAM, NOVEMBER 11: To ensure better health-care facilities in the district, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan Tuesday visited District Hospital (DH) Kulgam to take stock of ongoing health projects and patient care services. During the visit, the DC expressed satisfaction over the progress of the 50-bedded Emergency Critical Care Unit, and also reviewed the additional block for maternity and child health, renovation and upgradation of the main hospital building, new ticketing counter-cum-waiting area, and the development of additional car parking space. The DC conducted a detailed review of hospital functioning by visiting various IPD wards, where he interacted with patients

and enquired about the facilities being provided. He directed the executing agency to expedite the remaining work of the old hospital building so that it can be fully utilized for patients at the earliest. It was informed that the hospital infrastructure has been significantly upgraded, including the installation of a digital X-ray plant, anesthesia station, orthopedic surgery theatre, and machinery for the dialysis centre. It was also shared that a dedicated mortuary area has been completed. The DC was accompanied by ADC, Viqar Ahmed Giri; ACR, Riyaz Ahmad Shah; CMO, Dr. Showkat Ahmad; Medical Superintendent, Dr. Syed Masood; EXen R&B, Shabir Ahmad Tak; AEE R&B, CEO MC Kulgam, and the administrative staff of District Hospital Kulgam.

NH expansion will boost trade, tourism in J&K: Dy CM

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 11: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat here Tuesday, to review the progress of ongoing and upcoming National Highway projects across Jammu region. The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, PWD, Anil Kumar Singh; Engineer-in-Chief PW(R&B), Director Geology and Mining, Regional Officer NHAI J&K, Chief Engineer Project SAMPARK, Regional Officer MoRTH Jammu, Executive Directors NHIDCL Jammu and Srinagar, and Chief Engineer PWD Zone Pir Panjal, besides senior engineers and officers of the department. During the review, the Deputy Chief Minister took a comprehensive assessment of projects being implemented by various central agencies like NHAI, NHIDCL, and Project SAMPARK. The officers presented detailed updates on the physical and financial progress of projects, issues related to land acquisition, DPR approvals, utility shifting, and inter-departmental coordination. The Deputy Chief Minister reviewed projects including Lakhampur-Srinagar (NH-44), Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway (NH-5), Jammu Ring Road (NH-244A), Srinagar Ring Road (Phase-I, II & IIA), Chenani-Patni-top-Nashri (Old Alignment) NH-244, Jammu-Akhnoor (NH-44) and Chenani-Sudhmahadev, Goha-Khellani, and Chatroo-Khanabal (NH-244A). It was informed that a total of 37 projects under NHAI, 8 under Project SAMPARK, and 14 under NHIDCL Jammu are presently under different stages of execution in the Jammu province, while several others have already been completed.



The Deputy Chief Minister expressed satisfaction over the pace of certain works but emphasized the need to expedite all ongoing projects to ensure their timely completion. He directed all executing agencies to strictly adhere to the set timelines and maintain the highest standards of design and construction quality. He reiterated that the Government is fully committed to upgrading the road infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir, ensuring smooth connectivity and promoting regional development. While reviewing the status of the Mangam-Dodhpatri-Shopian-Surankote section of NH-701A, being executed by Project SAMPARK, the Deputy Chief Minister instructed the concerned agencies to expedite the remaining works and resolve issues related to DPR modifications and Treasury releases at the earliest. He asserted that work on all roads, tunnels and bridge projects be expedited across all highway projects to ensure timely completion of these projects. The meeting also discussed the Srinagar Ring Road Phase-IIA project from Manigam to Pandach, directing the concerned to fast-track

compensation processes to avoid delays in execution. He further underscored the importance of inter-agency coordination between PW(R&B), NHAI, NHIDCL, and MoRTH for overcoming procedural bottlenecks. He instructed officers to adopt a proactive approach in identifying field-level issues and resolving them promptly in consultation with the concerned departments. Deputy Chief Minister stated that the expansion and upgradation of national highways will not only strengthen connectivity within Jammu and Kashmir but also boost trade, tourism, and socio-economic growth in the Union Territory. The Deputy Chief Minister also took detailed assessment of restoration work of roads, bridges and other connectivity in Jammu. He called upon concerned to ensure speedy restoration of all affected infrastructure for public convenience. He appreciated the efforts of engineers and field officers while urging them to redouble their efforts in delivering results that reflect efficiency, accountability, and excellence in execution.

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GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR (UT) DEPARTMENT OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS J&K OFFICE OF THE WARDEN GUJJAR AND BAKARWAL BOYS HOSTEL BANDIPORA

Subject: Admission Notification for the Session 2025-26 - Extension in last date of form submission thereof.

PUBLIC NOTICE

In continuation to this office Admission Notification No.GBBH/Bpr/2025/109-114 dated 27-10-2025, The last date for submission of admission forms in Gujjar & Bakarwal Boys Hostel, Bandipora, is hereby extended upto Monday, 17th November, 2025.

Warden Gujjar & Bakarwal Boys Hostel
Bandipora

Contact no: 7889655252/7889317832

No: Gbh/bpr/25/131-35

Date: 10-11-2025

DIPK-7985/25

DATED: 11-11-2025

Budgam Bye-elections DEO inspects various Polling Stations

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 11: District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat Tuesday visited several polling stations across 27-Assembly Constituency Budgam to take firsthand assessment of the polling process during the ongoing Bye-Elections. During the visit, the DEO inspected polling stations at Sheikhpora, Ompora, Main Budgam Town and various other locations to review the arrangements, voter turnout, and overall conduct of polling. The DEO expressed satisfaction over the smooth and peaceful polling process and appreciated the efforts of polling personnel, security forces, and sectoral officers and zonal police officers in ensuring a well-coordinated and secure electoral exercise. "Polling is going on smoothly across all polling stations in the constituency. We are committed to ensuring free, fair, transparent, and inclusive elections," said the DEO. He added that special efforts were made to encourage higher voter turnout through continuous voter awareness and facilitation measures. He also interacted with voters, polling staff, and security personnel to take feedback regarding facilities



and arrangements at the polling stations. The District Election Officer commended the cooperation of citizens and urged all eligible voters to come forward and exercise their right to vote, strengthening the democratic fabric of the nation. The DEO reiterated the district

administration's commitment to uphold the sanctity of the electoral process and ensure a comfortable and accessible voting experience for all, including women, senior citizens, and persons with special abilities. Besides, ASP Budgam, Syed Sajjad Bukhari, other concerned officers also accompanied the DEO.

National Education Day DLSA Sgr organizes awareness programme

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 11: The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar organized a Legal Awareness Programme on the Right to Education on the eve of National Education Day in collaboration with the Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Forum J&K at the premises of Foundation World School, Illahi Bagh. The programme was held under the chairmanship of Chairman, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Principal District & Sessions Judge, Srinagar, Tasleem Arief and under the supervision of Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, Sajad Ur Rehman, who also graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The programme featured insightful addresses from speakers, who spoke on various dimensions of the Right to Education and its significance in empowering future generations. In his address, Sub-Judge/Secretary DLSA Srinagar, highlighted the key provisions of the Right to Education (Amendment) Act, 2002, which inserted Article 21-A into the Constitution of India, guaranteeing free and compulsory education to all children between the

ages of six and fourteen as a Fundamental Right. This awareness initiative not only reaffirmed the commitment towards the promotion of education but also resonated with the vision of the National Education Policy, emphasizing inclusive, accessible, and quality education for all.



The programme was attended by Chairman of Foundation World School, Faizan Ul Islam; President of Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Forum, Mudassir Ahmad Naikoo, students, teachers, staff members, and Para Legal Volunteers of DLSA Srinagar.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir. Office of the Divisional Forest Officer Social Forestry Division Pulwama.

e- NIT NO:- 06 OF 2025-26 DATED:- 10-11-2025

For and on behalf of the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, e-tenders are invited from approved and eligible contractors registered with Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir Govt./Central Govt. Organizations for the following works:-

S.NO	NAME OF WORK	ADV. COST (Rs. In lacs)	EARNEST MONEY (Rs. In Lacs)	CLASS OF CON- TRACTOR	Cost of Tender Document. (Rs)	TIME OF COMPLETION	Receiving/ Opening Committee.
1	Development of Bio Diversity Park at IUST Awantipora. Social Forestry Division Pulwama.	28.11	0.5622	"AAY" & B	Rs. 1100/=	2 Working Season.	Tender Opening Committee

The e-NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bills of quantities, (B.O.Q) set of Terms & Conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Website:- www.jktenders.gov.in.

