Volume: 16 Issue No: 276 Pages: 08 Price: ₹2

# Kashmir The same of the sa



concern of news agency
Kashmir News Observer (KNO)

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

# After backlash, CM Omar says no proposed 20% hike in power tariff

Asserts admissions in SMVDU >> Says govt committed to transparency in auctioning mineral blocks

**Yogesh** 

Jammu, Nov 24: After facing backlash over the proposed 20% hike in power tariffs during peak hours in Kashmir, Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah on Monday said that the issue has been unnecessarily made a point of debate and there would be no hike in electricity rates.

Talking to the reporters on the sidelines launch ceremony of the first-ever auction of seven limestone mineral blocks in J&K, CM, Omar, according to the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "I am also the Power Minister and so far no discussion to hike power tariff has taken place, leave aside my signature on the claimed proposal. There is no plan to hike the power tariff before the

The Chief Minister said,

'Op Sindoor its

Srinagar, Nov 24: Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on

Monday said the strength of

armed forces lies in synergy and

that the tri-services - the Army, Navy and the Air Force form

the trinity of India's strategic

sioning of INS Mahe in Mumbai,

the Army Chief, per news agen-

cy-Kashmir News Observer

(KNO), said that the sea, land and

skies form a single continuum of that the | More on P6

Speaking during the commis-

apt example'

**Ahmad Taimur** 

strength.

**India's tri-services** 

form trinity of strategic strength: Army Chief



"Unnecessarily, this (hike in power tariff) has become an issue."

Pertinently, the KNO last week had carried a news story about the Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCL) proposing an extra 20 percent

national security and together

the tri-services form the trinity

to the Indian Ocean and from in-

formation warfare to joint logis-

tics, the Indian armed forces are

in operation in every domain.

"Operation Sindoor was an apt

example of the synergy of the

of multi-domain operations, the

country's ability to act in concert

from the depths of the ocean to

the highest frontier will deter-

mine the security influence of

Following the commissioning

INS Mahe, the Army Chief said

He further said that in the age

armed forces," he added.

the Indian republic.

He also said that from Ladakh

of India's strategic strength.

surcharge on electricity consumption during morning and

evening hours in the Valley. The KPDCL had sought approval from Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC) to impose the surcharge on all categories of consumers except for the agriculture sector during peak hours, when demand is at its highest due to the bone-chilling cold in the Valley.

While talking to KNO, Managing Director KPDCL, Mahmood Ahmad Shah had said: "KPDCL has proposed a 20 percent surcharge on tariff for the peak hours of the day. As of now, no decision has been taken by the regulatory commission."

The proposal, according to the officials, was a part of the Time of Day (ToD) tariff system, under which electricity costs vary depending on the time of consumption.

However, the proposal evoked strong reactions from different sections of the society. Leader of Opposition (LoP) and senior BJP leader Sharma had accused

committing "electoral fraud" by promising free electricity before elections and now burdening the people with proposed hefty 20 percent tariff hike.

"Omar Abdullah promised 200 units of free electricity to every household in Jammu and Kashmir. Today, more than a year later, instead of fulfilling that promise, his government is preparing to loot people with an outrageous 20 percent increase in peak-hour consump-

tion charges," Sharma had said.
Apni Party president Syed Altaf Bukhari had described the proposal as a "grave injustice" to the people of Kashmir.

Peoples Democratic Party MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Para termed the proposal "cruel" and "catastrophic." "J&K government must do a real ground assessment before hiking electricity charges. | More on P6

# CM Omar launches e-auction of **J&K's limestone blocks**

the National Conference of

### Thanks Union govt for support

Jammu, Nov 24: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday reaffirmed his government's commitment to ensuring transparency in the auctioning of mineral blocks in Jammu & Kashmir, stating that the new e-auction mechanism will unlock economic potential in some of the most underserved regions of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister made these remarks during the launch and roadshow of the e-auction of the first seven limestone mineral blocks of J&K, held at the Convention Centre, Jammu, The e-auction was jointly commenced



by Union Minister for Coal & Mines, G. Kishan Reddy and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

The event was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Mines Additional Chief Secretary, Mining Department, Anil Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Farida M. Naik, senior officials from the Government of India, <u>I</u>&K Government, and representatives from the mining and industrial sectors.

Minister | More on P6

# BJP MP from Jammu asks 4 times more questions than Kashmir MPs combined

### Ruhullah stands out with 93% attendance

### **KNO Special Correspondent**

Srinagar, Nov 24: A single Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Member of Parliament from the Jammu region has asked four times more questions than all Kashmiri MPs combined.

According to PRS Legislative Research, a New Delhi-based non-profit organisation, BJP's Jammu MP, Jugal Kishore Sharma, has asked 100 questions since his election from the Jammu Lok Sabha seat in 2024. In comparison, three MPs



from the Kashmir region, including the Anantnag-Rajouri seat, who were simultaneously elected with Sharma in 2024, have together asked a total of 24 questions.

Among the Kashmir MPs. Srinagar MP Aga Ruhullah

Mehdi has asked 10 questions, Mian Altaf has asked nine, and Er. Rashid has asked five. Rashid, who is currently in jail in a terror funding case, has attended only two sessions of Parliament in 2025.

This means Sharma alone has asked over four times more questions than all Kashmiri MPs combined.

The BJP MP Jugal Kishore is also leading other J&K MPs in terms of participation in debates. Since the 2024 election, Sharma has participated in 17 debates, while Ruhullah, Altaf, and Rashid have taken part in 13, nine, and six debates, respectively.

In terms of attendance, Ruhullah tops | More on P6

### Budget 2026-27

## J&K Govt to begin budget discussions from Dec 1

### **KNO Special Correspondent**

Srinagar, Nov 24: As part of the exercise to prepare the Budget for the financial year 2026-27, the Jammu Kashmir Finance Department will begin discussions on the budget proposals from December 01.

In a communication, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the Finance Department has informed administrative secretaries that the budget discussions with departments will begin on December 01.

The Finance Department

will hold deliberations with 36 departments before culminating the exercise on December 16, 2025. The discussions will cover both revised estimates for 2025-26 and budget estimates for 2026-27, including revenue and capital components such as Centrally Sponsored (CSS), Prime Schemes Minister's Development Programme (PMDP) and loan provisions.

As per the communique, the departments have been advised to furnish the Action Taken Reports (ATRs) on the budget announcements, if any, besides | More on P6

# Reddy congratulates J&K for joining 'mineral action' map

'Action regime brought by PM Modi running with 100% transparency'

#### **Yogesh**

Jammu, Nov 24: Asserting that states across the country have "risen above political differences" and are collectively working towards empowering the youth, Union Minister for Coal and Mines G Kishan Reddy on Monday congratulated Jammu and Kashmir for joining the mineral action map.

According to the details available with the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the Union Minister and I&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today launched the e-Auction of Limestone Blocks during a dedicated launch programme and roadshow held in the winter capital.

While addressing the launch ceremony, Reddy said, "Seven limestone mineral blocks were launched by us with J&K CM Omar Abdullah. J&K has joined the mineral action map today."

He said, "In 2014, the Supreme Court instructed the government to reform the mining sector with transparency. PM Modi has brought a regime for this action. This action regime is running

with 100% transparency today." The Union Minister said that today all the states have risen above politics and are working towards empowering the youth.



"They are also playing a key role in improving the ease of doing business," he said.

Reddy highlighted that proactive participation by states has ensured holistic development across sectors, particularly mining. "All the state governments have come into the mineral action map," he said, adding that reforms and coordinated efforts have accelerated the pace of exploration and resource utilisation.

Reddy said, "More than 1000 mineral and coal blocks have been auctioned so far, marking a historic leap in resource management," he said.

The Union Minister praised the transparent and competitive auction process introduced by the PM Modi led government stating that it has not only boosted investor confidence but also opened new avenues for employment and industrial growth. He said | More on P6

# LG Sinha visits JKP's Commando Training Centre at Sunjwan

Interacts with police personnel



Jammu, Nov 24: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday visited the Commando Training Centre (CTC) of Jammu Kashmir Police at Sunjwan, Jammu.

The Lieutenant Governor

reviewed the training gramme on various specialized modules and other activities conducted during the training courses. He was briefed on the operational preparedness, specialised counter-terror and tactical training to | More on P6

## LG Sinha, CM Omar pay tribute to Dharmendra

**KNO Correspondent** 

Jammu, Nov 24: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah paid tribute to veteran Bollywood actor Dharmendra, who passed away on Monday.

"In the passing away of Shri Dharmendra Ji, the film industry has lost one of its most successful icons, who entertained several generations of Indians with his riveting performances. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved | More on P6

# Night chill intensifies, Sgr records season's coldest night at -3.2°C

### **Owais Gul**

Srinagar, Nov 24: With no forecast of any major wet spell in Jammu and Kashmir for the next two weeks, the night temperature has plummeted further across the valley with mercury settling to the lowest of the season at multiple locations.

As per the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Srinagar, the summer capital of J&K, recorded the season's coldest night at minus 3.2 degrees Celsius.

Pahalgam, a famous tourist destination, also recorded the

season's coldest night at 4.0 degrees Celsius.

The mercury also dropped by some degrees at other stations, with Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, recording a low of minus 2.5 degrees Celsius. Kokernag in south Kashmir recorded a minimum temperature of minus 0.4 degrees.

As per the details, Kupwara in north Kashmir recorded a

low of 3.2 degrees Celsius. While the mercury has plummeted across the valley, Director Meteorological Department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad has | More on P6

# **Police continue security** inspections, CASOs in districts

Comprehensive checks of chemical shops, hospitals carried out

Sajid Raina

Srinagar/Jammu, Nov 24 (KNO): Jammu & Kashmir Police on Monday continued with its extensive security inspections and joint operations across the region as part of ongoing efforts to maintain public safety and prevent unlawful activities, officials said here.

Officials told the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the operations included checks of commercial establishments, hospitals, and border areas, supported by multiple security agencies.

"In Srinagar, police carried out inspections of chemical and fertiliser shops across several police station jurisdictions, including Harwan, Lal Bazar, Chanapora, Rajbagh, RM Bagh, MR Ganj, Safakadal, Zadibal, Hazratbal, Nigeen, Saddar, and Khanyar," an official said.

He said the teams verified stock and sales records, ensured identity checks for bulk purchasers, inspected secure storage of | More on P6

### Winter break up to 8th class from Dec 1: Edu Min Up to 12th standard from second week of December

### **Riyaz Bhat**

Srinagar, Nov 24: The government Monday said that the winter vacations upto 8th standard will commence from December-01 for the winter zone of Kashmir division.

It also said that the vacations for other classes upto 12th standard will be from the second week of December.

Speaking to the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Education Minister, Sakina Itoo said, "The proposal for winter vacation upto 8th standard has been approved and the vacations will begin from December-01."



Itoo further said, "In case of other classes upto 12th standard, the vacations will likely begin from December-12 or

December-13." Earlier, the minister had said that the winter break for students up to the middle classes is likely to begin from the first week of December amid cold temperatures. She had said that the parents repeatedly requested for the announcement of the schedule for winter break. "The winter

> younger children." Itoo had further said that, break and we have tentatively

season becomes difficult for

'We have already conducted a meeting regarding the winter decided that for lower classes from Class 1 up to middle grade, will | More on P6

# Thunder

## **Constitution Day celebrations**

# Chief Secretary reviews preparedness across J&K

KT NEWS DESI

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 24: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Monday chaired a meeting to review the preparations for the grand celebration of Constitution Day (Samvidhan Diwas) across J&K. The upcoming events on November 26, 2025, mark the culmination of the year-long commemorations of the 75th Year of adoption of the Constitution of India.

The meeting besides Principal Secretary, Culture and Commissioner Secretary, GAD was attended by Secretary, School Education; Secretary, Law; DDG, NIC; ED, Mubarak Mandi Heritage Society and other concerned officers.

During the review, the Chief Secretary emphasized the administration's objective to take the message of the Constitution to a wider audience beyond official circles, generating a deep emotional connection and fostering public participation continuing with the great legacy it has.

The Chief Secretary directed all departments to ensure synchronized and impactful activities on Constitution Day

While highlighting the key components of the Action Plan for the Day to be celebrated on November 26, 2025, the Principal Secretary, Culture, Brij Mohan Sharma gave details about the finalized action plan. The same includes 'Mass Preamble Reading' a territory-wide reading of the Preamble will be conducted at 11:00 AM, synchronized with the National-level program. This will take place in all government offices, schools,



and colleges in constitutionally recognized languages.