Scheme:- Capex.

Position of Funds: Budgeted.

Position of AA/TS: Accorded.

Publishing Date:-	11-11-2025 from 9.00 AM
Download Start Date:-	11-11-2025 from 9.00 AM
Bid submission Start Date:-	11-11-2025 from 9.00 AM
Bid submission End Date:-	20-11-2025 Up to 06.00 PM
Date of Opening of Technical Bid Online.	21-11-2025 at 10:00 AM in the office of the Regional Director Kashmir Rajbagh Srinagar.
Date of Opening of Financial Bid Online:-	To be Notified Separately

NO:-DFO/SF/PUL/Plg/270-75
Dated:-10-11-2025

DIPK-7970/25
DATED: 11-11-2025

Divisional Forest Officer,
Social Forestry Division,
Pulwama.

GOVT. OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR (UT) Office of the District- Youth Services and Sports Officer Baramulla

Subject: Invitation of Quotations for Supply of Hydraulic Roller

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed quotations are hereby invited from registered and authorized dealers/suppliers for the supply and delivery of a Hydraulic Pitch Roller required by the District Youth Services & Sports Officer, The quotations should clearly mention the rates on an FOR (Free on Road) basis in favour of the District Youth Services & Sports Officer, Baramulla.

Since the said item is not available on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) Portal, procurement shall be carried out through offline mode, strictly in accordance with the financial norms and procedures in vogue. Interested dealers/suppliers possessing valid registration. GST. PAN. and other requisite documents may submit their sealed quotations in the office of the undersigned on or before 18-11-2025 up to 4:00 PM. Quotations received after the prescribed date and time shall not be entertained. Dealers are also requested to submit any queries or clarifications regarding the specifications or terms and conditions in hard copy to this office within the stipulated period.

Technical Specifications of Hydraulic Pitch Roller:

A ride-on hydraulic pitch roller is a self-propelled, operator-seated compaction machine weighing about 1.5 tonnes, powered by an 8-16 HP diesel engine, equipped with smooth steel drums and hydraulic transmission for forward and reverse movement, designed for efficient rolling of sports pitches and small grounds.

Term and conditions:

- The quotation shall be accompanied by copies of valid registration, GST, and PAN certificates.
 - The quoted rates shall be inclusive of all taxes, transportation, and installation charges.
 - The item must conform strictly to the specifications mentioned above.
 - The supply shall be completed within 15 days from the date of issuance of supply order.
 - Payment shall be made only after satisfactory delivery, installation, and verification of the item.
 - The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all quotations without assigning any reason thereof.
- For any further clarification, interested dealers may contact the office of the undersigned during working hours.

DIPK-7965/25
DATED: 11-11-2025

District Youth Services & Sports Officer Baramulla

Budgam By-Polls

Spiritual tide sways ballot between NC & PDP

OWAIS GUL

Budgam, Nov 11: A unique display of democracy was witnessed on Tuesday during the polling day in Budgam, where spiritual affiliations appeared to dominate the scene and influence voters' choices in this crucial contest between the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the ruling National Conference (NC).

Outside the polling station at the Government Boys Higher Secondary School in the main town of Budgam, some youth were seen discussing the mood of voters during the bye-election today.

The young voters said that the voter turnout seemed lower today compared to previous elections, but for them, casting their ballot was always mandatory to ensure their candidate's victory. "We have spiritual



affiliations with the candidate, and thus it becomes mandatory for us to vote for him in any way," Adil Hussain, a voter, told KNO. He added that they have never wasted their vote but

always stood in the queue to cast their ballots. "This time too, we have turned up at the polling booth to make our candidate win," he said.

Imran Ahmad, another voter,

echoed similar views and said that spiritual affiliations would never allow them to stay away from the polls. "Since our leader and Member of Parliament Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi is not in the race this time, the direct contest in Budgam is between NC's Aga Mehmood and PDP's Aga Muntazir. Both are spiritual leaders and have a massive following. Thus, the majority of voters with spiritual affiliations to both of them have been turning out at the polling stations just to ensure their leaders' victory," he explained.

Ahmad further said that in the main two areas of Budgam, the contest is not really between NC and PDP, but between the spiritual leaders. "We are not casting our ballots for any party but voting in favour of our

leaders," Ahmad added.

However, a group of youth, joining Imran and Adil, expressed hope that this vote would change the scenario of the Budgam constituency. "We have been pinning hopes on multiple issues related to development. Therefore, it is expected that our votes will change our destiny," he said.

Pertinently, the bye-election for the Budgam Assembly Constituency was held today, with 17 candidates in the electoral fray. The seat fell vacant after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who had won from two seats in the 2024 assembly elections, retained the Ganderbal seat.

Omar Abdullah had secured 35,804 votes, against 17,445 votes for PDP candidate Aga Syed Muntazir Mehdi, out of a total of 1.25 lakh votes—(KNO)

MP Ruhullah skips voting

NAVEED UL HAQ GANAIE

Budgam, Nov 11: Member of Parliament from Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency, Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, on Tuesday, skipped voting in the by-elections for the Budgam Assembly segment.

Ruhullah, who decided to stay away from campaigning for the National Conference (NC) candidate Aga Mehmood in the by-elections, is presently in Germany.

A Facebook page in the name of Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi shared a couple of pictures of the incumbent parliamentarian meeting top German officials during his visit to Germany.

His visit to Germany comes at a time when



his home constituency is undergoing by-elections today. The seat fell vacant after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who won from two seats in the 2022 elections, decided to retain the Ganderbal seat.

Showing differences with the party, Ruhullah had clearly refused to campaign for the party candidate. However, he had stated that he would vote on polling day but wouldn't campaign for anyone—(KNO)

Soibug residents vote for development

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Budgam, Nov 11: As freezing winds swept across Budgam, voters in Soibug and nearby areas came out in good numbers today, determined to make their voices heard.

At Polling Station 44, Soibug-D, set up at the Government Middle School Bonpora, queues of men and women were seen since early morning. Despite the sub-zero temperatures, the mood remained upbeat.

"We have voted many times, but this time we want real work on the ground, roads, water and power," said Abdul Rashid, a local resident of Soibug said.

Young voters also joined their elders, hoping for a change. "Our

generation wants to see visible progress, not just speeches. We want clean water and proper electricity," said a first-time voter.

At the Community Hall polling station in Budgam town, similar scenes were witnessed. "Every election brings promises, but now it is our turn to remind them what we need," said another voter while waiting to cast his ballot.

Moreover, polling throughout the day remained peaceful and well-organised, with security forces ensuring its smooth conduct. Meanwhile, eyewitnesses from Budgam said there was a good pace of voting in the morning, a dip during the day, and renewed momentum in the evening as residents lined up again.

Youth vote for change

Say deprived of basic facilities in last 6 decades

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Budgam, Nov 11: Unlike the previous elections, Soibugh, the ancestral village of Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin, has once again witnessed a high voter turnout, with people coming out to cast their ballots for a change and the development of the region.

A similar high voter turnout was recorded for the first time in the 2024 elections.

Voters who had turned up at the polling station today said that the village has decided to vote for change this time to witness development on the ground.

Shaheen Ahmad Shah, 36, who voted today, said that he exercised his franchise to bring about change and pave the way for development here. "Boycotting in the past has

not benefited us anyway. We have been pushed to the wall so far. Nobody has listened to us in the last 60 years," Shah said, adding that the situation is quite tough in the village, as residents are even being deprived of basic facilities.

"In this modern era, we are lacking even the basic facilities. We have no playground, no Degree College, no proper road connectivity in this village," the voter said. He added that their lanes and by-lanes have been macadamized for the first time after 2019; otherwise, the interiors have never been blacktopped, Shah said.

Muhammad Shafi Khan, an ex-Panch and voter, also echoed similar views, saying that the village has been facing electricity issues, and the faulty drainage system has been leaving residents in

a lurch. He added that the land of locals is being snatched in the name of the Hokersar wetland, and therefore, choosing the right candidate at this time could bring them at least some relief.

"Our vote is for change and development," Khan said, adding that they have been completely ignored over the last several decades. "Such is the situation that the Public Health Centre (PHC), established in 1965, has not been upgraded. Even the PHC lacks equipment and proper manpower, which forces residents to visit health facilities outside Soibugh for a mere checkup."

Expressing their faith in the local independent candidate, the voters hoped that their demands would be fulfilled if their candidate emerged victorious—(KNO)

'Leaders only remember us at election time'

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Budgam, Nov 11: In the main town of Budgam, voters at multiple blocks and polling stations voiced strong anger over what they called "seasonal politics." Residents said leaders and political parties only appear when it is time to seek votes and disappear once the elections are over.