A special run titled 'Run for Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity' is to be organized at all District Headquarters to engage the youth and public. Additionally Schools and colleges will host special assemblies focusing on the role and contribution of women members in the Constituent Assembly. Moreover, wall art depicting the Preamble will be created in schools, Panchayats, and public spaces

Panchayats, and public spaces.
The action plan also includes screening of documentaries and films on the Constitution will be held using materials from constitution75. com. A webinar by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions is also scheduled from 4:30

PM to 5:30 PM which everyone was encouraged to watch here.

Reviewing the progress of the year-long campaign (26th Nov 2024 – 26th Nov 2025), Shri Dulloo expressed satisfaction with the extensive outreach achieved so far. As of November 20, 2025, a total of 5,009 events have been conducted across J&K by various departments including Home, Tourism, Rural Development, and School Education.

With respect to the year long activities the meeting was apprised that the initiative generated significant engagement, headlined by 3,200 Oaths & Pledgeevents. These were supported by 756 Seminars & Symposia and 534 Mass Awareness Drives, highlighting a strong focus on outreach. Additionally, the campaign

featured 291 Cultural & Musical Events, concluding with 132 Runs for Unity to round out the diverse array

of activities
The Chief Secretary urged citizens to participate in the Nationwide Week-long Campaign, which includes community dialogues, open debates, and online engagement. He called upon the public to take the "Online Pledge" and participate in the Samvidhan Quiz available on the MyGov.in portal.

All Nodal Officers and District Administrations have been instructed to document these historic celebrations by uploading reports and visual evidence to the official portal www.constitution75.com to create lasting digital memories of this national occasion.

# J&K set to confer UT Artisan Awards in H&H sector

38 artisans to be honoured for keeping craft heritage alive

KT NEWS DESIG

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 24: The Handicrafts and Handloom Department is all set to confer the annual UT Artisan Awards for the year 2024 amongst the selected craft-persons, who have kept the famed handicrafts legacy alive in Jammu & Kashmir.

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Choudhary, who is also Minister In-Charge Industries & Commerce, shall distribute the coveted awards here at the picturesque SKICC on November 25, in presence of the Commissioner/Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Vikramjit Singh.

In a press release issued here today, a spokesman of the Department stated that 38 artisans and weavers, 20 from Kashmir and 18 from Jammu Division respectively, shall be conferred with the prestigious UT Artisan Awards in different notified crafts, who have been selected by the Government. "All arrangements have been made at SKICC Auditorium for the gala function. The award for the artisans shall accompany a citation and cash prizes of ₹50,000, ₹30,000 & ₹20,000 for first three places in each craft,"



he added

ldentifying welfare of artisans and weavers as the primary objective of the department, the spokesman asserted that the coveted annual Artisan Awards distribution is an effort of the Government to recognize the contribution of our artisan community who toil hard to keep the handicrafts heritage alive in Jammu &

Kashmir. "Apart from UT Aryisan Awards, which are given out annually, our artisans have regularly brought laurels for J&K by winning the prestigious Padma and Shilp Guru Awards at the national level. "Even in the international arena, our artisans have distinguished themselves by capturing the eyes of the art connoisseurs," he added.

# Gupta takes over as Controller Legal Metrology J&K

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 24: Shiv Kumar Gupta Monday joined as Controller, Legal Metrology Department Jammu & Kashmir. The officers and

officials of the department welcomed the new Controller, expressing confidence in his leadership. They assured their full cooperation and support in executing the department's mandates effectively.

Upon taking charge, Shiv Kumar Gupta emphasized the department's crucial responsibility in safeguarding consumer rights, ensuring accuracy in trade measurements and



strengthening transparency across markets. He stressed swift grievances redressal and strict enforcement of Legal Metrology laws across the Union Territory.

A forward-looking and result-oriented officer, Mr. Gupta is known for his visionary approach and strong administrative capabilities. He expressed confidence that with innovation, technology-driven monitoring and sustained public outreach, the department will achieve new heights of efficiency and consumer trust

## **Hokarsar Wetland**

# DC Budgam reviews progress on demarcation

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 24: Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat Monday chaired a meeting to review the progress of demarcation of the Hokarsar Wetland, a designated Ramsar Site, being carried out by Revenue and allied departments.

The meeting was attended by the ACR Budgam, Afroza Bano; SDM (West) Srinagar, Irfan Bahadur; SDPO Magam, DFO Photo Interpretation Division J&K, DFO Settlement & Demarcation Srinagar, Range Officer Hokarsar, Naib Tehsildar Regional Director Survey & Land Records Srinagar, and the Settlement Assistant, Regional Director S&LR Srinagar. During the



meeting, the DC reviewed in detail the current status of field verification, boundary assessment, geo-referenced mapping, and availability of relevant records with each

department.

He stressed the importance of accurate,

scientific, and dispute-free demarcation to ensure longterm conservation and legal protection of the wetland.

The DC emphasised strict adherence to the directions, calling for enhanced coordination between Revenue, Forest, Police, and Survey & Land Records teams. He directed officers to remove any bottlenecks in the ongoing process and maintain close inter-departmental communication for seamless progress.

The DC further instructed the concerned agencies to submit updated status reports, expedite pending tasks, and ensure that the demarcation exercise is completed in a transparent and technically sound manner.

He reiterated that Hokarsar Wetland, being a Ramsar Site of international ecological importance, must be protected through robust management and clear boundary identification to prevent encroachment and ensure its ecological sustainability.

### **PMAY-U 2.0**

# DC B'la hands over sanction letters to 20 beneficiaries

KT NEWS DESK

BARAMULLA, NOVEMBER 24: In a step towards ensuring housing for all eligible beneficiaries, DC Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, in the presence of Executive Officer MC Watergam, Sarafraz Ahmad Bhat, Monday handed over sanction letters under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U) 2.0 to 20 eligible beneficiaries from Municipal Committee Watergam.

The DC congratulated the beneficiaries and urged them to start construction work at the earliest. He highlighted that timely initiation would enable them to receive subsequent installments on schedule and complete their houses within the prescribed timeframe. He also emphasized the importance of adhering to construction guidelines, maintaining quality, and ensuring transparency throughout the process.

The DC stressed that PMAY-U 2.0 is a key initiative aimed at providing safe, pucca, and affordable housing to eligible urban families, reinforcing the government's commitment to "housing for all." He encouraged the beneficiaries to make full use of the assistance to achieve secure and dignified living conditions.

Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Watergam, assured full support to the beneficiaries and highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts with the administration for smooth implementation of the scheme. Other concerned officers were also present during the event

### SHD B'la organizes CVE prog

KT NEWS DESK

BARAMULLA, NOVEMBER 24: Sheep Husbandry Department Baramulla Monday conducted a Continuing Veterinary Education (CVE) Programme on the theme "Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)" at the Veterinary Hospital, Chijhama (MFC, SDB Rafiabad), as part of World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week.

The programme aimed to raise awareness and enhance understanding of AMR in both animals and humans.

The programme was attended by veterinarians, para-veterinarians, students, farmers, and representatives from pharmaceutical companies.

Key experts delivered lectures on various aspects of AMR highlighted Impacts, Challenges, and Future Prospects. The current status of AMR in veterinary medicine and the importance of adhering to withdrawal periods for commonly used antimicrobials was also highlighted.

# DC Shopian reviews winter mitigation preparations

KT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 24: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta, Monday chaired a meeting of concerned officers to review winter preparations of departments concerning the ensuing winter at Mini Secretariat Shopian.

The DC took stock of finalisation of Departmental Action Plans and emphasized the need for a coordinated approach to mitigate winter challenges and instructed concerned officers to execute mitigation plans efficiently, ensuring prompt responses to avoid inconvenience to the public through disruption of services.

Focus was given on strict implementation of the department action plans for the prioritisation of roads for snow clearance, unhindered power supply and timely replacement of DTs with decentralised and adequate Buffer stocking in Zainapora, Keller and Shopian

Keller and Shopian. He stressed on proper and comprehensive arrangements for uninterrupted water supply, healthcare facilities, fire fighting services, relief and rescue, Mughal Road snow clearance and other priority issues.



The meeting focused on interdepartmental coordination, evolving efficient mechanisms to address public grievances, and ensuring seamless services during the winter season with the establishment of Integrated Control Room at District level and department wise emergency control

# SKUAST-K hosts dialogue, panel discussion

KT NEWS DESK

NOVEM-SRINAGAR, BER 24: Division of Veterinary Microbiology & Immunology, Faculty of Veterinary Sciences & Animal Husbandry Shuhama, under the aegis of ICAR-Indian Network for Fishery and Animal Antimicrobial Resistance (INFAAR), organized an Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) Dialogue and Panel Discussion today at Vice Chancellor's Conference Hall, SKUAST -Kashmir Shalimar.

The session was attended by Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice Chancellor SKUAST-Kashmir and Dr. M. Ashraf Ganai, Director SKIMS, Soura. various stakeholders from medical,



veterinary, environmental, agricultural and other industrial sectors also attended the daylong event.

Both the key speakers in inagural session threw light on importance of the AMR in current times and need for collaboration among different stakeholders to combat the menace.

The highlight of

the event was panel

discussion on the theme "One Health, One future: Combating AMR together" The session focused on current trends, global frameworks, and regional perspectives on AMR mitigation, fostering cross-sectoral collaboration under the One Health approach.

It is pertinent to mention that Antimicrobial Resistance awareness week was celebrated with different events like Debate, Essay, Quiz, Painting, poster competition and Farmers and School Outreach Programs on AMR.

A documentary in this regard was also dis

A documentary in this regard was also displayed at the inaugural session while various felicitations of students and others concerned in successful conduct of the program was held at the end of the event.

# **Doctor schedules on** public display

**JAHANGEER GANAIE** 

Srinagar, Nov 24: Patients and attendants across Kashmir have welcomed the decision of the Directorate of Health Services Kashmir (DHSK) directing all district hospitals and healthcare institutions to publicly display daily duty rosters of doctors, calling it a "long overdue reform" that will bring much-needed transparency and accountability to the healthcare system.

As per the circular issued by the DHSK, hospitals must update and display daily rosters, including specialists, medical officers, casualty and emergency staff, and leave arrangements, at prominent locations such as the main entrance, OPD blocks, emergency sections, and, wherever available, on hospital websites or online portals.

Each roster must clearly mention the doctor's name, designation, department, duty hours, and contact or extension numbers. Medical Superintendents have been held personally responsible for timely updates, with non-compliance attracting disciplinary action.

Patients said the decision will put an end to routine confusion about the availability of doctors and help them plan their visits more effectively.



"This is the first time we will actually know which doctor is on duty and when," said Abdul Rashid, a patient from Pulwama. "Earlier, we would come to hospitals blindly and wait for hours only to be told that the doctor is not available today."

Another patient, Nasreena from Shopian, said the displayed rosters will stop unnecessary miscommunication. "Sometimes doctors or staff would say the concerned doctor is on a night off or in a ward. Now, everything will be on the board. Nobody can mislead patients," she said. Attendants, too,

feel the move will reduce frustration and long waiting hours. "When we know who is in OPD and who is in the ward, we can directly go to the right place. This will save both time and stress," said Javed Ahmad, who had accompanied his father to a dis-

trict hospital. Patients also believe the system will help them connect with their preferred doctors more easily.

"At least now we can plan in advance. If we want to meet a specialist, we can check the roster and come on the right day instead of making multiple trips," said

Shabnam, a patient suffering from a chronic condition. Many said this will particularly benefit those coming from far-flung areas who often spend an entire day visiting hospitals only to find doctors unavailable.

The DHSK circular stresses that the move aims to improve transparency, accountability, and the smooth functioning of healthcare institutions across the Kashmir Division. Chief Medical Officers, Medical Superintendents, and Block Medical Officers have been directed to implement the order immediately.

A senior health official told KNO that the initiative is meant to "restore patient trust" and streamline hospi-

"If patients know who is on duty and when, confusion automatically ends. This will improve patient satisfaction and reduce unnecessary crowding," the official said.

Patients now hope the directive will be strictly implemented and maintained consistently. "If they follow it properly, it will be a game changer," said another attendant at JLNM Hospital. "For patients, clarity is everything." The DHS Kashmir has said the measure will be monitored closely to ensure full compliance across all hospitals and health centres in the region—(KNO)

# Surprise Checks on hospital lockers in Srinagar, Pulwama



**KNO** 

Srinagar, Nov 24: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Monday continued sur-prise checking of the hospital lockers in Srinagar and Pulwama districts.