Many voters expressed frustration, saying even the Chief Minister's visit was limited to campaigning. They also said they demanded consistent attention and real development throughout the year.

"Every election we see the same faces returning for campaigns, but once the results are out, they

disappear," said Abdul Majid, a resident of main town Budgam, who cast his ballot around noon.

He said they need leaders who visit even when there are no elections and when people actually need them.

Locals also questioned the absence of senior politicians from the area in the past. "Since Ruhullah represented this seat, no leader and even the Chief Minister has ever visited us. Now that elections are here, everyone suddenly finds time to campaign," said Suhail, another resident of Budgam.

He added that even the CM came only for campaigning, not for the people. Another young voter, Mehran, said, "We need someone who listens to us and addresses our daily issues

like power, water and jobs not just speeches during campaigns."

Several other voters shared similar sentiments, saying the sudden political attention felt "too late." "We want leaders who engage with us after the elections, not just for photos and promises," said one of them.

He added, "If they truly cared, our basic issues would have been solved long ago." Despite the frustration, turnout remained well as voters said casting their ballots was their only way to push for accountability. "We can't stay silent anymore," said Shabir, another resident, adding that their vote is a reminder that Budgam deserves equal attention like any other district—(KNO)

Women call for change in Narbal, Soibug

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Budgam, Nov 11: At the polling stations of Government Girls Higher Secondary School Narbal and Government Middle School Check Soibug in Budgam district, a strong voter turnout was recorded, particularly among women.

They said they were casting their ballots not just for a day's verdict, but for their families' future.

Shazia, a voter from Narbal, while standing in queue at the Higher Secondary School Narbal said that she voted hoping her families members could find a job and stay instead of leaving home. "We want power that works, not smart meters that cost more and deliver less," she said.

Another voter, Ruqaya, said they are tired of being ignored after every election. "We want opportunities, water, electricity and some relief. Our votes reflect

that hope," she added.

Women at the Government Middle School Check Soibug echoed similar concerns. Mehmooda, another voter, said, "I came out with my family to vote because we believe this time our voices will count and that our vote will mean jobs for our loved ones, lower electricity bills and that basic things will finally get fixed."

Among the queues were young female voters who said they came out to vote for change. "We have voted before, but this time we are doing it with real hope for change," one of them said.

It is worth mentioning that women voters were also seen turning out in good numbers across other parts of Budgam including Ompura, Main Town, Soibug, Nasrullah Pora and Narbal, where long queues of women were seen patiently waiting to cast their ballots—(KNO)

Historic low in outdoor saffron production: Growers

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Pampore, Nov 11: In what has been described as one of the worst years for saffron cultivation in decades, growers across the Pampore belt — the heartland of Kashmir's saffron — say that both outdoor and indoor production have been severely affected due to poor-quality corms and erratic weather conditions.

Saffron farmers said that this year's outdoor yield has been alarmingly low — the lowest in several decades. Compounding their woes, many could not even switch to indoor saffron cultivation, which has emerged in recent years as an alternative to overcome unpredictable climatic patterns.

"We were hopeful that indoor cultivation would help us recover from the losses caused by erratic weather, but unfortunately, there were no quality corms available this



season," said Ghulam Nabi, a saffron grower from Lethpora. "The corms available in the market were of poor quality, and planting them would have meant wasting both money and effort."

Another grower, Abdul Ahad from Khrew, said that the prolonged dry spell during summer, followed by untimely rains, affected the soil fertility and the overall health of the

saffron corms. "Our corms have lost their vigour. They are getting smaller and weaker every year. Without good-quality corms, both outdoor and indoor cultivation are becoming impossible," he said.

The farmers also voiced concern over the large-scale selling of saffron corms outside the valley, which they believe has contributed to the shortage

and deterioration of quality. "The government has stopped the sale, and there is a need for stricter action to fully stop the sale of corms outside Kashmir. These corms are part of our heritage and economy — their outflow will only accelerate the decline of this industry," said Manzoor Ahmad, another cultivator from Chandhara. Experts have repeatedly

warned that without timely intervention, the traditional saffron cultivation — already hit by climate change, urban encroachment, and poor irrigation — could face irreversible decline.

Growers are urging the government to establish dedicated corm multiplication centres and research units to improve corm quality and ensure their local availability. "If steps are not taken now, saffron, which once brought global recognition to Kashmir, will soon become just a memory," said a local saffron association member.

Kashmir's saffron industry, centred around Pampore and its adjoining areas, once produced around 16 metric tonnes annually. However, the figure has steadily declined in recent years, leaving thousands of families struggling to sustain their livelihood—(KNO)

Police arrest 4 drug peddlers

KNO

Srinagar, Nov 11: Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drug abuse from the society, Police on Tuesday said to have arrested four drug peddlers in Kulgam and Awantipora including a Nepali national.

Police in Kulgam intercepted a vehicle at Alstop Chowk, Mir Bazar, and recovered charas weighing 1.100 kilograms from its luggage compartment, a police spokesman said in a statement.

During the checking, a Nepal national, identified as Lalit Giri son of Narender Giri resident of Jajhar Kote, Nepal, was found in possession of the contraband substance. He was traveling in a vehicle bearing registration number JK07-5482, driven by Asad Ullah son of Mohd Qasim resident of Kargil. The accused was arrested and the vehicle used in the commission of the crime has also been seized, police said.

Accordingly, police said that a case under FIR number 239/2025 under sections 8/20 of the NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Qazigund, and further investigation has been taken up to identify the backward and forward linkages of the drug network.

"Preliminary investigation revealed that the Nepal national had entered India about six days ago, procured the contraband from an area in Shimla, and was enroute to Ladakh for drug peddling purposes. Investigation in the matter is still going on," police said.



In Awantipora, a Police team of Police Station Pampore at a checkpoint established at Laterbal near Gas Plant, Pampore arrested three drug peddlers identified as Ashfaq Ahmad Khanday son of Ghulam Qadir resident of Wuyan, Muhammad Maqbool Rather son of Abdul Ahad resident of Pustona Tral and Abid Hussain Khan son of Nazir Ahmad Khan resident of Larow, Tral, police said.

During the search, police recovered 725 grams of Bung Chura and 25 grams of Charas-like substance from their possession. Accordingly, police said that a case under FIR number 119/2025 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Pampore.

Meanwhile, J&K Police urged the community members to come forward with any information regarding drug peddling or related activities—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

A Digital Leap Towards Transparent Governance

The proposal for a Single Window Digital System for framing recruitment rules marks a transformative step in Jammu and Kashmir's governance reforms. This initiative, spearheaded by Minister Satish Sharma, represents exactly the kind of administrative modernisation that can fundamentally alter the relationship between citizens and their government. For decades, recruitment processes have been plagued by delays, opacity, and bureaucratic hurdles that not only hindered efficient governance but also eroded public trust. The existing multi-layered, paper-based system created

unnecessary complexity that often left positions vacant for years and opened the door to discretionary practices. The new digital portal, with its standardised templates and simultaneous routing to concerned departments, addresses these structural weaknesses with technological precision. What makes this initiative particularly commendable is its comprehensive approach. The integration with E-Office, capacity building for nodal officers, and most importantly, the public reference view demonstrate a holistic understanding of administrative reform. By allowing citizens to access approved

recruitment rules online, the government is practising the transparency it preaches, enabling public scrutiny that serves as the best check against arbitrary decisions. The defined timelines - 30 days for proposal submission and 10 days for each department's processing - introduce much-needed accountability into a system where files often moved at a glacial pace. The real-time monitoring and escalation mechanisms will ensure that delays cannot be easily buried in bureaucratic paperwork. In a region where unemployment remains a critical challenge, this system could significantly accelerate the

filling of vacant positions, bringing relief to thousands of job seekers. More importantly, it establishes a culture of efficiency and accountability that could inspire similar reforms across other governance sectors. The government deserves full credit for this forward-looking initiative that balances technological innovation with administrative pragmatism. As this system becomes operational, it could well become a model for other states to emulate, proving that good governance is not just about policies but about the systems that implement them.

Redefining India's Highways

Driving Innovation, Delivering Connectivity

Press Information Bureau

Paving the way for New-Age Highways

In the age of digital revolution, India's highways are no longer just stretches of asphalt and concrete; they are evolving into intelligent backbones of mobility and data, enabling seamless transport and real-time information flow. The vision of smart networks is reshaping how we travel, transport goods, manage tolls, and even access the internet on the move. Once seen merely as physical connectors between cities and states, the country's highways are now being reimagined as smart corridors of connectivity and control, designed not just for vehicles, but for data, communication, and real-time decision-making.

The scale of this transformation is as vast as the network itself. As of March 2025, India's road network stands at more than 63 lakh kilometres, the second largest in the world. Within this, the National Highway network has grown to 1,46,204 kilometres, up from 91,287 kilometres in 2013-14, a remarkable increase of about 60%. Between 2014 and 2025 alone, the country has added 54,917 kilometres of new national highways, a feat that reflects not only construction prowess but also a pressing need for digitally enabled management and monitoring of such a massive asset. In a sweeping move to enhance efficiency and streamline operations, the government has adopted a comprehensive 360-degree digital transformation across all major phases of a highway project's lifecycle. From planning and detailed project reports (DPR) to construction, maintenance, tolling, and network upgradation, core processes are being streamlined to enhance system performance and promote ease of doing business.

Digital Tolling & Payment Reforms

From paper tickets and cash booths to seamless, sensor-driven travel, India's national highways are undergoing a quiet revolution. In a bid to cut down on wait times, reduce fuel wastage, and plug revenue leakages, the country has been steadily overhauling its toll collection system with digital-first solutions.

One Tag, All Roads: FASTag and NETC Powering Toll Payments

To streamline toll collection across India's highways, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has developed the National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC) program, a unified, interoperable platform for electronic toll payments. The system facilitates smooth transactions through a centralized clearing house for settlements and dispute resolution.

At the core of NETC is FASTag, a Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) based device affixed to a vehicle's windscreen. It allows toll payments to be made automatically from the user's linked account without stopping at the plaza. With standardised processes and specifications, FASTag ensures that commuters can use a single tag at any toll booth across the country, regardless of the operator managing the toll plaza. With a penetration rate of approximately 98% and more than 8 crore users, FASTag has transformed the Electronic Toll Collection system across the country.

Offering a hassle-free way to travel across India's highways is the FASTag Annual Pass. Designed for non-commercial vehicles, the pass provides unlimited convenience with a one-time payment of 3,000, valid for one year or 200 toll plaza crossings across 1,150 toll plazas on National Highways and Expressways. Activated within two hours via the Rajmargyatra app or NHAI website, the pass eliminates frequent recharges, ensuring a seamless and efficient travel experience for highway users.

The FASTag Annual Pass, crossed the benchmark of twenty-five lakh users with around 5.67 crore transactions recorded in two months after its launch on 15th August



2025 across the country, reflecting strong demand for hassle-free toll payments.

To push digital payments and reduce cash transactions at toll plazas, the government has amended the National Highways Fee Rules, 2008, effective November 15, 2025. Under the revised rules, non-FASTag users paying tolls in cash will be charged double the standard fee, while those opting for UPI payments will pay 1.25 times the toll amount. The aim is to streamline toll collection, cut down congestion, and promote greater transparency and ease of commuting on National Highways.

In August 2025, India launched its first Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF) tolling system at Choryasi Fee Plaza on NH-48 in Gujarat, a barrier-free, camera- and RFID-based setup that reads FASTag and vehicle numbers in motion. The system allows seamless toll collection without stopping, cutting congestion, saving fuel, and reducing emissions.

Rajmargyatra: Making Highway Travel Smarter and Smoother

In a move to redefine highway travel across India, the government launched Rajmargyatra, a citizen-centric mobile application aimed at enhancing the overall experience of commuters on national highways. Developed with user convenience at its core, the app is seamlessly integrated with a web-based system for real-time updates and efficient grievance redressal.

Rajmargyatra serves as a digital travel companion, offering a wealth of information such as details about highways, toll plazas, nearby amenities, including petrol pumps, hospitals, EV charging stations, and even live weather updates. This comprehensive data helps citizens make informed travel decisions and plan their journeys more effectively.

To facilitate a smoother driving experience, the app is integrated with FASTag services for hassle-free toll payments and supports multiple languages, ensuring wider accessibility. Prioritizing safety, it also features speed limit alerts and voice assistance, promoting responsible driving habits on long stretches of road.

A standout feature of the platform is its user-friendly complaint system. Travelers can quickly report highway-related issues such as potholes, maintenance concerns, unauthorized structures, or safety hazards by uploading geo-tagged photos or videos and tracking the progress of their complaints. This not only improves accountability but

also enhances transparency in the management of road infrastructure.

The Rajmargyatra app has rapidly gained traction among Indian commuters, climbing to the 23rd spot in the overall rankings on Google Play Store and securing the 2nd spot in the travel category. With over 15 lakh downloads and an impressive user rating of 4.5 stars, the app has emerged as a popular digital tool for highway travelers across the country. In a significant achievement, Rajmargyatra also became the top-performing government app just four days after the launch of the FASTag Annual Pass feature, marking a major accomplishment in its adoption and impact.

NHAI One: Digital Backbone for Highways

To boost operational efficiency and ensure the timely execution of infrastructure projects, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has launched the 'NHAI One' mobile application, a comprehensive platform that streamlines internal processes and enhances on-ground coordination across the national highway network. NHAI One integrates five core areas of NHAI's project operations: Field Staff Attendance, Highway Maintenance, Road Safety Audits, Toilet Maintenance, and Daily Construction Audits via Request for Inspections (RFI). By consolidating these functions into a single digital interface, the app empowers field teams and supervisory personnel to manage tasks more effectively and in real-time.

From Regional Officers (ROs) and Project Directors (PDs) to contractors, engineers, safety auditors, and toilet supervisors at toll plazas, the app enables last-mile users to report, update, and track project-related activities directly from the field. With features like geo-tagging and time-stamping, NHAI One enhances accountability and ensures accurate documentation of on-site progress and compliance. Beyond improving internal efficiency, the app plays a key role in bridging the gap between project execution and public-facing service delivery by enabling faster response to infrastructure issues and smoother implementation of highway development plans.

Mapping India's Highways: The Role of GIS & PM Gati Shakti

Digital maps and spatial intelligence are reshaping how highways are envisioned and built. Behind this change is the powerful synergy between Geographic Information System (GIS) and the Government's flagship initiative, PM Gati Shakti National Master

Key Takeaways

- India's Highways are transforming with the digitization of every phase from planning to tolling, making them both physical and data-driven assets.
- FASTag has revolutionized the country's Electronic Toll Collection system with nearly 98% penetration and over 8 crore users.
- The Rajmargyatra app, with 15 lakh+ downloads is India's top highway travel app enhancing the overall experience of commuters.

Plan (NMP). Fast becoming the digital command centre for infrastructure development in India, especially for highways, the NMP Portal acts as a comprehensive digital atlas for integrated, multimodal connectivity. At its core is a powerful GIS-based platform that hosts over 550 layers of live data, including economic clusters, logistics hubs, social infrastructure, environmental features, and more. With this clarity, road alignments can be planned with minimal disruption, maximum efficiency, and faster clearances.

In a major milestone, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has uploaded and validated the entire National Highway network (~1.46 Lakh kms) onto the GIS-based NMP portal. This marks a crucial shift in how India's highways are planned and executed, from fragmented, paper-based processes to geo-intelligent planning with nationwide visibility.

Technology Driving Intelligent Transport System

When we talk about tech powered corridors, the pavement is only half the story. The other half lies in systems that sense, analyze, enforce, and react, collectively known as Intelligent Transport System (ITS). ITS in India is being implemented primarily through Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) and is gradually being integrated into a broader Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X) communication ecosystem. These systems are designed to significantly reduce road accidents, minimize traffic violations, and accelerate emergency response times.

ATMS has been deployed on major expressways like the Delhi-Meerut Expressway, Trans-Haryana Expressway, and the Eastern Peripheral Expressway, enabling faster incident detection and quicker response times. Importantly, ATMS installation is now a default component in new high-speed NH projects and is also being adapted as standalone systems on key existing corridors, a clear signal that India's roads are shifting to intelligence. On corridors like the Bengaluru-Mysore Expressway, the accident data revealed a significant drop in fatalities post-implementation of the Advanced Traffic Management in July 2024, indicating that smart enforcement is saving lives.

The government is enhancing highway transparency and safety with smart technologies rolling out Project Information Sign Boards featuring QR codes for real-time project details, emergency helplines, and nearby amenities like hospitals, petrol pumps, and e-charging stations, while Network Survey Vehicles (NSVs) equipped with 3D laser systems, 360° cameras, etc. will be deployed across 23 states, covering 20,933 km to automatically detect road defects, ensuring smoother, safer, and more informed travel experiences.