The drive is a part of the heightened vigilance in the wake of the November 10 Delhi blast and the recovery of arms and ammunition, including an AK-47 riffle from the locker of a doctor from GMC Anantnag, linked to the "white collar" terror module. Meanwhile, in a

statement a police spokeshe added. man said, "In line with ongoing efforts to ensure transparency and account-

"The inspections were aimed at preventing misuse of lockers for unauability in health institutions and security protocols thorised storage of illegal or hazardous materials within the city, Srinagar and strengthening interpolice, in coordination with nal security within medical medical officers from the institutions," the spokesman said.

He said all racks and lockers were thoroughly examined, and staff were reminded to maintain proper records and ensure that lockers are used strictly for official purposes—(KNO)

# 141 Km road macadamisation completed

**REHAN QAYOOM MIR** 

Srinagar, Nov 24: With barely over a month left for 2025 to end, the Roads and Buildings (R&B) Department on Monday said it has completed over 141 kilometres of macadamisation work across Srinagar, as part of its pre-winimprovement ter road

According to officials, the South Circle Srinagar has achieved 80.76 km of blacktopping this season, covering major divisions including Rajbagh, Dal- ers," the official told KNO, gate, Nowgam, Sanat adding that the coordinat-Pantha Chowk, Harwan and Dara.

"The works were carried out under multiple schemes and focused on 'restoration of damaged corridors, pothole rehabilitation and structural strengthening' to ensure road durability through the winter," a sen-

ior R&B official said. He said the North Circle

Srinagar completed 60.5 km of macadamisation, largely in Khanyar, Safakadal, Hazratbal and the downtown belt, where traffic volume remains consistently high.

The official added that the works have helped ease congestion and improve connectivity in densely populated and

"The department has prioritised critical stretches in both circles to ensure smoother movement and better safety for commut-Srinagar's road network before the winter season.

Moreover, the R&B Department said the current season's drive reflects a push toward improving urban mobility and enhancing road resilience, as part of broader infrastructure upgrades being taken up across the city—(KNO)

# CM's push fixes Gbl's healthcare specialist gap

**JAHANGEER GANAIE** 

Srinagar, Nov 24: A long-pending demand of residents in Ganderbal district has finally been met, with the administration appointing an ENT specialist at SDH Kangan and a gynaecologist at Trauma Hospital Gund.

The development comes shortly after the issue was raised by MLA Kangan, Mian Mehar Ali, during the Chief Minister's recent review

Officials confirmed that the Director Health Services Kashmir acted promptly after the CM's intervention, facilitating the immediate posting of both specialists in these key

Residents in both Kangan and Gund expressed happiness over the move, saying the absence of these essential specialists had caused significant difficulties, especially for patients who previously had to travel to Srinagar for consultations and routine care.

"We are genuinely relieved. For years, we had to rush to Srinagar even for minor



ENT-related issues. Now that the specialist is available locally, it will save our time, money and stress," said Abdul Rashid, a resident of Kangan.

Women in Gund area, in particular, welcomed the posting of a gynaecologist at the Trauma Hospital Expecting mothers faced huge challenges during emergencies. Having a dedicated gynaecologist here is a blessing for our community," said Shabnam Jan, a local resident.

While appreciating the new appointments, locals urged the district administration and higher authorities to fill all remaining vacant posts in the health department to ensure comprehensive healthcare delivery.

"This is a great step, and we thank the CM and our MLA. But several other specialist and paramedical posts are still vacant. We request authorities to expedite recruitment so that natients don't suffer said another resident from

As per order, Dr Asif ENT specialist has been posted to SDH Kangan and Dr Shabana Salim has been posted to Trauma hospital Gund Ganderbal.

MLA Mian Mehar Ali expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister for responding swiftly to the concerns raised

# PDP women protests proposed 20% electricity hike

health department, carried

out inspections of lockers

used by doctors and staff

across district and private

hospitals, medical colleges,

PHCs (primary health cen-

tres) and health facilities."

Similar checks were con-

ducted in Pulwama district,



**REHAN OAYOOM MIR** 

Srinagar, Nov 24: Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) women's wing on Monday staged a protest against the government's proposed 20 per cent power tariff hike during peak hours.

Dozens of women workers assembled t the PDP office, carrying placards and banners highlighting the impact of rising electricity costs on ordinary households.

The protest saw participants chanting slogans, accusing the ruling government of neglecting public hardship amid the biting cold.

The protesters described the move as an "anti-people policy" that will disproportionately burden lower and middle-income families already struggling with erratic power supply during winter. "We are on the streets because people are suffering. Instead of ensuring uninterrupted electricity, the government is tightening the noose around poor families by hiking rates," one of the protesting women told KNO.

Witnesses also said police and security personnel were deployed outside the PDP headquarters to prevent the protesters from moving towards the city centre. The women workers, however, continued

their demonstration within the premises, vowing to intensify protests if the decision is not withdrawn.

Later in the day, PDP President Mehbooba Mufti, also condemned the action, posting on X (formerly Twitter): "The J&K Police stopping PDPs Women Wing from holding a peaceful protest against the crushing rise in power tariffs is yet another continuation of the assault on our democratic rights since 2019. When even the most peaceful voices are throttled under the pretext of law and order it sends a chilling message that our pain is irrelevant that our rights are expendable and that speaking up now carries an unfair cost."

The tweet further read, "this constant silencing is pushing Kashmiri's to the wall suffocating our hopes and even our basic demand to be heard. Such relentless suppression leaves deep wounds on an entire community and fosters an overwhelming sense of collective

Notably, the PDP's women's protest comes amid growing public concern over the proposed tariff revision, which consumers fear will further strain households already coping with inflation and erratic winter power supply—(KNO)

# **Grand Mufti condemns** Delhi, Nowgam blasts

• Calls for unity, fair probe

**REHAN QAYOOM MIR** 

Srinagar, Nov 24: The Grand Mufti of Jammu and Kashmir, Mufti Nisar-ul-Islam, on Monday strongly denounced the recent explosions in Delhi and Nowgam, terming the loss of innocent lives a tragedy for all humanity.

Addressing media persons at his Srinagar office, the Grand Mufti said terrorism has no link with any faith or civilisation and must be condemned in one voice. "Violence in any form is against the very spirit of religion and humanity," he said, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Expressing concern over reports of Kashmiri students and traders being harassed outside the region, Mufti said it was unfair to paint an entire community with one brush. "Our youth engaged in education and trade deserve dignity, security and an atmosphere of trust, not fear," he added.

He recalled that during the Pahalgam terror incident,



people across the valley had unitedly condemned the attack, which he said reflected Kashmir's deep-rooted culture of peace, tolerance and

brotherhood Calling for a transparent and impartial probe into the Delhi and Nowgam blasts, Mufti Nasir-ul-Islam said the investigating agencies must bring the facts before the public to prevent misinformation

and suspicion. The Grand Mufti also criticised the proposed 20 per cent hike in electricity tariff, calling it "anti-people" and "unjustified" at a time when citizens are "already facing economic stress and unemployment". He urged the government to reconsider the decision in the interest of the common man.

The Grand Mufti prayed for lasting peace, communal harmony and prosperity across Jammu and Kashmir and the country—(KNO)

### Bihar resident killed in accident

Srinagar, Nov 24: A 45-year-old man from Bihar died after being hit by a vehicle at Nowgam Bypass near Peaks automobiles on Sunday late night, officials said.

An official said that a man was injured in a road accident after being stuck by a vehicle near Peaks automobile's

He said the man was soon shifted to the hospital following the accident, by police party with assistance of locals. However, he was declared brought dead by doctors. He was later identified as, Sukhadi Rawat (45), a resident of Bihar and was presently living in Srinagar.

Meanwhile, Police have taken cognizance of the incident—(KNO)

## ED attaches Rs 1 Cr property in Jammu

**KNO** 

Srinagar, Nov 24: Directorate of Enforcement, Jammu has attached an immovable property worth Rs 1 Crore under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

According to a statement, the provisionally attached property comprises industrial land at Panipat, Haryana of M/s Vidit Healthcare Pvt. Ltd., Sirmour, HP. The statement reads that the ED initiated investigation in respect of case registered by NCB, Jammu, against M/s Vidit Healthcare (Managing Partner, Neeraj Bhatia) Niket Kansal and others for illegal diversion of a Codeine-based cough syrup (CBCS), "Cocrex", for misuse as intoxicant/drug, from manufacturer, M/s Vidit Healthcare.

"ED investigation revealed that M/s Vidit Healthcare supplied CBCS to entities viz. M/s SS Industries, M/s Kansal Industries, M/s Nouveta Pharma, M/s Kansal Pharmaceuticals and N K Pharmaceuticals (all operated and controlled by Niket Kansal R/o Delhi) during 2018-24, to the tune of about Rs. 16.74 Crore," it reads.

# Mazbug bridge work back on track

**WARIS FAYAZ** 

missing multiple deadlines, the work on the pivotal Mazbug Bridge in north Kashmir's Sopore has been back on track yet again with the Roads and Buildings (R&B) department fixing a two year completion time to reduce daily gridlock in the area. Details available states that the construction on the project, launched in 2023 over Nallah Pohru was stalled for many years due to lack of funds and poor tender response.

Sopore, Nov 24: After

The project's progress had left the area with only an old single lane bridge from the 1970s.

An official from R&B told KNO that the department now has funds

available for the project. 'The new estimate stands at around Rs 3.5 crore, while the bridge will be completed within two vears," an official overseeing the project said.

Earlier as reported by the KNO, the bridge was initially executed by JKPCC, which cited fund shortage and outdated tender rates as key reasons for the standstill.

Residents, who spoke with the KNO Correspondent, said the restart of work has ended years of uncertainty. They said the incomplete structure had caused daily traffic congestion and long delays for commuters, patients, students and fruit traders.

Local fruit growers and transporters said the new bridge will reduce travel time and improve

movement between Baramulla, Rafiabad and Sopore. They said the project will also ease the pressure on the existing bridge, which only allows one vehicle at a time.

ment to maintain steady progress and ensure that the project does not face further interruptions.

They urged the depart-

It is noteworthy that during his Sopore visit on November 15 last year, Minister Javid Dar had acknowledged the delay in the Mazbug bridge project.

He said he was aware of the inconvenience to residents and assured that the bridge would be completed in the coming months, adding that the regular follow ups were needed to keep the work



**EDI**TUESDAY | 25.11.2025

EDITORIAL-

# PM Modi's IBSA Vision Deserves Support From International Community

Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2025

Powering Viksit Bharat @2047

1 Strengthening financial discipline and accountability

2 Optimizing distribution network utilization

3 Strengthening uninterrupted, efficient, and

4 Ensuring and protecting interests of the farmers

Trime Minister Narendra Modi's address at the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) summit in Johannesburg represents a significant articulation of the Global South's legitimate demand for a more equitable world order. His assertion that UN Security Council reform is "no longer an option, but a necessity" captures the urgent need to democratise global governance institutions that remain frozen in a 20th-century power structure. This call reflects the aspirations

of billions who seek fair representation in international decision-making. The Prime Minister's proposals demonstrate a forwardlooking approach to South-South cooperation. The suggestion to establish an 'IBSA Digital Innovation Alliance' is particularly visionary, offering a practical framework for sharing India's successful digital public infrastructure, like UPI and CoWIN, with partner nations. This initiative could accelerate digital inclusion across three continents

while ensuring that technological sovereignty remains with developing nations. Equally commendable is Modi's emphasis on combating terrorism without double standards, which is a clear reference to the selective condemnation that has long plagued global counter-terrorism efforts. By proposing institutionalised NSA-level meetings, he seeks to create concrete mechanisms for security cooperation rather than remaining content with symbolic declarations. With IBSA members having consecutively held G20 presidencies, the grouping has demonstrated its capacity to shape global agendas around human-centric development. Modi's call for a global compact on AI, in which he emphasised human oversight, transparency, and restrictions on malicious use, shows India's growing leadership in navigating emerging technological challenges. These initiatives reflect a sophisticated understanding of 21st-century diplomacy where

technology, security, and institutional reform intersect. By positioning IBSA as a bridge between three continents and three major democracies, PM Modi has outlined a vision of multilateralism that is both inclusive and action-oriented. With the world grappling with fragmentation, this emphasis on unity, cooperation, and shared development offers a constructive path forward that deserves wholehearted support from the international community.

# Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2025: Reforming The Electricity Sector

**Press Information Bureau** 

The Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2025, is a major step toward transforming India's power system to meet the needs of a rapidly growing economy. It aims to create a future-ready electricity sector that delivers reliable, affordable, and high-quality power to every consumer: farmers and households, to shops and industries. The Bill moves away from the old monopoly supply model and encourages a performancedriven approach, where both public and private utilities compete fairly to improve consumer service. It promotes better use of the existing electricity network with transparency and accountability so that citizens get more value for every rupee spent.

Importantly, the reforms fully protect subsidised tariffs for farmers and low-income households. By providing a platform for the Centre and States to work together, it gives a big role to the states in shaping policies. More than just an update, this Bill is a blueprint for a modern, efficient, and resilient power sector. It aligns with India's developmental aspirations, from farmers to industries. The bill supports the country's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, supporting India's long-term economic growth.

Correcting the Current: The Push Behind the Amendment

The Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2025, was brought forward to resolve deeprooted inefficiencies, ease financial strain on the power sector, promote competition, and optimise network cost across India's power distribution sector.

Persistent financial losses in distribution companies (discoms) due to poor billing efficiency, high aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses.

Lack of competition in electricity supply, with consumers tied to a single discom, limiting service quality and innovation. Cross-subsidisation distortions, where industrial users pay inflated tariffs to subsidise other categories, making Indian manufacturing less competitive.

transparent service

and other consumers.

The Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2025,

Objective & Vision

aims to transform the existing market structure by rationalising cross-subsidy, promoting cost-reflective tariffs, and enabling direct procurement of power by industrial users. It seeks to dismantle longstanding barriers to India's manufacturing competitiveness, making industrial power more affordable, reliable, and responsive to market demands, and at the same time protecting the subsidised tariff for farmers and other eligible consumers.

The Bill empowers State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) to determine cost-reflective wheeling charges to ensure adequate network development by all the distribution licensees in accordance with the framework established by the SERCs. These regulated charges will be uniformly applicable to all users of the distribution network, whether public or private. This mechanism ensures that utilities have sufficient financial resources for staff salaries, routine maintenance, and future network development.

The ISTS Model: Efficient, Fair, Reliable India already operates a successful Inter-State Transmission System (ISTS) built on shared infrastructure. Both public and private Transmission Service Providers (TSPs), including Powergrid (a CPSU), compete to develop ISTS assets under the oversight of the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC). Monthly payments made by users are fairly redistributed among the TSPs. This model has helped reduce costs and construction time for ISTS projects while maintaining high reliability.

Powering Reform: Core Pillars of the Bill The Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2025, sets the stage for a more efficient, environmentally and financially sustainable, transparent, and consumer-focused power sector. It blends structural reforms with regulatory clarity to modernise electricity distribution across India. By aligning policy with evolving needs, the Bill aims to deliver quality service, financial discipline, and sustainable growth.

The Bill promotes fair competition between government and private distribution companies in electricity supply, overseen by State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs). This approach is expected to enhance service quality, boost operational efficiency, and offer electricity supply to the industrial sector at a reasonable cost. By shifting from a monopoly-based supply to performance-driven delivery, it fosters a more accountable and consumer-oriented power sector, while protecting the interests of the farmers and other consumers.

Structural Reforms Facilitate regulated competition in electricity distribution, allowing multiple licensees to operate in the same area using shared and optimized infrastructure.

Mandates Universal Service Obligation (USO) for all licensees, ensuring nondiscriminatory access and supply to all consumers, while enabling SERCs to make Distribution licensees free from USO, in consultation with State Governments, for large consumers eligible for Open Access (more than 1 MW).

Tariff and Cross-Subsidy Rationalisation Promotes cost-reflective tariffs while protecting subsidised consumers (e.g., farmers, poor households) through transparent budgeted subsidies under Section 65.

Seeks elimination of cross-subsidy for the Manufacturing Industry, Railways, and Metro railways within five years Infrastructure and Network Efficiency

Empowers Appropriate Commissions to regulate wheeling charges and prevent du-

plication of distribution networks. Introduces provisions for Energy Storage Systems (ESS) and defines their role in the electricity ecosystem.

Governance Regulatory

Strengthening Establishes an Electricity Council for Centre-State policy coordination and consensus-building.

Empowers State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) to enforce standards, penalise non-compliance, and determine tariffs suo moto if applications are delayed.

Sustainability and Market Development Strengthens obligations for non-fossil energy procurement, with penalties for non-compliance.

Promotes power market development, including new instruments and trading platforms.

Legal and Operational Clarity

Updated definitions and references (e.g., Companies Act 2013).Introduces detailed provisions for the Electric Line Authority, including compensation, dispute resolution, and coordination with local authorities. The power of the Electric Line Authority will be the same as the Telegraph Authority under the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.

Conclusion:

The Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2025, introduces key reforms to modernise India's power sector. It promotes competition in distribution, strengthens regulatory oversight, and supports fair pricing mechanisms. The Bill safeguards subsidies for vulnerable consumers while enabling direct power access for industries. Together, these measures aim to build a more efficient, accountable, and future-ready electricity system aligned with national development priorities.

Ministry of Power: https://powermin.gov.in/sites/default/files/ webform/notices/Seeking\_comments\_on\_ Draft\_Electricity\_Amendment\_Bill\_2025.pdf

Press Information Bureau: https://www.pib.gov.in/FactsheetDetails. aspx?Id=150442

# What To Do When You Don't Know What To Do

**Andrea Wachter** 

Tou know those moments when clarity suddenly shows up in your gut. Maybe you just know it's time for bed. Or you sense a need for fresh air, or connection, or quiet. You get an urge to look up an author and learn from them. Or an unexpected urge to stop listening to content that no longer feels right. Maybe a friend comes to mind out of the blue, and you feel moved to reach out to them.

Sometimes, you're deciding whether or not to do something and the answer becomes instantly clear. You're not forcing it. It's simply an internal "yes" or "no." It might even be "I'm not sure yet" or "I need more time" or "I changed my mind," the human version of recalculating.

### **Our Built-In GPS**

That inner knowing is intuition. It's our built-in GPS, included in every make and model of us. It helps us navigate life. When we clear out internal noise and set aside distractions, we can hear it more easily.

If you're not sure what your intuition sounds like yet, that's completely OK. It becomes clearer with practice and patience. Intuition may feel soft and subtle or unmistakably strong, whether it's nudging you toward something or signaling you to step

We're not even in charge of what our intuition will guide us to do. We're only in charge of whether we listen for it and to it. Sometimes our inner guidance nudges us to reach out for support or to give a situation some time. It might offer a strong or soft sense to avoid something or to lean into it. You might feel drawn to a book, a conversation, or an action. Other times you might feel guided away from it. All of this is intuition at work.

We can lean on this guidance in every area of life, even when we're facing tough decisions. I had a situation recently where I was struggling with a decision and realized that I simply did not know what to do. Instead of wrestling with it in the confines of my mind, I turned to something deeper and asked for help.

For me, this feels like tapping into something bigger than my own mind. I like to consider the source that created everything: trees, flowers, butterflies, human beings, stars, and snowflakes. The source that made no two fingerprints the same. Clearly this source is wiser than my limited mind.

### **Staying Open for Guidance**

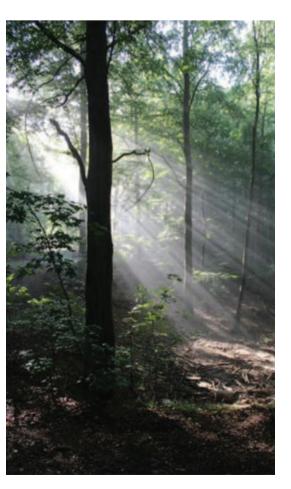
So I turned to it and handed over the situation I was wrestling with. Then came part two: staying open for guidance.

On this particular day, after surrendering my situation, I noticed my mind trying to pick the problem back again. I simply handed it back over. Every time I slipped into trying-to-figure-it-out mode, I let it go again. I kept handing the situation back to the source that made everything and went about my day. I did what was before me to do, including things my intuition guided me toward, along with the things that were already on my calendar.

Clarity doesn't always come instantly. The key is asking and staying open. Answers come when they're ready and when we're available to hear them, often in unexpected ways. Of course, there are times when life asks for a quick decision. In those moments, intuition may show up as the very first sense you feel before the mind starts spinning. Even a few slow breaths can help you notice any signals inside of you. And if clarity doesn't come, we make the best decision we can in the moment and stay open

Then, without looking for the answer and when I least expected it, the solution to my dilemma appeared. It wasn't even an option I'd considered when I was trying to squeeze an answer out of my mind. It arrived when I had fully let it

I asked for guidance from something bigger than my



mind, and guidance came. That's often how intuition works. It shows us paths we can't see when we're too focused on the problem.

### **Trusting Your Inner Wisdom**

When our minds settle, even a little, and we make some space inside, it becomes easier to hear our heart-based wisdom. It's always there, waiting for us to listen in whatever way we can. It might be a gut feeling or a clear thought. It might be an undeniable knowing or a soft internal whisper. It might guide you to reach out for support or to stop a behavior that feels hurtful to your body. No matter what the topic or time of day is, we can connect with something bigger than our minds and ask for guidance. Free

So the next time you're unsure about something, whether it's a simple decision or a complex one, remember that you have steady inner guidance available at all times. You can test this out if you're new to asking and letting go, and you can return to it if it's something you've tried and trust.

Consider the source that created everything. Ask for guidance and clarity. Let go. Do what's before you to do. Then watch the answers come when you least expect them. Andrea Wachter, LMFT is a psychotherapist, author, and teacher.

Source: Psychology Today

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



# HADP changing Agri landscape, generates Rs 298 Cr revenue CS lays focus on establishment, tracking of units for its success

stating that sustained and di-

versified growth across sectors

would provide a significant

economic boost to the farming

community. He emphasized the

need to bridge gaps between

credit applications, sanctioned

and disbursed cases, including

reducing pendency and improv-

ing coordination with banking

institutions. He assured that

all necessary clarifications and

operational support would be

extended to banks for enhanc-

Managing Director, HADP,

Sandeep Kumar presented a

detailed overview of the pro-

gramme's performance and out-

comes, informing that since its

inception, HADP has facilitated

the establishment of over 91,600

agricultural units across J&K,

with more than 75,000 units

actively monitored through the

Output Tracking App (OTA). The

initiative has generated an im-

pressive 1.34 crore person-days

ing their performance.

**KT News Desk** 

IAMMU, NOVEMBER 24: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Monday conducted an activity-wise, outcome-based comprehensive review of all 29 projects being implemented under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) aimed at boosting the Agriculture, Horticulture and Livestock sectors across the districts of Jammu and Kashmir in a structured, time-bound and resultoriented manner.

The high-level review meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department (APD), Shailendra Kumar; Managing Director, J&K Bank; Vice Chancellors of SKUAST Kashmir and Jammu; Managing Director, HADP; Heads of Departments of Agriculture Production and other concerned officers. Deputy Commissioners from all districts participated through video conferencing.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary laid strong emphasis on achieving tangible outcomes by ensuring the establishment of targeted units under each project. He directed the department to track every unit rigorously for productivity, sustainability and success, stating that performance indicators under each project must become the hallmark of effective implementation.

instructed further the Agriculture Production Department to formulate a roster of senior officers for frequent field visits to districts for on-ground assessment and



accountability and efficiency, he called for regular evaluation of progress and corrective interventions wherever required.

Taking project-wise ap-praisal, the Chief Secretary reviewed achievements and progress registered in each activity and sought detailed feedback from the respective Heads of Departments regarding current performance and future roadmaps to meet targets in both public and private sectors. He underlined that all HADP projects hold immense potential for income enhancement and employment generation, citing Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Hi-Tech Vegetable Cultivation, Dairy and Poultry sectors as key growth drivers.

He also directed banking institutions to significantly increase credit disbursement rates and minimize rejection cases, urging Deputy Commissioners to actively monitor credit flow and coordinate with banks to expedite financial support to beneficiaries for seamless implementation of



engine in rural areas. He further divulged that the Kumar highlighted the transformative impact of HADP on the UT's agricultural landscape,

programme has demonstrated exceptional return on investment, yielding ₹2.24 in revenue and 87% profit for every rupee of subsidy disbursed. Cumulatively, the programme has generated a total revenue of ₹298 crore and profits amounting to ₹126 crore for unit holders operating across multiple sectors.

Highlighting establishment success, it was informed that around 82% of the units are fully operational and tracked, with the addition of 14,000 new units since the last review held in August 2025.

The meeting also noted the pivotal role of the Daksh Kisan Portal in farmer capacity building. The platform has registered over 3.5 lakh farmers, with 2.6 lakh enrolled in various skillbased courses. So far, 2.1 lakh farmers have been trained, equipping them with modern agricultural techniques to enhance productivity and income.