Green Miles Ahead: Commitment to Sustainable Infrastructure

India's commitment to sustainable infrastructure is also reflected in the Green Highways Mission, launched under the Green Highways (Plantation, Transplantation,

Beautification and Maintenance) Policy, 2015. Its objectives include minimising pollution and noise, preventing soil erosion, and generating employment opportunities. In 2023-24, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) planted over 56 lakh saplings, followed by another 67.47 lakh in 2024-25. Together, these efforts have taken the total count of trees planted along national highways to over 4.69 crore since the mission's inception, but the green transformation doesn't stop at plantations.

NHAI has also focused on reviving water bodies along highways. Under Mission Amrit Sarovar, launched in April 2022 with a view to conserve water for the future, it has developed 467 water bodies across India. This initiative has helped restore local ecosystems and provided around 2.4 crore cubic meters of soil for highway construction, leading to an estimated 16,690 crore in cost savings. In 2023-24, NHAI used more than 631 lakh metric tonnes of recycled materials like fly ash, plastic waste, and reused asphalt for building national highways, promoting eco-friendly and sustainable construction.

Beyond Conventional Highways

India's highways are evolving from engines of transport into engines of transformation. What began as a mission to connect cities has grown into an ambitious effort to connect systems, linking people, data, and decisions through a web of smart, sustainable, and digitally empowered infrastructure. The integration of GIS-driven planning, intelligent traffic systems, digital tolling, and citizen-centric apps has turned the highway network into a structure that senses, responds, and learns in real time. Each expressway now doubles as a channel of connectivity and a node of national intelligence, ensuring that mobility in India is not just faster, but safer, cleaner, and more transparent. Every kilometer carries more than traffic; it carries trust, technology, and transformation.

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Rana for establishing Research Centre for regional languages

Inaugurates 2-day conference at University of Jammu

KT News Desk

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 11: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, inaugurated two-day Jammu Language Conference, 'Jammuiet aur Zaban-o-Adab' at University of Jammu here Tuesday.

The event is being organized by the Department of Urdu, University of Jammu, in collaboration with the Himalayan Education Mission, Rajouri.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister commended the Department of Urdu for undertaking the challenging task of organizing a seminar that brings together scholars and enthusiasts of multiple languages.

He emphasized that such academic initiatives play a crucial role in strengthening the region's cultural and linguistic heritage.

He lauded the efforts of the department in uniting experts from diverse linguistic backgrounds and highlighted that platforms like this are essential for enrichment of literary pursuits.



Stressing the importance of institutional support, the Minister advocated for establishment of a Research Centre for all regional languages at the University, aimed at promoting study, documentation and preservation of the region's linguistic diversity.

"The proposed Centre should spearhead research in language development, analysis

and usage across Jammu and Kashmir," he said, underlining the need for systematic approach to linguistic scholarship.

Highlighting Urdu's role as a linguistic bridge across regions, Rana praised the writers and poets of Jammu for capturing the life, culture and natural beauty of the region through their literary works.

He emphasized that every

language requires dedicated cultural and literary initiatives for its propagation and revival, particularly in a region as linguistically diverse as Jammu and Kashmir.

Acknowledging the plurality of languages in Jammu, he noted that the region is home to Bhaderwahi, Gojri, Kishtawari, Pahari, Pogli, Siraji, Gaddi, Kashmiri, Dogri and other dialects, each carrying unique cultural significance.

He added that writers from Jammu have historically played a vital role in documenting local lifestyles, traditions, and natural landscapes.

The Minister also called upon civil society to actively participate in the preservation and promotion of native languages, stressing that community involvement is essential for safeguarding the region's rich linguistic heritage.

Rana also praised the Department of Urdu for successfully initiating a conference on a subject that has received limited attention in the literary history of Jammu and Kashmir and extended his best wishes for the success of the event.

Govt committed to improve rural connectivity: Javid Dar

Lays foundation stones for developmental projects

KT News Desk

BARAMULLA, NOVEMBER 11: In a significant step towards strengthening rural infrastructure and grassroots governance, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperative, and Election departments, Javid Ahmad Dar Tuesday laid foundation stones for multiple developmental projects across various blocks of Baramulla district under the UT Capex and District Capex schemes.

At Nadihal, the Minister laid the foundation stone for the Construction of a Block Development Council Office Building under UT Capex, with an approved cost of Rs 125.16 lac. He also laid the foundation for a Bridge on Nallah Daikal Ladoora, costing Rs 25.00 lac under UT Capex.

During his visit, the Minister addressed the gathering, highlighting the government's commitment to improving rural connectivity and administrative facilities.

At Rohama Block, the Minister laid the foundation stone for the Community Hall cum Multipurpose Centre



at Humdub Panzalla under District Capex/BDC Grants, costing ₹65.00 lac. In Rafiabad Block, he laid the foundation for construction of RCC Box Type Culvert at Budden Saripara under UT Capex, with an estimated cost of ₹32.90 lac. The Minister engaged with local residents, stressing the importance of participatory development and the role of community infrastructure in uplifting rural life.

In Kandi Rafiabad Block, the Minister laid the foundation stones for two key projects, Community Hall at Kangroosa under District Capex/PRI Grants costing ₹80.00 lac, and Block Development Council Office Building at Kangroosa under UT Capex with an approved cost of ₹125.16 lac. Addressing public gatherings at these

sites, the Minister emphasized the government's focus on inclusive growth, better governance, and strengthening rural institutions.

The total investment of over ₹4.5 crore under these projects marks a major boost to public facilities, administrative infrastructure, and connectivity in rural areas of Baramulla.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Sopore, SA Raina and Assistant Commissioner Development Baramulla, Mudasar Hussain Choudhary accompanied the Minister during the visit and briefed him about the progress and expected impact of these developmental projects.

Local residents expressed their gratitude for the government's sustained efforts in promoting inclusive and sustainable development in the district.

DC Kupwara flags off exposure tour for farmers

KT News Desk

KUPWARA, NOVEMBER 11: Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse Tuesday flagged off a group of farmers for an Exposure Tour to SKUAST Wadoora.

The tour which was flagged off from D. C Office Complex here, aimed to provide hands-on training and awareness about the latest technologies in pruning and high-density plantation.

Chief Horticulture Officer (CHO) Kupwara, Sandeep Dubey and officials from Horticulture Department were present on the occasion.

The programme has been organized by the Horticulture Department under the ATMA (Agricultural Technology Management Agency) Scheme, with the objective of upgrading farmers' technical knowledge and promoting modern horticultural practices in the district.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of such exposure visits in enhancing farmers' skills and productivity. He urged the participants to make the most of the training and implement the learned techniques in their orchards to improve yield and quality.

Vande Mataram celebrations continue across Shopian

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 11: In continuation of the ongoing celebrations marking 150 years of National Pride, 'Vande Mataram', a series of events were organized Tuesday across all blocks of District Shopian with great enthusiasm and patriotic zeal.

The events were coordinated by the Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Chief Education Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development, respective BDOs of Ramnagri, Shopian, Kanjulliar, Chitragam, Imamsahib, Zainapora, Kaprin, Keller and Hermain.

Principals and staff of various Higher Secondary Schools took a leading role in organizing activities under the Vande Mataram theme.

Among the Institutions that

actively participated, were HSS Zainapora, HSS Imamsahib, GHSS Shopian, HSS Kellar, HSS Narpora, HSS Hermain, HSS Kaprain, HSS Kanjulliar and HSS Ramnagri. The schools held cleanliness drives, paintings, beautification initiatives around public buildings, walls, main roads, symbolizing respect for the national song and love for the motherland.

Students, teachers, members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions also took part in awareness campaigns and cleanliness drives promoting Swachh Bharat Abhiyan ideals in connection with the celebration. Patriotic songs, speeches, interactive sessions were conducted to educate students and the general public about the historical cultural significance of Vande Mataram in India's freedom struggle and national unity.

Edu-Youth Meet organized at Srinagar

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar delivers address



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 11: Higher Education Department (HED) in collaboration with Youth Services and Sports Department, organized a landmark Edu-Youth Meet aimed at tackling substance abuse and promoting holistic education, at Bakhshi Stadium here.

Over 20,000 students from colleges and universities across Kashmir attended the event, which featured an inspiring address by Spiritual Leader and founder of The Art of Living Foundation, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

The gathering was graced by several MLAs, Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Higher Education, Shantmanu; Vice-Chancellors, Registrars, Directors, Principals, and educators and faculty members of various colleges.