Major progress was recorded across all 29 constituent projects. In vegetable production,

led to the establishment of 7,976 units with an additional annual production of 1.95 lakh metric tonnes. In the Dairy and Mutton sectors, milk production has reached 39 lakh metric tonnes while mutton production stands at 380 lakh kilograms, indicating steady progress towards self-sufficiency.

In trout fish farming, production has touched 2,650 metric tonnes with the establishment of 635 raceways. Additionally, distribution of 20,800 modern farm machinery units has significantly reduced manual labour and improved field efficiency.

The promotion of high-value and niche crops resulted in the production of 207.8 MT of quality planting material, including Saffron and Kala Zeera, across both Jammu and Kashmir divisions. The integration of technology through OTA and Kisan Sathi Portal has enabled realtime monitoring, enhanced transparency and strengthened accountability in implementation of this mega agri development programme here.

About the Holistic Agriculture Programme Development (HADP) it is worth mentioning here that it is a flagship initiative of the J&K Government aimed at revamping the agricultural sector through 29 focused projects covering seed quality enhancement, niche crop cultivation, mechanization, and market linkage development. The programme envisions doubling farmers' income while ensuring economic sustainability and resilience of the farming commuSamvidhan Divas 2025

# DC Budgam reviews arrangements



**KT News Desk** 

BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 24: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat Monday convened a detailed preparatory meeting to review arrangements for the celebration of Samvidhan Divas (Constitution Day), which will be observed across the district on 26th November 2025.

On the occasion, the DC assessed department-wise preparedness and finalized the schedule of activities to be conducted at the District Headquarters and all Sub-Divisions.

As part of the celebrations. the district administration will organise a 'Run for Rights', from the New Parking area Budgam to the DC Office Complex Budgam. The event aims to highlight the constitutional values of equality, justice, liberty, and fraternity.

The run will be followed by a Preamble Reading Ceremony. Subsequently, a documentary on constitutional values and history will be screened for participants, after which an online quiz will be conducted to encourage broader public engagement and awareness regarding the Constitution.

The DC directed all line departments to ensure seamless coordination, adequate logistical support, security

arrangements, medical cilities, and wide community participation.

He stressed that the programme must reflect the spirit of the Constitution and promote civic understanding among citizens, especially youth and students.

The DC further instructed that similar programmes be organised in all sub-divisions, colleges, Schools etc to ensure district-wide participation in the national event.

He emphasised timely finalization of routes, traffic regulation, digital arrangements for the online quiz, and communication of the programme schedule to educational institutions and the general public.

The DC urged officers to work in synergy to make the Constitution Day celebrations vibrant, informative, and inclusive, honouring the vision of the founding fathers of the nation.

The DC directed officers for ensuring full preparedness and active support for the successful observance of Samvidhan Divas 2025 across Budgam district.

Besides, ADC Budgam, Mehrajud-din Shah, CPO Budgam, CEO MC Budgam, CEO Budgam, ACP CMO, DIO Information, DSWO, DIO Informatics, EOs of all MCs , and representatives from forest department were present in

# **DC Shopian chairs NCORD** meeting

**KT NEWS DESK** 

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER, 24: The District-Level NCORD Committee Meeting was Monday convened under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta here at Mini-Secretariat to review the measures being taken to curb drug and substance abuse and break the chain of parcotics in the district.

During the meeting, The DC took department-wise review of enforcement actions, counselling interventions, awareness programmes and monitoring mechanisms adopted by all concerned departments and stressed the need for strong inter-departmental coordination, and intensified action against

drug peddlers. The meeting also discussed the issues of enforcement and inspection of drug stores, coaching institutes, Surveillance in Hot spot areas, IEC Campaign in drug abuse.

The DC also instructed concerned to strengthen surveillance in vulnerable areas of hotspots and initiate strict action against persons involved in drug trade and persons having amassed property from proceeds of crime.

Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmad Choudhary; ADC Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; SDM Zainapora and other officers of the district were present in the meeting.

# Doorstep Passport Service reaches Kupwara for 2 days

RPO Sgr to deploy MPV from Nov 27 to 28

**KT News Desk** 

Srinagar, Nov 24: In a citizen centric initiative aimed at improving accessibility to passport services, the Regional Passport Office Srinagar, under the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, will deploy a Mobile Passport Van in Kupwara from Thursday, 27th November 2025 to Friday 28th November 2025.

The initiative is part of the Passport Seva Project (PSP), aimed at delivering efficient, transparent, and citizen friendly passport services across the country. The Mobile Passport Van will provide doorstep passport facilities, especially in remote and far flung regions under the jurisdiction of the Srinagar office.

B.S. Rawat, Regional Passport Officer, Srinagar, said that the



introduction of the Mobi Passport Van service in Kupwara is a proactive step towards extending passport services to underserved regions. This initiative reflects the Ministry's continued efforts to ensure that citizens, irrespective of their location, are provided timely and hassle free access to essential documentation. The Mobile Passport Van will be stationed at the Deputy Commissioner, Office Park, Kupwara, during the specified dates.

Applicants from Kupwara and nearby areas who wish to avail the services must book an appointment through the official Passport Seva website www.passportindia.gov. in. While booking, applicants should select "Passport Van" as the service option and choose a suitable date and time slot between 27th to 28th November 2025.

On the day of their ment, applicants are advised to visit the designated location at the scheduled time. They may contact the Mobile Passport Van team, bearing Registration Number PB65BF1377, for any on site assistance or procedural support.

This initiative marks a significant step in decentralising passport services and making them more accessible to citizens residing in remote regions. It reflects the Ministry's broader vision of delivering timely, transparent, and efficient services to all sections of the population.

# Chairperson DDC, DC flag off Trekking Expedition

**KT News Desk** 

BANDIPORA, **NOVEMBER** 24: Chairperson, District Development Council (DDC) Bandipora, Abdul Gani Bhat, along with Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Monday flagged off the Youth Services & Sports Bandipora trekking contingent (Boys Group) for the Inter Zonal District Level Residential Trekking Expedition to Pahalgam.

The week-long expedition, scheduled from 24th November to 30th November, features selected boys representing different educational zones of the district. The programme aims to promote adventure sports, physical fitness, discipline, teamwork, and environmental awareness among the youth.

Speaking on the occasion, the DDC Chairperson praised the participants for their enand encouraged thusiasm

them to take full advantage of the learning exposure provided through the outdoor adventure experience. He extended his best wishes for a safe and successful expedition.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the efforts of the Youth Services & Sports Department in organizing such initiatives to channelize youthful energy into constructive platforms. She advised the young trekkers to maintain discipline, follow instructions of escorting staff, and enjoy the natural beauty and heritage of Pahalgam responsibly.

Officials of the Youth Services & Sports Department Bandipora, parents, and sports lovers were present during the flag-off ceremony and conveyed their best wishes to the participants.

The expedition is expected to contribute towards developing leadership qualities, confidence, and a strong spirit of adventure among the young boys.

## One-day salary deduction for absentee employees



**KT News Desk** 

NOVEMBER 24: RAJOURI, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma Monday conducted a series of surprise inspections across various government offices to assess functioning, service delivery and staff attendance.

During a surprise inspection at the Office of the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sunderbani, the Deputy Commissioner found four employees absent from duty without authorization. Strict directions were issued to seek an immediate explanation from the absentee officials and the controlling officer was instructed to initiate action as per rules.

The DC also inspected the Development Office (BDO) Siot, where he reviewed the attendance register, ongoing works and public service delivery mechanisms.

Later, during an inspection at Lamberi, eight employees were found absent. Taking serious note of the absenteeism, the Deputy Commissioner ordered deduction of one-day salary from all such employees and reiterated that negligence of duty, particularly in public-facing departments, would not be tolerated.

Reiterating the commitment of the district administration towards efficient governance, the Deputy Commissioner instructed all officers to maintain regular attendance, ensure timely delivery of public services and uphold the highest standards of accountability.

The Deputy Commissioner also stated that such inspections will continue in the coming days to ensure effective implementation of government schemes and responsive administration at all levels.

### **Medical camps** organised across Doda

**KT News Desk** 

DODA, NOVEMBER 24: A series of Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) medical camps were organised Monday at multiple locations across this mountainous district. The health outreach initiatives were aimed at providing a wide range of healthcare facilities directly at the doorstep of the public, particularly those residing in farflung and underserved areas.

In Medical Block Ghat, a medical camp was organized at Village Khal. Dr. Mirza Nadeem Beg, with the assistance of the local health staff and the MMU team, screened 79 patients and provided essential diagnostic services and medical support.

Similarly, another camp was held at Village Drone Jamani in Medical Block Thathri. Dr. Ikhlaq Hussain, supported by the local health staff and MMU team, provided necessary medical consultation and care to 68 patients. Free medicines were provided to

all beneficiaries as per requirement

at both camps.

Apart from medical consultations, the staff also raised awareness among the community on hygiene, disease prevention and the importance of timely healthcare seeking behavior.

# SHEW Shopian organises awareness programme

**KT News Desk** 

**NOVEMBER** SHOPIAN, 23: Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women (SHEW), Mission Shakti Shopian, organised an awareness programme Monday at Anganwadi Centre (AWC) Cheermarg.

The programme was aimed at informing and educating local women about various government welfare schemes and initiatives designed for their social and economic upliftment.

The officials provided detailed information on multiple social security schemes, including Old Age Pension, Widow Sponsorship, PCP and State Marriage Assistance Scheme, helping women understand eligibility and benefits. Participants were also made aware of employment and financial support schemes such as Tejaswini, Mission Youth, and other loan-based initiatives that encourage



self-employment and entrepreneurship young women.

To further promote selfreliance, the programme highlighted several skill development schemes available through various government departments. Women were encouraged to utilise these opportunities to enhance their skills and improve livelihood prospects.

A key component of the session was the sharing of crucial helpline numbers, such as the Women Helpline (181), Child Helpline (1098) and the Drug De-addiction Helpline (14446). These

numbers were emphasised to ensure that women can access immediate support in times of need.

In addition, the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) initiative was discussed, focusing on the importance of girls' education, protection, and empowerment. The participants were sensitised about the need to promote gender equality and create a supportive environment for the growth of girls within the community. The programme saw enthusiastic participation from local women, who expressed gratitude for the valuable information shared.

### Sham Lal Sharma chairs **PAC** meeting

**KT News Desk** 

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 24: A meeting of Public Accounts Committee (PAC) held Monday under the Chairmanship of MLA, Sham Lal Sharma, to examine the CAG's Audit Paras pertaining to the Revenue and Disaster Management, Relief Rehabilitation & Reconstruction Department.

Members, Mubarak Gul, Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurezi), Balwant Singh Mankotia, Qaysar Jamshaid Lone, Sajad Shaheen and Muzaffar Iqbal Khan were present in the meeting.

He directed the senior officers of the departments to submit their replies regarding Audit para's within the time frame.

The Chairman said that the PAC plays a crucial role to ensure accountability and transparency in government spending. He added that non-seriousness on part of any official would not be tolerated by the committee. Secretary, JKLA, Manoj Kumar Pandit: Director, Finance, Revenue; Special Secretary, DMRR&R; Director Finance, DMRR&R and other senior officers of concerned departments.



# Railways' Jammu Div allots multi-purpose stalls through record-breaking mega e-auction

**KT News Desk** 

Jammu, Nov 24: In a significant step towards boosting asset monetization and enhancing non-fare revenue, a mega e-auction was successfully conducted for the allotment of multi-purpose stalls across various stations of the Jammu Division.

This initiative was carried out under the leadership of Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Uchit Singhal, and witnessed enthusiastic participation from all interested bidders.

In the e-auction results, multipurpose stalls were successfully allotted at various railway stations, marking a strategic move towards improving passenger amenities and boosting local economic development.

Details of multi-purpose stalls allotted under the e-auction are as:

1. Multi-purpose stalls were successfully allotted at Platform 2/3 of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Railway Station. The rent fixed for the first year is approximately ₹25,00,000, and for five years, the total rent to be charged by the Railways is approximately ₹1,47,50,000.

2. Multi-purpose stalls were successfully allotted at Platform 1 of Pathankot Cantt Railway Station. The rent fixed for the first year is approximately ₹11,00,000, and for five years,



the total rent to be charged by the Railways is approximately ₹64,95,310.

3. Multi-purpose stalls were successfully allotted at Platform 1 of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Railway Station. The rent fixed for the first year is approximately ₹6,55,888, and for five years, the total rent to be charged by the Railways is approximately ₹38,69,739.

4. Multi-purpose stalls were successfully allotted at Platform 1 of Sopore Railway Station. The rent fixed for the first year is approximately ₹2,67,786, and for five years, the total rent to be charged by the Railways is

approximately ₹15,79,937.

5. Multi-purpose stalls were successfully allotted at Platform 1 of Anantnag Railway Station. The rent fixed for the first year is approximately ₹2,22,786, and for five years, the total rent to be charged by the Railways is approximately ₹13,14,437.

Through these multi-purpose stalls, the Railways is expected to generate a total revenue of ₹2,80,09,243 over five years. Beyond financial benefits, this initiative will introduce convenient and essential services at railway stations, enhancing the travel experience of passengers. Commuters will now have easy

access to necessary items such as water bottles, food, magazines, soap, oil, children's toys, and other essential goods.

Speaking on this successful e-auction, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Shri Uchit Singhal said, "The e-auction conducted on 24 November 2025 has generated the highest revenue among all previous eauctions. Along with increased revenue, these multi-purpose stalls will greatly benefit passengers by providing essential items conveniently, making their journey more comfortable and hassle-free, while also promoting local businesses."

# Dir IIIM Jammu briefs Chief Secy on institute's advanced R&D initiatives



**KT News Desk** 

Jammu, Nov 24: Director, CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM) Jammu, Dr. Zabeer Ahmed on Monday called on Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo and apprised him of the institute's ongoing research and development initiatives, along with its role in advancing the region's scientific and bio economic landscape.

During the interaction the Director provided a comprehensive overview of CSIR-IIIM's institutional activities, highlighting its impactful work in the domestication and captive cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants across Jammu & Kashmir.

He outlined the progress

made under CSIR's flagship programmes, including Aroma Mission, Floriculture initiatives and region-specific Smart Agriculture Missions, which aim to integrate scientific interventions with agricultural practices to enhance productivity, sustainability and farmer livelihoods.

The Director further apprised the Chief Secretary of the institute's contribution in drug discovery and research programmes, underlining how these efforts are fostering innovation, strengthening the regional research ecosystem and accelerating the translation of laboratory discoveries into commercially viable and socially relevant applications.

Chief

acknowledged CSIR-IIIM's contribution towards high-quality research, innovation and public-oriented scientific outreach. He encouraged the institute for continuing its efforts in aligning advanced research with regional development needs and stressed the importance of its role in supporting Jammu & Kashmir's emerging scientific and bio economic framework.

The Chief Secretary further underscored the need for further collaboration between the institute and the UT administration to leverage scientific expertise for strengthening agriculture, pharmaceuticals and allied sectors, thereby ensuring inclusive growth and enhanced income opportunities for local communities.

### **CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE**

#### After backlash

Peoples Conference general secretary Imran Reza Ansari had questioned the rationale behind the hike, demanding clarity on who within the Power Development Department authorized the "magical midnight-thought tariff ideas."

The Kashmir Trade Alliance (KTA) had voiced strong opposition to the proposal. KTA President Aijaz Shahdhar had termed it "arbitrary" and "unjustified," warning that such a move would severely impact the business community and the general public.

The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) had also opposed the move, calling it unjustified and an attempt to shift the burden of systemic failures onto the people of Kashmir.

Shrine Board Medical College Row

Reacting on the controversy surrounding the selection of students for the MBBS programme at the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi (SMVD) Institute of Medical Excellence, the Chief Minister stated that admissions were based on merit, not on the preference of boys and girls from any particular community.

In his remarks, CM Omar said, "When the Assembly had passed the bill to establish Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, where was it written that boys and girls belonging to one particular community will be kept out of it? It was said that admission to the university will be done based only on merit, not on religion."

His comments came in the wake of protests triggered by the recent MBBS admissions at the Katra-based medical college, which saw 42 out of 50 seats allocated to Muslim students.

The controversy has sparked intense debate, with the BJP and several Hindu groups calling for the institution to reserve seats exclusively for Hindu students.

CM Omar took a dig at senior BJP leader and LoP Sunil Sharma, who had expressed strong reservations over the admission process.

Sharma, alongside representatives from different organisations, had met Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha last Saturday to raise concerns about the Muslim-majority admissions.

Sharma had argued that the process has sparked anger among devotees of Mata Vaishno Devi and the larger Hindu community.

E-auction of limestone blocks

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister reaffirmed his government's commitment to ensuring transparency in the auctioning of mineral blocks in Jammu & Kashmir, stating that the new e-auction mechanism will unlock economic potential in some of the most underserved regions of the region.

The Chief Minister made these remarks during the launch and roadshow of the e-auction of the first seven limestone mineral blocks of J&K, held at the Convention Centre, Jammu.

The e-auction was jointly commenced by Union Minister for Coal & Mines, G. Kishan Reddy and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

In his address, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said that the e-auction initiative marks a crucial step towards economic revival and sustainable development in mineral-rich but economically weaker areas of J&K.

"At least, we have limestone — and that limestone lies in areas where the economic situation is very bad," he said.

The Chief Minister expressed gratitude to Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy for proposing a special group within the Ministry of Mines to fast-track mineral exploration in Jammu and

He recalled how J&K's mineral wealth including the famous Neelam (sapphire) of Paddar and marble deposits – have remained commercially underutilized for decades. The CM revealed that Minister Reddy per-

sonally intervened and urged J&K to take renewed interest to complete the process.

"In between, Mr. Reddy picked up the phone from Delhi and spoke to me. He asked me to push this forward so that these e-auctions are concluded successfully.'

The Chief Minister said the initiative is aimed at increasing J&K's own revenue, which currently stands at around 500 crore from these mineral blocks.

"When more blocks are identified, I hope our earnings will grow. I look forward to the day when the Chief Minister of J&K will not have to go to Delhi seeking funds. On the contrary, we will be self-sufficient and capable of contributing to the Centre."

Reiterating his commitment to good governance, Omar Abdullah added, "Our effort is to have these blocks auctioned in a transparent manner. I assure you that the J&K Government will not create any obstacles. Instead, we will ensure that this process — and the next one is successful. I hope this programme proves beneficial for J&K and for the entire country."

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary described the day as "historic," marking a transformative step toward harnessing the mineral wealth of Iammu and Kashmir.

Among others the event was also attended by Additional Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Sanjay Lohiya, Additional Chief Secretary, Mining Department, Anil Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Farida M. Naik. senior officials from the Government of India, J&K Government, and representatives from the mining and industrial sectors. (KNO)

### Reddy congratulates

the sector is now contributing significantly to revenue generation for states, thereby enabling them to enhance welfare and development programmes.

Earlier talking to the reporters, Reddy said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah want Jammu and Kashmir to become a mineral state.'

"This limestone mineral blocks auction is happening for the first time in J&K. PM Modi and Amit Shah ji want to create more and more employment opportunities for the I&K people and increase mineral activity here" he added.

Reddy described the auction as a transformative milestone for the region and reaffirmed the Government's commitment to ensuring that mineral development leads to employment generation, industrial growth, and long-term socio-economic benefits for local communities.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah noted that the initiative will strengthen investor confidence, diversify the region's industrial base, and support employment and entrepreneurship avenues for the youth.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary congratulated all stakeholders and acknowledged the collaborative role of the Centre and the UT Government in driving this reform.

As part of the roadshow, MECL presented detailed technical and geological assessments of the identified blocks, SBI Capital Markets explained the transactional framework, and MSTC demonstrated the e-auction process, ensuring that potential bidders are adequately informed and supported.

SIGNIFICANT STEP IN IMPLEMENTING

MINING REFORMS Notably, the launching of mineral blocks marked a significant step in implementing the mining reforms introduced under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act (MMDR Act), 2015 and has positioned Jammu & Kashmir among States and UTs adopting a transparent, digital, and auctionbased system for mineral resource allocation.

An official said, "Seven limestone blocks, spread across the districts of Anantnag, Rajouri, and Poonch, were put up for auction. These blocks, classified under G3 and G4 stages of the United Nations Framework Classification (UNFC), cover approximately 314 hectares and are anticipated to generate significant industrial interest, particularly in the cement and construction sectors.'

The auction, he said, is being conducted under subsections (4) and (5) of Section 11 of the MMDR Act, represents a major step forward in unlocking the mineral wealth of Jammu & Kashmir, which is now entering the national competitive bidding ecosystem for the first

"The limestone auction in Jammu & Kashmir aligns with the Central Government's broader development push for the Union Territory. Under the Prime Minister's Industrial Development Scheme, J&K is being positioned as an emerging investment hub with a clear focus on job creation and transparent industrial processes. Jammu & Kashmir is witnessing improvements in connectivity and infrastructure, which support mining and allied sectors. The successful auction is expected to boost local industry, generate employment, and contribute to the government's vision of fast-tracking economic growth in Jammu & Kashmir," he added.

The sale of Tender Documents will begin on November 28, 2025, with the pre-bid conference on December 12, 2025. The last date for purchase of Tender Documents is January 19, 2026, and the last date for submission of bids is January 20, 2026 via the MSTC online auction platform, the official said, adding that this initiative reflects the Government of India's continued commitment to transparency, technology-enabled regulation, and sustainable resource utilization-advancing the vision of a self-reliant mineral sector and contributing to the broader national goal of Viksit Bharat 2047. Iammu & Kashmir

For more details on auction terms, timeline, and participation, visit the MSTC auction platform at https://www.mstcecommerce.com/ auctionhome/mlcln/. (KNO)

### **India's tri-services**

Indian Navy plays a key role in the neighbourhood as well as in the global environment in far-off lands where the Army's efforts can play both a supplementary and a complementary role in soft and hard diplomacy. (KNO)

### CM Omar launches

Omar Abdullah said that the e-auction initiative marks a crucial step towards economic revival and sustainable development in mineralrich but economically weaker areas of J&K.

"At least, we have limestone — and that limestone lies in areas where the economic situation is very bad," he said.

The Chief Minister expressed gratitude to Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy for proposing a special group within the Ministry of Mines to fast-track mineral exploration in Jammu and

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aimed at increasing J&K's own revenue, which currently stands at around 500 crore from these mineral blocks. "When more blocks are identified, I hope our earnings will grow. I look forward to the day

when the Chief Minister of J&K will not have to go to Delhi seeking funds. On the contrary, we will be self-sufficient and capable of contributing to the Centre." Reiterating his commitment to good gover-nance, Omar Abdullah added, "Our effort is to have these blocks auctioned in a transparent manner. I assure you that the J&K Government

will not create any obstacles. Instead, we will

ensure that this process — and the next one — is successful. I hope this programme proves beneficial for J&K and for the entire country." Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary described the day as "historic," marking a transformative step toward harnessing the mineral wealth of

Jammu and Kashmir. He said the government is committed to responsibly extract the "scattered wealth hidden in the mountains of J&K," and will soon extend e-auctioning to other high-value resources.

"Besides limestone, we are exploring all options for auctioning lithium, sapphire, and other valuable minerals. Very soon, people will hear good news about these resources," he said.

### LG Sinha visits JKP's

the trainees.

The LG also interacted with the J&K Police personnel undergoing training at CTC. SSP, Training and Special Operations gave a detailed presentation on various components of training and proposed upgradation and infrastructure expansion of the centre.

The Lieutenant Governor was accompanied by Nalin Prabhat, Director General of Police; S.J.M. Gillani, Special Director General (Coordination), PHQ J&K; Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary, Home Department; M.K Sinha, ADGP Headquarters and Director SSG; Bhim Sen Tuti, ÎGP, Jammu; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu and other senior officials.

### LG Sinha, CM Omar

family. I pray for peace of the departed soul," Office of LG, J&K wrote on X.

As per the news agency-Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Abdullah described Dharmendra as a "friend of Jammu and Kashmir" who kept his date with the picturesque region through film shoots and holiday trips till 1987-88.

He remembered Dharmendra's contribution to Bollywood and said his death is a big loss for the film industry. (KNO)

### **J&K Govt**

complete details on Establishment Budget & FRBM to the Finance department much ahead of the scheduled date of discussion.

The departments have also been directed furnish PowerPoint presentations (PPTs) containing data on staffing (sanctioned, in place, contractual, etc.), trends in scheme-wise revenue and capital expenditure, revenue receipts (over the last five years and scope for enhancement), details of major projects and initiatives, and the total liabilities of ongoing projects.

### **BJP MP from Jammu**

the list with 93 percent, followed by Jugal Kishore Sharma (88 percent), Mian Altaf (60 percent), and Er. Rashid (9 percent).