Earlier in the day, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar interacted with Vice-chancellors, Principals,

and Faculty, where the Vice-Chancellor of SKUAST requested the establishment of Art of Living Centres in University campuses to support students dealing with anxiety. Gurudev pledged the Foundation's full support to integrate its wellness and life-skill programmes as co-curricular initiatives across Jammu and Kashmir, emphasizing emotional resilience, mental well-being, and leadership development.

In his powerful address to around 20,000 youth, Gurudev called for collective action to eradicate drug abuse and to reimagine education as a path of love, happiness, and creativity. He urged young people to embrace their cultural heritage while fostering innovation and compassion and living with harmony and purpose.

Highlighting the mental health crisis, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar noted that nearly one-fourth of the global

population suffers from psychological distress and urged mindfulness, meditation, and balanced living as solutions. He invoked Kashmir's spiritual legacy, referencing the Spada Karika and ancient breathing practices, calling for their revival in modern education. Gurudev also proposed teacher and youth training through SKY Clubs, student-led initiatives promoting focus, happiness, and inner stability.

ACS, Higher Education in his address reaffirmed the department's commitment to integrating such programmes into institutions across the UT, fostering a stress-free and value-based learning environment. The event concluded with an interactive session that left students inspired and educators motivated to nurture a peaceful, mindful, and drug-free Kashmir through compassionate, creative, and balanced education.

Div Com Jammu reviews progress of ongoing projects

KT News Desk

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 11: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, Tuesday chaired a meeting to review the progress of the ongoing projects at Mubarak Mandi Heritage Complex.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner JMC, Executive Director Mubarak Mandi Jammu Heritage Society, Director Archives, SSP Jammu, Chief Engineer, PW (R&B) Department Jammu, SE PWD, representatives from NHLML and JK Cable Car Corporation Ltd.

The Divisional Commissioner sought the status of different projects including Multilevel Parking Facility coming up

at the Complex and progress on vertical lift from Peerkho to Mubarak Mandi Heritage Complex. He directed the concerned authorities to float the tender for the proposed flyover bridge, connecting Circular Road near Jullaka Mohalla to the Heritage Complex.

The Divisional Commissioner also reviewed the status of the ongoing projects including conservation of Darbar Hall; Dogra Art Museum, Raja Ram Singh Palace, Raja Amar Singh Palace, Central Courtyard, besides other projects heritage conservation works. The Divisional Commissioner directed for timely completion of all the ongoing projects with coordinated efforts of all concerned departments and agencies.

DIPR Jammu organises cultural events

KT News Desk

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 11: In connection with the celebration of 150 years of the National Pride - "Vande Mataram", the Cultural Unit, Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) Jammu Tuesday organised cultural programmes at Apsara Road and Raghunath Bazar, featuring colourful presentations on themes of unity, integrity and nationalism.

The programmes celebrated the 150 glorious years of the iconic National song "Vande Mataram," a timeless symbol of India's unity, strength, and freedom. The celebrations aimed to reignite the spirit of patriotism and remind citizens

of the enduring legacy of the National song that continues to inspire generations.

Artists from the Cultural Unit DIPR, Jammu presented patriotic songs and theme-based presentations, beautifully capturing the essence of national pride and cultural harmony. The highlight of the event was the collective rendition of "Vande Mataram" by the artists of the Cultural Unit, which resonated with patriotic fervour among the audience.

Adding grandeur to the celebrations, the Jammu and Kashmir Police Band (JKP Band) presented soul-stirring patriotic tunes, evoking a deep sense of national pride and drawing applause from the crowd gathered at the twin venues.

MC Sumbal organizes prog on Waste Composting at SWM plant

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, NOVEMBER 11: Municipal Committee (MC) Sumbal organized a comprehensive Waste Management and Skill Training Programme on Waste Composting at the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Plant, Sumbal, aimed at promoting sustainable waste disposal and eco-friendly composting practices.

The programme witnessed the participation of Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Sumbal; Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) Bandipora, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat (ACP) Bandipora, SDO Sumbal, officials from SKUAST-Kashmir and representatives from Magnite Agri Tech, along with officials from various departments and local stakeholders.

Representative from SKUAST-K delivered an enlightening address on the scientific importance of waste composting and elaborated on the role of Ribozymes in enhancing composting efficiency. He also conducted an on-site demonstration of advanced composting techniques, providing practical insights to participants.

Representative from the SDO Office emphasized the need to promote eco-friendly manures to ensure sustainable agricultural practices, while Assistant Registrar of Cooperative Societies highlighted the crucial role of cooperatives in strengthening community-based waste management systems and the growing significance of organic manure in modern farming practices.

Speaking on the occasion,

the SDM Sumbal lauded the collaborative efforts of all departments, experts, and stakeholders in advancing sustainable waste management initiatives and promoting environmental responsibility at the grassroots level.

Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Sumbal, reiterated the Municipal Committee's commitment to strengthening sustainable waste management systems, promoting organic composting, and fostering a cleaner, greener future for the area.

The event also witnessed active participation from municipal workers, scrap dealers, and other local stakeholders, whose engagement provided valuable on-ground perspectives on practical waste management challenges and solutions.

Fisheries Deptt Kupwara organizes training programme

KT News Desk

KUPWARA, NOVEMBER 11: Department of Fisheries, Kupwara, in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Kupwara, organised a one-day training programme on "Basic Procedures on Management of Cooperatives and Relevant Business Activities."

The training aimed to enhance the managerial and business competencies of fisheries-based Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) for improved governance and sustainability. A total of 30 members representing two fisheries FPOs from across the district participated in the programme.

The event was attended by Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Kupwara, Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad, who in his address, highlighted the importance of cooperatives in promoting self-reliance and inclusive growth among rural



communities. He appreciated the efforts of the Fisheries Department and KVK Kupwara in empowering local fish farmers through training and awareness initiatives.

Speaking on the occasion, Assistant Director Fisheries Kupwara, Dr. Salman Rauoof Chalkoo, underscored the department's commitment to building strong fisheries cooperatives in the district. He encouraged participants to adopt modern management

practices, maintain transparency in operations, and explore new business models for sustained growth. "Our objective is to transform fisheries cooperatives into viable business entities that create livelihood opportunities and strengthen the local economy," he remarked.

Head KVK Kupwara, Dr. Kaiser Malik lauded the joint initiative and emphasised the importance of inter-departmental collaboration for fisheries development. He stated

that regular capacity-building and exposure programmes help entrepreneurs understand both the technical and managerial aspects of cooperative functioning. "Training and innovation are key drivers for transforming fisheries into a profitable and sustainable enterprise," he added.

Experts from both institutions delivered technical sessions on cooperative management, record keeping, marketing strategies, and value addition in fisheries products. The programme concluded with an interactive session where participants shared their experiences and suggestions.

The participants expressed their gratitude to the Department of Fisheries Kupwara and KVK Kupwara for organising such an informative programme and assured that the knowledge gained will be effectively applied to strengthen their respective FPOs.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, VC CUK, trade bodies' delegations call on LG Sinha

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Nov 11: Renowned spiritual teacher, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday.

Prof. A Ravindra Nath, Vice Chancellor, Central University of Kashmir called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

A delegation of Traders Association Central Lal Chowk, Srinagar led by its President Feroz Ahmad Baba called on Lt Governor and projected various welfare issues of traders' community. Subsequently, a delegation of Traders Federation Bandipora, headed by its President Ali Mohammad Hajam, also called on the Lieutenant Governor.



Div Com Kashmir reviews arrangements for Nagar Kirtan in Srinagar

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Nov 11: Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Anshul Garg on Tuesday chaired a meeting to review the arrangements for the commemoration of the 350th year of the Martyrdom of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and the organization of the Nagar Kirtan at Gurdwara Chhatti Patshahi, Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Commissioner Kashmir, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Srinagar, Director Tourism Punjab, SSP Rural Traffic, SP Security, and members of the organizing committee.

During the meeting, the Div Com reviewed civil, traffic, and



security arrangements along the route from Qazigund to Gurdwara Chhatti Patshahi, Srinagar. He emphasized the need for smooth and coordinated arrangements to ensure

the successful conduct of the Nagar Kirtan and the commemoration event.

The Div Com directed for the deployment of magistrates along the designated route to facilitate

convoy movement and maintain order during the procession.

He appointed ADC Srinagar as the Nodal Officer for overall facilitation of the event, while Additional Commissioner Kashmir, Akramullah Tak, was designated as the Nodal Officer to coordinate inter-district arrangements.