The term of these MPs began on June 9, 2024.

They will complete one and a half years of their term on December 9, 2025. (KNO)

#### probably observe the vacation from the first week of December." About the textbook issue, the minister had

said, "We have already streamlined the matter to a large extent." "Directions have been issued to ensure there is no shortage of books or uniforms," she said.

Pertinently, KNO two weeks back had reported that the School Education Department has tentatively decided to announce the winter vacations in a phased manner from the first week of December for the winter zone of Kashmir division. (KNO)

### Police continue

Winter break up

materials, and reviewed license validity. The shop owners, he added, were briefed to report suspicious transactions and maintain proper documentation. In Pulwama police conducted sudden in-

spections of hospital staff lockers to prevent misuse of hospital spaces and ensure safety protocols. Similar checks were carried out in other health centres across the valley. Multiple CASOs were also conducted in

Kashmir, during which several locations were searched and individuals questioned to prevent anti-national activities.

In Jammu, Kathua, and Samba districts, security forces launched joint search operations, focusing on border villages and sensitive areas.

The official said the teams from the Jammu and Kashmir Police Special Operations Group (SOG), Border Security Force (BSF), and Army carried out the operations to monitor infiltration routes and strengthen local security.

"Checkpoints were established along key routes, including the Jammu-Pathankot National Highway, with vehicles checked thoroughly," he added.

In Kathua, the officials said that operations targeted border villages, with BSF and local border police using drones and sniffer dogs to monitor dense forests and ravines for suspicious activity.

The south Kashmir districts, including Pulwama, Anantnag, Kupwara, and Shopian, also witnessed multiple operations aimed at maintaining security and public safety.

"These measures are part of an ongoing strategy to prevent unlawful activities, monitor sensitive areas, and ensure the safety of residents," the official said. (KNO)

### **Night chill intensifies**

predicted further fall in both maximum and minimum temperatures by 1-2 degrees Celsius during the next seven days.

According to him, shallow to moderate fog would likely continue at many places of the Kashmir division and isolated places of the Jammu division.

Director MeT further said that generally dry weather is expected till December 1. "On December 2, the weather is expected to remain generally cloudy while there is a possibility of a brief spell of very light snow over isolated higher reaches towards afternoon," he informed.

The weatherman further added that generally dry weather is expected from December 3

Pertinently, the chill is expected to intensify further, especially after mid-December when the 40-day harshest winter period, known as Chilla-i-Kalan, will commence.

Chilla-i-Kalan will begin on December 21, which is followed by the 20-day Chilla-i-Khurd and later the 10-day Chilla-i-Bacha. (KNO)

# Thunder

# Cinema icon Dharmendra no more

PM Modi condoles demise

#### PTI/AGENCIES

Mumbai, Nov 24: Dharmendra, the star who wrote himself into showbiz legend in a 65year career spanning 300 films ranging from "Satyakam' to "Sholay", died here on Monday, police said here. He was 89.

There was no confirmation from the family.

The actor, who would have turned 90 on December 8, was not keeping well for a while and was in and out of a Mumbai hospital with the family finally deciding to continue his treatment at home earlier this month. A police statement said Dharmendra died this morning and funeral arrangements are being made at the Pawan Hans



crematorium in Ville Parle suburb of Mumbai.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed condolences for the death of Dharmendra, the He-Man of Bollywood. The veteran actor passed away on 24 November at the age of 89.

"The passing of Dharmendra Ji marks the end of an era in Indian cinema. He was an iconic film personality, a phenomenal actor who brought charm and depth to every role he played," PM Modi wrote. "The manner in which he played diverse roles struck a chord with countless people. Dharmendra Ji was equally admired for his sim-plicity, humility and warmth. In this sad hour, my thoughts are with his family, friends and innumerable fans. Om Shanti," he added.

## Irreplaceable loss for Indian film world: Amit Shah

New Delhi, Nov 24: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday condoled the death of veteran actor Dharmendra, terming it an "irreplaceable loss for the Indian film world".

In a message posted on 'X', Shah said coming from an ordinary family, Dharmendra carved an indelible identity for himself in the film industry.

"The passing of Dharmendra ji, who touched the hearts of every citizen for six decades with his finest acting, is an irreplaceable loss for the Indian film world," Shah wrote.

## **Left deep** impression with unparalleled acting: Kharge

New Delhi, Nov 24: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday condoled the passing away of Bollywood actor Dharmendra, saying the Indian film industry has lost a precious star who ruled over the hearts of cinema lovers for decades.

Dharmendra, the star who wrote himself into showbiz legend in a 65-year career spanning 300 films ranging from 'Satyakam' to "Sholay", died in Mumbai on Monday, police said. He was 89.

"The Indian film world has lost a precious star today. The renowned actor Dharmendra is no longer with us. Honored with the Padma Bhushan in 2012, Dharmendra reigned over the hearts of cinema lovers for decades and left a deep impression with his unparalleled acting and simple life," Kharge said in a post in Hindi on X.

He said his passing away marks the end of an era.

"In this hour of grief, I extend my deepest condolences to his family and millions of fans. May God grant peace to his soul," the Congress president said.

The actor, who would have turned 90 on December 8, was not keeping well for a while and was in and out of a Mumbai hospital with the family finally deciding to continue his treatment at home earlier

# **Dharmendra: Machismo with marshmallow** softness, the star who will sparkle forever

Mumbai, Nov 24: When he was not breaking hearts with his gentle smile, he was breaking bones of bad-dies with his "dishoom" biceps. And then there was his comic timing that left the audience bathed in mirth.

Dharmendra was the rare star packing it all in a 65-year career with no full stops.

Machismo, sensitivity, charisma. And classic handsomeness. Sprinkled with stardust and wrapped in tinsel, his was a career that spanned every kind of movie - from intense "Satyakam" to romantic "Baharein Phir Bhi Aayengi", from boisterous "Sholay" to wholesome "Chupke Chupke" and slick actioner "Charas".

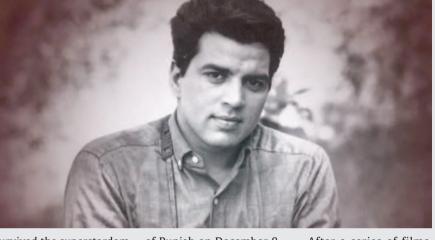
Perhaps the last of the big matinee stars, he refused to fade into the shadows, continuing long after the sun set on the careers of many

of his contemporaries. Dharmendra, the man who more than anyone else perhaps embodied a certain goodness and wholesomeness, died on Monday at his Mumbai home. He would have been 90 on December 8.

In 2023, when he was all of 88, he romanced Shabana Azmi to great effect in Karan Johar's "Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani" -- still breaking hearts and evoking sighs to the strains of that evergreen love song "Abhi Na Jaao Chhod Kar" as he serenades his lost love. And seals it with a kiss!

The gait was slow, the age evident but the twinkling eyes and that warm smile? Intact.

This was an actor who saw the Hindi film industry evolve through the decades, moving from black and white to colour and now the digital age, and ensured that he stayed relevant in each era. His foot firmly planted in commercial cinema, Dharmendra



survived the superstardom of Rajesh Khanna and the rise of Amitabh Bachchan, making sure his space was all his own.

He was Garam Dharam and the original He-Man of Hindi cinema with the marshmallow softness of the fairytale hero.

Dharmendra, who acted in more than 300 films, was often called a 'Greek God', a tag that hid a sensitive artist just a little eclipsed by his macho man roles.

"I have always broken my image every time I went on screen. I don't know what it means to be a Greek god but people used to call me one he said with characteristic modesty in an interview with PTI in 2018.

It was the essence of the simple Punjab village boy and one he retained. Active on social media, Dharmendra frequently shared pictures of produce from his farm in Lonavla and also the Urdu verses he penned and quoted liberally on his

It was an effective way to communicate - the savvy Dharmendra had 2.6 million followers on Instagram and 770.5k X followers. The handle? The evocative "aapkadharam".

Dharmendra was born Dharam Singh Deol in Nasrali village, Ludhiana district of Punjab on December 8, 1935, to an idealistic school teacher. The family moved to Sahenwal village after his father's transfer when Dharmendra was just two. His father, a school teacher, hoped his son would become a professor.

Enamoured by the magic of the movies of Dilip Kumar and Madhubala, Dharmendra started nursing a different dream: to see his name up on the posters. He would often climb a bridge at local station and pray the Frontier Mail chugging through would one day take him to Mumbai, the city of

In 1958, Filmfare magazine announced a nationwide talent hunt. The young Dharam decided to try his luck, won the contest and packed his bags for Mumbai

It did.

The first film he signed was Bimal Roy's "Band-ini" opposite Ashok Kumar and Nutan. While waiting for the movie to begin, he found it hard to make ends meet and worked in a drilling firm for Rs 200 a month to survive.

The first break came in 1960 with Arjun Hingorani's "Dil Bhi Tera, Hum Bhi Tere" in 1960. The debut was not a success. But he did get

After a series of films, including "Ayee Milan Ki Bela" and "Haqeeqat" and "Kaajal", came stardom with the 1966 film "Phool Aur Patthar" opposite Meena Kumari.

That same year saw him in "Anupama", his first film with director Hrishikesh Mukherjee who saw in him the gentle, supportive hero to Sharmila Tagore.

Mukherjee, imagined Dharmendra differently from the rough screen persona of several of his other movies, went on to cast him in "Majhli Didi", "Satyakam", "Guddi", "Chaitali" and of

"Chupke Chupke" where his his role as botany professor Parimal Tripathi will long be remembered.

Dharmendra the superstar bloomed to his full potential in the 70s and 80s when another big name was on the horizon: Amitabh Bachchan.

He teamed up with Bachchan in "Chupke Chupke". And also memorably in "Sholay" where their roles as Jai and Veeru came to define male bonding, the two characters blending comedy, action and romance.

Dharmendra continued to get top billing in the 80s and romanced heroines like Sridevi and Dimple Kapadia, who also worked with his

# India, Canada agree to resume FTA talks: Goyal



New Delhi, Nov 24: India and Canada have agreed to resume negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with an aim to increase the two-way trade to USD 50 billion by 2030, according to Commerce and Industry Min-

ister Piyush Goyal. An FTA or Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) has many strategic elements to it and it is a demonstration of the trust between the two countries, Goyal said here at an event on Monday.

The pact would give confidence to investors. businesses of both sides, he said.

"We have agreed to begin negotiations on a high-ambition CEPA and double the trade between the two nations by 2030," he said, adding the two countries are natural allies and do not compete with each other.

The strengths of India and Canada can become a force multiplier for businesses and investors, Goyal said.

There is a lot that we can learn from Canada and a lot we can offer Canada.

There is a lot of potential on critical minerals, critical minerals processing technologies.

There is a good possibility on nuclear energy - particularly with our engagement with Canada on Uranium supplies," he said, adding, "we can diversify our supply chains on both sides".

In 2023, Canada had paused negotiations for a free trade agreement with India. The India-Canada

relations hit rock bottom following then Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations in 2023 of a potential Indian link to the killing of Hardeep Sin-

India had dismissed Trudeau's accusation as "absurd".

In March 2022, the two countries had re-launched negotiations for an interim agreement, officially dubbed as Early Progress Trade Agreement (EPTA).

Over half a dozen rounds of talks have been held on the trade pact so far.

Normally in a trade agreement, two countries significantly reduce or eliminate customs duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them.

They also liberalise norms for promoting trade in services and attract investments.

India's exports to Canada rose 9.8 per cent to USD 4.22 billion in 2024-25 from USD 3.84 billion in 2023-24.

Imports, however, dipped 2.33 per cent to USD 4.44 billion in the last fiscal year from USD 4.55 billion in 2023-24.

The renewed vibrancy in ties between the two countries followed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's talks with his Canadian counterpart Mark Carney on the sidelines of the G7 summit at Canada's Kananaskis in June.

Bilateral trade in goods and services between India and Canada stood at USD 18.38 billion in 2023.

There are about 2.9 million Indian diaspora and over 4,27,000 Indian students in Canada.

# CJI Surya Kant to head SC collegium



New Delhi, Nov 24: Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant will now head the five-member Supreme Court collegium as his predecessor Justice B R Gavai demitted office on Sunday.

The reconstitution of five and three-member collegium is a consequential event after the superannuation of former CJI Gavai on November 23.