The Div Com also directed concerned departments to ensure comprehensive arrangements for VIP participation, including security, traffic management, and other necessary facilities at the venue.

He stressed upon all departments to work in close coordination for the smooth and peaceful conduct of the commemoration events in the Division.

Delhi's air quality slips to 'severe' category for 1st time this year

PTI

New Delhi, Nov 11: Delhi recorded its first "severe" air quality day of the year on Tuesday, with the overall Air Quality Index (AQI) reaching 428, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

The overall AQI data, which is usually updated by 4 pm every day, was delayed by several hours. On Monday, the CPCB

data was updated after 11 pm.

Officials did not immediately provide a reason for the disruption.

The air quality, which was in the "very poor" category for the last several days, deteriorated further on Tuesday morning due to stagnant weather conditions and local emissions.

A "severe" AQI indicates hazardous pollution levels that pose serious health risks, affecting

even healthy individuals and severely impacting those with pre-existing respiratory or cardiac conditions.

This is the first time in 2025 that Delhi's air quality has entered the "severe" zone. The last time the city recorded such poor air quality was in December 2024, the CPCB's data showed.

Amid worsening pollution levels, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta announced that schools

up to Class V will temporarily operate in a hybrid mode – both online and offline – to protect children's health.

Chairing a high-level review meeting, Gupta directed for a strict enforcement of Stage III of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), increased the number of enforcement teams to 2,088 and ordered immediate action against the construction sites violating pollution norms.

She also instructed agencies to control dust by paving open areas, installing 300 mist-spray systems by November 30, ensuring proper waste disposal and curbing open and biomass burning.

Gupta said the Delhi government is tackling the pollution crisis on a "mission mode", with full seriousness and accountability.

According to the Decision Support System (DSS) for air

quality forecasting, stubble burning contributed 6.5 per cent to Delhi's pollution on Tuesday, while the transport sector accounted for around 18.2 per cent.

For Wednesday, the contribution from stubble burning is projected to be 5.3 per cent, while transport-related emissions are expected to rise slightly to 18.9 per cent.

Satellite-based data on Monday reported 133 farm fires in Punjab, 30 in Haryana, 154 in

Uttar Pradesh and one in Delhi.

The Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi has forecast that the city's air quality is likely to remain in the "very poor" category from Wednesday.

On the weather front, temperatures continued to dip, with the minimum recorded at 10.2 degrees Celsius, 4.1 notches below normal, and the maximum at 27.7 degrees Celsius, 1.8 notches below normal.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

NIA takes over Red Fort

continued in multiple areas of Delhi, Faridabad, and Jammu & Kashmir. Investigators said the group planned a larger series of strikes that were disrupted by the earlier seizures in Haryana.

Forensic teams confirmed the use of high-intensity explosives similar to those found in Faridabad. CCTV footage shows the car entering Delhi from Badarpur and circulating around the Red Fort before the explosion around 6:50 PM. Police suspect a suicide-style operation designed to cause maximum damage.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking in Bhutan, said the country stands with the victims and that the perpetrators "will not be spared."

AMIT SHAH CHAIRS SEVERAL MEETINGS

Meanwhile, Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired several review meetings throughout the day with top security officials in New Delhi on Tuesday.

The first meeting was attended by the Union Home Secretary, Director Intelligence Bureau, Director General of the National Investigation Agency, and Commissioner of Police of Delhi. The Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat joined the meeting via video conference.

The second meeting was attended by Union Home Secretary, Director, Intelligence Bureau, Director General of the National Security Guards (NSG), Director General, National Investigation Agency (NIA), Director Forensic Science Services, Chief Director of Forensic Science Laboratory, Delhi and other senior officials.

After chairing the meetings, the Union Home Minister in his post on X said, "Chaired review meetings on the Delhi car blast with the senior officials. Instructed them to hunt down each and every culprit behind this incident. Everyone involved in this act will face the full wrath of our agencies."

PERPETRATORS WILL BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE: RAJNATH SINGH

Defence Minister Rajanth Singh assured the people that perpetrators will be brought to justice. "I wish to assure my fellow citizens that the country's leading investigative agencies are conducting a swift and thorough inquiry into the incident. The findings of the investigation will soon be made public. I want to firmly assure the nation that those responsible for this tragedy will be brought to justice and will not be spared under any circumstances," Singh wrote on X.

Over 500 officials have been deployed for the investigation. More than 1,000 CCTV clips are being analysed, and mobile phone dump data from the Red Fort area is under examination to trace communications linked to the blast.

High alert has been sounded in Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Maharashtra. NSG commandos are deployed at key installations, and additional security has been placed around metro stations and religious sites. (KNO)

LG Sinha reviews

Lieutenant Governor directed all concerned officials to maintain constant vigil and security and emphasised on seamless coordination amongst the J&K Police, Intelligence and security agencies.

Pertinently, in one of the most shocking counter-terror revelations in recent years, the Jammu and Kashmir Police in coordination with Haryana and Uttar Pradesh Police recently unearthed a massive terror network allegedly masterminded and operated by doctors working across the country.

Two Kashmiri doctors identified as Dr. Aadil Ahmad Rather and Dr. Muzammil Shakeel were apprehended in separate operations in Saharanpur and Faridabad. Later, a woman doctor from Lucknow, Dr. Shaheen Shahid, was also detained after her car was found used in

the transport of arms and ammunition.

Police said that Dr Shakeel's aide, Dr Umar Mohammad of Pulwama, is suspected of carrying out a fidayeen (suicide) attack in a Hyundai I20 near Delhi's iconic Red Fort, which killed eight people, hours after the terror module was busted.

After the arrests police carried out massive searches across multiple districts and recovered two pistols (Chinese Star and Beretta models), an AK-56 rifle, an AK Krinkov rifle, and approximately 2,900 kilograms of IED-making material, including explosives, chemicals, electronic circuits, remotes, and metal sheets. (KNO)

J&K leaders, trade

of Opposition (LoP) and senior BJP leader, Sunil Sharma also expressed grief over the traffic blast. "Deeply saddened over the tragic loss of lives in the car blast incident in New Delhi. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. Praying for the speedy recovery of those injured," Sharma said.

Adding to the condemnations, Kashmir's chief religious cleric, Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Umar Farooq, wrote on X: "Deeply saddened by the tragic car blast in Delhi that has claimed precious lives and injured many. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayers for the swift recovery of those injured. May Almighty Allah grant strength and patience to all affected by this tragedy."

The Grand Mufti of Jammu and Kashmir, Mufti Nasirul Islam, also joined the condemnations, describing the blast as a "shameful act of terrorism," saying, "The killing of an innocent person is the killing of the entire humanity. People of Jammu and Kashmir, irrespective of religion and caste, share the grief of the bereaved families."

The former Chief Minister of J&K, Mehbooba Mufti, also shared on her X handle: "Deeply shocked and saddened to hear about the tragic car blast in Delhi that has taken eight precious lives and injured so many others. My heart goes out to the families who have lost their loved ones. No words can ease their pain. Praying for the speedy recovery of those injured and hoping the cause of this tragedy is uncovered soon."

Among other condemnations, National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah described the blast as "an assault on the very spirit of humanity and peace."

Additionally, the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers cum Dealers Union and the New Kashmir Fruits Association Srinagar described the incident as a "highly deplorable and inhumane act."

Chairman Bashir Ahmad Basheer, who also heads the New Kashmir Fruits Association, extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

The Kashmir Traders and Manufacturers Federation (KTMF), led by Mohammad Yaseen Khan, expressed profound grief, saying, "We stand in solidarity with the bereaved families in this hour of grief and pray for the speedy recovery of the injured."

The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCC&I) also condemned the attack, calling it a "heinous act of violence" that has caused "immense loss of life and deep anguish." In its statement, KCC&I conveyed heartfelt condolences to the victims' families and prayed for the quick recovery of those injured. It urged the Government of India to "bring the perpetrators to justice and strengthen preventive mechanisms to ensure public safety." The business fraternity of Kashmir stands in solidarity with all those affected by this tragedy," the Chamber said, stressing that "such acts are an assault on peace, stability, and the shared values of humanity."

Similarly, the Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Democratic Front (PDF) President and former

Minister Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen termed the Red Fort attack a "barbaric and cowardly act carried out by enemies of peace and humanity."

In a statement, he expressed deep shock and grief, saying, "The perpetrators of such heinous crimes deserve the severest punishment and must be brought to justice swiftly."

He called upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to order a high-level probe into the incident.

In another development, the Awami Itihaad Party (AIP) announced that its jailed founder and MP from Baramulla, Er Rashid, has informed Tihar Jail authorities of his decision to begin a "two-day hunger strike from November 12" to protest the Delhi blast and the growing trend of violence.

AIP Chief Spokesperson Inam Un Nabi quoted from Er Rashid's letter addressed to the DG Prisons, New Delhi, stating that he condemned the attack as "an assault on humanity." "Er Rashid has expressed concern that even educated Kashmiris, including doctors, are being pushed towards violence. His hunger strike is a call for introspection and a reminder that we cannot afford to lose more young and educated people," Inam said.

Moreover, the Awami National Conference (ANC) President Begum Khalida Shah and Senior Vice President Muzaffar Shah also condemned the explosion, appealing for calm and restraint, and urging citizens to preserve communal harmony.

Additionally, the President of the Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party, Altaf Bukhari, also wrote on X: "I strongly condemn the horrific blast near the Red Fort in New Delhi, which claimed the lives of several innocent people and left many others gravely injured. This cowardly act of violence is an assault on humanity and a direct attack on the peace and security of our nation."

Violence of this nature—especially in the heart of our nation's capital—deserves the strongest possible condemnation. Those responsible must be swiftly brought to justice and given exemplary punishment. The entire nation must stand united in this moment of grief and resolve, showing zero tolerance for terrorism in any form. Let us send a clear and unwavering message: terrorism will find no refuge, no support, and no sympathy on Indian soil," wrote Bukhari.

MLA Handwara and President Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Conference Sajad Lone also wrote on X: "My heartfelt condolences to those who lost their loved ones in the blast in Delhi. May they rest in peace."

It is important to mention that condemnations continue to pour in from across Jammu and Kashmir, with leaders and organisations calling for unity, justice, and peace as the nation mourns the victims of the Red Fort tragedy. (KNO)

Security beefed up

particularly at key entry points, where random vehicle checks and frisking are being conducted to prevent the movement of subversive elements.

"Security forces also searched residential houses in Habbakadal, Srinagar, during a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO)," the official added, stating that security has been tightened at Railway Stations as well.

At the Navyug Tunnel—the main entry gateway into Kashmir—Kulgam Police and CRPF launched intensive frisking and vehicle checking using high-tech equipment.

SSP Kulgam, Anayat Ali Choudhary, said: "For the last few days, we have been conducting a large-scale crackdown against terrorism. As part of that effort, we launched a special vehicle-checking drive—not only on the highways, which is routine—but at more than 75 locations across the interiors of Kulgam. From LMVs to HMVs, no vehicle is being allowed to

pass without checking. We are also using advanced technology to detect if anything is concealed inside a vehicle."

He said that the security forces are alert and committed to prevent any attempt to disturb peace in the region. "Our priority is the safety and security of the people. Such measures are essential to maintain peace and ensure that no anti-national elements take advantage of the situation," Choudhary said, adding, "Anyone attempting to disrupt peace will face consequences."

In a statement, Awantipora Police said, "To ensure the maintenance of peace and public order, Awantipora Police have intensified vehicle checking on key roads across the district."

The spokesperson said the checking drives are aimed at monitoring the movement of suspicious persons and vehicles and preventing the transportation of contraband or unlawful material. "These measures are part of continuous efforts to strengthen security, enhance public safety and ensure strict adherence to law and order," he added.

NORTHERN ARMY COMMANDER VISITS FORWARD AREAS

Meanwhile, Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command, visited forward areas in North Kashmir to review the anti-infiltration grid and assess the operational readiness of formations along the Line of Control.

In a post on X, the Northern Commander stated: "While reviewing forward areas, he was briefed on state-of-the-art surveillance systems and next-generation technologies fortifying border security. He lauded the troops for exceptional professionalism, operational excellence and combat readiness to confront emerging threats, reaffirming the Army's unwavering resolve to defend the nation's frontiers." (KNO)

J&K districts directed

door-to-door searches since morning, the official said.

"The J&K Police have also stepped up checks on vehicles and pedestrians across Handwara, Qalamabad, Kralgund, and Vilgam. Check-posts have been set up at key routes and sensitive locations, where thorough frisking and verification are being carried out," he added.

Security measures, the officials said, aim to ensure public safety, maintain peace, and prevent any attempts by terrorists to disturb law and order in the region.

During the past few days, Police have detained around 1,500 individuals across Kashmir in a large-scale operation aimed at dismantling terror support networks.

The crackdown, described by officials as a "pre-emptive strike," targeted suspected overground workers, sympathisers, and family members of terrorists operating from across the border.

Police conducted coordinated raids, cordon-and-search operations, and inspections of SIM card vendors across north, south, and central Kashmir. Searches also focused on digital devices to track terrorist links.

The Kashmir link in the Red Fort incident has prompted the NIA and J&K Police to carry out coordinated raids across Pulwama, Anantnag, and Srinagar.

Multiple suspects are being questioned, including Dr. Sajad Ahmad Malla and relatives of Dr. Umar Mohammad, who investigating agencies said was driving the car used in the Delhi blast. (KNO)

Sgr, Anantnag GMCs

Officers, Estates Officer, and Accounts Section have also been directed not to issue any LPC, NOC, or service book on transfer of any employee until the individual locker of the employee is handed over.

"It is hereby ordered that all HODs should identify the lockers/almiras in their respective departments or wards and ensure the name of

the staff to whom it is allotted is pasted on it. Any unidentified locker or almirah that is not owned by anyone should be reported to the undersigned," reads the order issued by the Medical Superintendent of GMC Anantnag. (KNO)

By-elections: Budgam

that a total of 178 votes were polled at special polling booths set up for migrants in Jammu, Delhi, and Udhampur.

"A total of 157 votes were polled at the Special Polling Stations in Jammu. The lone Special Polling Station in Udhampur recorded 11 votes, while in Delhi, a total of 10 votes were cast by Kashmiri migrants," he said.

As many as 126025 electors were registered in the Budgam constituency and 97980 electors in the Nagrota segment.

The ECI had set up 173 polling stations in Budgam and 150 in Nagrota.

A total of 27 candidates were in the fray for these two segments, which were previously won by the National Conference and the BJP, respectively.

According to field reports, the outcome of the Budgam Assembly segment is likely to be decided by a narrow margin between National Conference's Aga Mehmood and PDP's Muntazir Mehdi.

In Nagrota, BJP's Devyani has the upper hand in the contest for the seat, which fell vacant following the demise of her father, Devinder Singh Rana, the reports suggest. (KNO)

2 elections in 13 months

Budgam had voted last year with the aim of getting an elected representative to listen to them.

"However, it is unfortunate that we have been kept without any representation for the last one year, and now again, we have been forced to come out to vote. The people here have been waiting for a year to get even the basic issues resolved," Ali Muhammad, a voter in Budgam, said.

Another voter from Nasrullah Pora said that voting for the second time in just one year feels like a punishment to them. "We feel betrayed despite voting with dedication and full of hope last year," he said.

"We cast our ballots last year with the hope that our representative from the constituency would also serve as the Chief Minister and that we would get some benefits. But all our hopes were shattered when Omar Abdullah decided to retain the Ganderbal seat," Ashfaq Hussain, a voter, said.

"As we turn up at the polling stations again, we hope our choice this time will bring benefits to this constituency," he added.

The by-election for the Budgam Assembly Constituency was held today, with 17 candidates in the electoral fray. The seat fell vacant after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who had won from two seats in the 2024 assembly elections, retained the Ganderbal seat.

Omar Abdullah had received 35,804 votes, against 17,445 votes for PDP candidate Aga Syed Muntazir Mehdi, out of a total of 1.25 lakh votes. (KNO)

Ventilator shortage hits

availability, which can only be confirmed either in the evening for the next day or in the morning itself," she said.

Sometimes, ventilators are simply not available at the required time, and surgeries can only proceed when one becomes available, the MS said. "But not all surgeries require ventilators. Not every patient requires ventilator support—only those who medically need it," she added.

Dr Shaheen further said that the government is already in the process of procuring more ventilators for the hospital. "The support being provided by the allied SMHS hospital is also proving helpful in more ways than one," she said. (KNO)

PM Modi, Bhutan King hold talks on energy, defence, connectivity projects

THAMMA (U/A16+)
HINDI - 11:30 AM, 06:40 PM

Budgam By-Election: Shaping The Future

Voters cast their ballots in the by-election for the 27 Budgam Assembly Constituency on Tuesday, seeking representation after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah retained his Ganderbal seat following the 2024 elections

Pics: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