Besides CJI Kant, the five-member collegium which selects apex court judges and decides on transfers of high court judges, would now comprise CJI Kant and Justices Vikram Nath, BV

Nagarathna, JK Maheshwari and MM Sundresh. The three-member collegium, which selects high

court judges, will have the

CJI and Justices Vikram Nath and BV Nagarathna as members. Even though Justice

Kant has a tenure of nearly 15 months as CJI, the collegium will undergo only one change when Justice Maheshwari retires on June 28, 2026. Justice PS Narasimha will become a member of the collegium. After CJI Kant retires, Justice JB Pardiwala will enter the collegium.

The collegium system is a process for appointing and transferring judges in higher judiciary.

# **Ex-CJI** Gavai leaves official car for successor Surya Kant at Rashtrapati Bhavan

New Delhi, Nov 24: Former Chief Justice of India (CJI) B R Gavai on Monday set a new precedent by leaving the official Mercedes-Benz car for his successor, Surya Kant, at Rashtrapati Bhavan after the latter's swearing-in ceremony.

Justice Gavai, who superannuated on November 23, reached the Rashtrapati Bhavan in the official car and left for his residence in his personal vehicle after the function.

"After the oath ceremony, Justice Gavai left the official vehicle designated for the chief justice and returned in an alternative vehicle from Rashtrapati

Bhavan, ensuring that the official car is available for use by his successor," a person privy to the development said. Justice Surya Kant was administered the oath as the 53rd CJI by President Droupadi Murmu at a brief ceremony on Monday morning. He took the oath in

Hindi in the name of God. Justice Kant was appointed the next CJI on October 30, and will serve for nearly 15 months. He will demit office on February 9, 2027, on attaining the age of 65.

Vice President C P Radhakrishnan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and former CII Gavai were among the dignitaries who attended the



## TUESDAY | 25.11.2025

# Pope heads to Turkiye, Lebanon in first overseas trip

Heybeliada, Nov 24: Pope Leo XIV embarks on his debut overseas trip Thursday, traveling to Turkiye and Lebanon to promote Christian unity and urge peace efforts amid heightened tensions in the Middle East.

The six-day trip is the first major international test for the US pope, who was elected head of the Catholic Church in May and whose understated style contrasts with that of his charismatic and impulsive predecessor, Francis. In Turkiye, Leo will celebrate the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, where the Creed — a foundational declaration of the Christian faith — was

While the Chicago-born pontiff's upcoming visit has so far garnered little attention in the predominantly Muslim country, where Christians represent only 0.2 percent of the 86 million inhabitants, it is eagerly awaited in Lebanon.

Lebanon has long been held up as a model of religious coexistence.

But since 2019, it has been ravaged by crises, including economic collapse which has caused widespread poverty, a devastating blast at Beirut port in 2020,

and the recent war with Israel. "The Lebanese are tired," said



Vincent Gelot, director of the Lebanon and Syria office for l'Oeuvre d'Orient, a Catholic organization that supports Christians in the Middle East. "They expect a frank word to the Lebanese elite, as well as strong and concrete actions," he told AFP.

- 'A vicious cycle' -Preparations are in full swing at the sites the pope will visit, with signs bearing his image and reading "Lebanon wants peace" hung along newly-restored roads.

Lebanon's ambassador to the Holy See, Fadi Assaf, said it was an "exceptional" visit which would "highlight the difficulties facing Lebanon," which is hoping for a

"political and economic breakthrough." Gelot said the Lebanese are caught in "a vicious cycle of wars and suffering," "dashed hopes" and "uncertainty about the future," and they "know full well that (this visit) will not solve all their problems.

It is an opportunity however to highlight the role of private, often religious, organizations in ensuring access to health care and education — like the psychiatric hospital run by Franciscan nuns that Leo is set to visit, he said.

Trip highlights include a meeting with the country's youth, an open-air mass expected to draw 100,000 people, and a prayer at

the site of the port explosion that killed over 220 people and caused vast damage to the Leb-

anese capital.
Abdo Abou Kassem, the church's media coordinator for the visit, said the pope also wishes to "reaffirm Lebanon's role as... a model for both East and West" through an interreligious meeting in downtown Beirut.

- Schisms -

The visit to Turkiye, a strategic crossroad between East and West, is also aimed at promoting the Church's dialogue with Islam. Leo will meet President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Anka-

ra on Thursday and visit the Blue

the anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, which Leo was invited to attend by Patriarch Bartholomew I, the spiritual head of Orthodox

But at the heart of the trip is

Christianity.
Catholics recognize the universal authority of the pope as head of the Church, while Orthodox Christians are organized into churches that appoint their own

The 325 A.D. meeting in Nicaea predated the schisms that divided Christianity between East and West and the commemoration is an important moment to promote Christian unity.
On the shores of Lake Iznik,

the current name for Nicaea, the 70-year-old will join dignitaries from various Orthodox churches on Friday for a prayer which his predecessor, who died in April, had originally been set to attend.

There will be one notable absence. With the war in Ukraine deepening a rift between the patriarchates of Moscow and Constantinople, Russian Patriarch Kirill – a supporter of President

Vladimir Putin — was not invited. The pope will be careful not to inflame tensions further by irritating Moscow, which fears the Vatican will strengthen Constantinople's role as a privileged interlocutor and weaken its

# China slams Japan's plans to deploy missiles near Taiwan



Beijing, Nov 24: China slammed on Monday Japan's decision to push ahead with a planned deployment of missiles on an island near Taiwan, escalating a weeks-long diplomatic spat.

Japanese media on Sunday quoted Japan's defense minister Shinjiro Koizumi as saying that the planned deployment of the missiles on Yonaguni island — which is close to Taiwan — was on track.

"The deployment can reduce the possibility of an armed attack on Japan," Koizumi said.

Beijing-Tokyo relations have soured this month, fol-lowing remarks by Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi suggesting that Tokyo could intervene militarily in any attack on Taiwan.

China's foreign ministry on Monday said Japan's missile deployment was a "deliberate attempt to create regional tension and provoke military confrontation."

"Coupled with Prime Minis-ter Sanae Takaichi's erroneous remarks on Taiwan, this trend is extremely dangerous and warrants high vigilance from neighboring countries and the international community,"

foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning told reporters at a regular press briefing.

Since 2016, the remote island of Yonaguni has hosted a base for Japan's army, the Self-Defense Forces, which was established despite initial objections from residents.

Tokyo had previously announced plans to deploy the Type 03 Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Guided Missile to defend the island against incoming air-to-ground missiles and aircraft.

China claims democratic Taiwan as part of its territory and has threatened to use force to bring the self-ruled island under its control.

Taiwan on Monday said that Japan's strengthening of miltary facilities on Yonaguni helps maintain security in the Taiwan Strait."

"Japan is a sovereign country and it has the right to do everything necessary to protect the security of its own territory, as long as such actions do not threaten other countries," Deputy Foreign Minister Wu Chih-chung told lawmakers.

"We believe this is helpful to our national interests, because Japan essentially has no territorial claims or hostility toward

### **Zelensky says Kyiv working** with US, other partners on peace proposals



### **REUTERS**

Kyiv, Nov 24: Ukraine will continue to work with partners including the US on peace proposals, President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Monday, the second day of talks in Switzerland a plan calling for concessions from Kyiv.

"We all continue working with partners, especially the United States, to look for compromises that will strengthen but not weaken us," Zelensky said via video link from Sweden where he was attending a summit of countries seeking Russian withdrawal from Ukraine's occupied Crimea Peninsula.

On Sunday, Ukraine and the United States said in a joint statement they had drafted a "refined peace framework" after talks in Geneva, although they did not provide specifics.

pay for the war in Ukraine and that a decision on using frozen Russian assets was crucial.

"Right now, we are at a critical moment," he said.

"There is a lot of noise in the media, and all the political pressure, and even greater responsibility for the decisions ahead."

# Marco Jansen stars with 6-wicket haul as South Africa take 314-run lead over India in 2nd Test

Guwahati, Nov 24: After taking a 288-run first innings lead, South Africa were 26 for no loss in their second essay at stumps on Day 3 as the visitors took control of the second Test against India here on Monday. Openers Ryan Rickelton and Aiden Markram were batting on 13 and 12 respectively at the end of the day's play. South Africa faced eight overs in the final session after dismissing India for 201 in 83.5 overs in their first innings. The Proteas, who had made 489 in their first innings, are now 314 runs ahead overall with two days left in the Test. The visitors had won the first Test by 30 runs in Kolkata.

In India's first innings, only Yashasvi Jaiswal (58 off 97 balls) and Washington Sundar (48 off 92 balls) could contribute substantially as the home team suffered a batting collapse after starting the day at 9 for no loss.

Four Indian wickets tumbled in the opening session, reaching 102 for 4 at tea. Three more Indian



batters fell in the second session.

Washington and Kuldeep Yadav (19 off 134 balls) gave a stubborn resistance after India were reduced to 122 for 7 in the second session, stitching a 72-run partnership for the eighth wicket before the former was out. South Africa then wrapped up the two remaining Indian wickets easily. Kuldeep was out after the Proteas took the new ball in the final session of the day.

Marco Jansen was the wrecker in chief with figures of 6/48 while Simon Harmer took three wickets for 64 runs. At lunch, India were struggling at 174 for 7 in 67 overs.

KL Rahul (22), Sai Sudharsan (15), Dhruv Jurel (0), captain Rishand Nitish Kumar Reddy (10) fell

cheaply. **Brief Scores:** 

South Africa 1st Innings: 489 and 26 for no loss in 8 overs (Ryan Rickelton 13 batting, Aiden Markram 12 batting)

India 1st Innings: 201 all out in 83.5 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 58, Washington Sunder 48; Marco Jansen 6/48, Simon Harmer 3/64).

### North, South Korea in 'very dangerous' standoff, Yonhap quotes Lee saying

REUTERS

Seoul, Nov 24: North and South Korea are in a "very dangerous situation" where an accidental clash is possible any time and it was crucial for Seoul to engage Pyongyang in dialogue, South Korean President Lee Jae Myung said on Monday, according to Yonhap News. North Korea is refusing to answer calls by Seoul to establish contact and putting up barbed wire fences along the military border, something that had not been done since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War, Lee was quoted as saying.

"Inter-Korean ties have

become very hostile and confrontational, and in the absence of even the basic level of trust, the North is showing some very extreme behavior," Lee said, according to Yonhap.

Lee was speaking to reporters on a flight from South Africa where he attended a G20 summit, to Turkiye for the last leg of his trip.

South Korea proposed military talks with North Korea on November 17 to discuss drawing up a clear boundary along the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) to prevent armed clashes along the border which could potentially trigger a wider conflict.

# Messi scores, assists thrice as Inter Miami enters its first **MLS East Conference Final**

### **REUTERS**

Miami, Nov 24: Lionel Messi scored and assisted three more as Inter Miami pulled away to a 4-0 victory over FC Cincinnati in Sunday's Eastern Conference semi-

Mateo Silvetti, 19, also had a goal and an assist for No. 3 seed Miami, which continues its deepest Major League Soccer (MLS) Cup Playoff run in club history by advancing to its first East final, will face New York City FC in the summit clash.

Cincinnati was eliminated in a home match for a third consecutive post-season while falling a match short of reaching its second East final. Miami's second consecutive 4-0 playoff win after earning a home victory over Nashville SC in the decisive game of the round one series two weeks ago - came as manager Javier Mascherano decided not to



the starting line-up.

Suarez, who was previously Messi's longtime teammate at FC Barcelona, served a red-card suspension in the final Nashville match, but had 10 goals and 10 assists in the regular season. But Messi and a more youthful Miami frontfour have appeared to reach another level over the last 180 minutes.

Messi has six goals and six assists this post-season - contributing to every single Miami tally – after he scored 29 goals and added 19 assists during what is likely to be a second consecutive MLS MVP-winning regular season.

On Sunday, he scored in the 19th minute — Jodi Alba created the opportunity, intercepting a Cincinnati pass and creating a transition opportunity. Eventually, Silvetti got the ball in space on the left

and delivered an outswinging cross that Messi met in stride with a firm header past goalkeeper Roman Celentano.

Silvetti doubled Miami's lead in the 57th minute on a sequence that began from a throw-in on the right. Tadeo Allende did extremely well to receive the throw, then turn his body quickly to elude a defender and spot Messi in space near the penalty arc.

Messi kept the ball moving right to left with a layoff into Silvetti's path, who dispatched an excellent curling finish beyond Celentano and inside the far right post.

Allende added his brace in the 62nd and 74th minutes, both on transition opportunities. Messi took the ball off Evander on the first to create the break, and the final throughball on both.

