



10-day autumn session concludes with adoption of statehood, TeT resolutions

Aggressive BJP protests trigger adjournments, 2 govt bills withdrawn

Waris Fayaz

Srinagar, Sep 30: The autumn session of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly was on Wednesday adjourned sine die by the Speaker.

The ten-day session concluded after transacting business for over 25 hours across seven sittings.

The brief session saw the adoption of a resolution on statehood, which also referred to the autonomy resolution passed by the legislature of the erstwhile state in 2000, as well as the special status resolution adopted by the Union Territory's Assembly in 2024.

The resolution triggered sharp criticism from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which dubbed it "anti-national" and "unconstitutional."

The session also witnessed high-voltage drama over salary bills of Ministers and MLAs, forcing Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to withdraw them following opposition from the BJP. It also adopted a resolution



urging the Government of India to amend the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 to exempt teachers from Teachers Eligibility Test.

The proceedings often saw heated exchanges between the treasury benches and the main opposition BJP. The BJP, led by Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma, was aggressive in the

House over issues ranging from governance to its core ideological agenda.

The Speaker had to adjourn the House twice due to disruptions by BJP MLAs.

On the other hand, the non-BJP opposition parties were less effective in House due to sharp divergences between them.

As per | [More on P6](#)

Social media trolling, viral videos dominate final day

New media policy within four months, minister tells House

Waris Fayaz

Srinagar, Sep 30: Social media trolling, viral videos and unregulated online platforms dominated proceedings on the final day of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly's Autumn Session, with lawmakers calling for regulation while others warned against censorship.

Minister for Information Sakina Itoo, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) told the House that the Information Department would frame

a new media policy and guidelines within four months to address concerns over unregulated social media platforms.

The debate began after MLA S Bashir Ahmad Shah Veeri raised concerns over social media trolling of legislators. Referring to the recent controversy involving MLA Altaf Kaloo and a viral video featuring Hapident chewing gum, he said there was an urgent need for rules to prevent online "mud-slinging".

Kaloo said the video had damaged his image by portraying the chewing gum as a tobacco product. While stressing that he was not against the media, | [More on P6](#)

Art 370, pre-1953 position can't be linked with statehood: LoP Sharma

Calls Assembly session 'most unfortunate'

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Asserting that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) remains committed to restoration of statehood to J&K within the constitutional framework, Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Legislative Assembly Sunil Sharma | [More on P6](#)

Speaker directs govt to study other States' EWS criteria

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather on Monday directed the Government to study the criteria adopted by different states for issuing certificates under the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) quota. The directive came during a discussion on a calling attention notice moved by Peoples Conference MLA Sajad Gani Lone | [More on P6](#)

Minister rules out blanket audit of JJM scheme

Says no need to constitute committee to probe procurement of pipes

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Sep 30: Minister for Public Health Engineering (PHE), Flood Control and Irrigation Javed Rana on Wednesday announced that only those schemes identified by the House Committee, or flagged by MLAs, would be audited by District Development Commissioners.

Speaking in the Legislative Assembly, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the Minister said that all schemes under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) recommended for blanket audit by the House Committee headed by Justice Hasnain Masoodi would not be subjected to such scrutiny.

"The House Committee has recommended a blanket audit of all JJM schemes. This would amount to yet another probe and could keep execution of these schemes halted. Many Hon'ble Members have stated

in writing that there is no irregularity in their constituencies and that JJM schemes should continue. I therefore propose that only the schemes identified by the Committee or any Hon'ble Member as having issues be subjected to a comprehensive audit by the respective District Development Commissioners through teams comprising technical and financial experts," he said.

The Minister said the department was of the view that a high-level committee, as recommended by the House Committee, was not required. "The Department will also examine the other recommendations and take necessary steps to address the concerns raised. Therefore, there is no need for any further action by this Hon'ble House on the recommendations of the Committee, and the matter may be treated as closed," he added.

He further | [More on P6](#)

Top Lashkar commander Musa killed in Budgam encounter

Major setback to LeT network in J&K: MHA; says entire group of 4 commanders eliminated



Naveed UI Haq Ganaie

Budgam, Sep 30: A top Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commander, identified as Musa alias Asif Fauji, was killed by security forces during an intelligence-led anti-terror operation in the upper reaches of Budgam district, officials said on Wednesday.

The encounter broke out late Tuesday after security forces launched a

joint search operation in the Gurwatkalan area of Khanshab following specific intelligence inputs about the presence of terrorists.

Officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the operation was conducted jointly by the Indian Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police, and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

According to | [More on P6](#)

Army Commander reviews Op Korag progress

Naveed UI Haq Ganaie

Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C), Northern Command, visited South Kashmir on Wednesday to review the progress of the ongoing Operation Korag and assess the prevailing security situation, the Army said. During the visit, the Army Commander reviewed the operational situation and the progress of counter-terror operations in the region. In a post on X, the Army, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said Lt Gen Sharma commended the formations | [More on P6](#)

'Op Drishti' Army's living example of service, compassion: LG Sinha



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Sep 30: Terming 'Operation Drishti' a living example of service, compassion, courage, and resolve, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday said that by restoring sight, the Army has given patients a new vision of peace, trust, and togetherness.

Addressing the closing ceremony of 11th Mega Eye Surgery Camp organised under Operation Drishti, which marks another milestone in the Indian Army's healthcare outreach in Jammu Kashmir, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "This is true courage, dedication to duty and the real meaning of service. This entire effort has proven one thing beyond doubt that where resolve is firm, no difficulty, however great, can block the path of human service by Indian Army."

The Lieutenant Governor observed that Operation Drishti has strengthened

trust between the Army and communities, proving that the Indian Army is not only a force of defence but also a source of compassion and healing. He saluted the courage of support staff, Air Force pilots, and soldiers who transported equipment, prepared underground theatres and ensured complex surgeries in adverse conditions.

"Indian Army is not only a force that defends the country from external threats, but also a source of support, compassion and healing for ordinary citizens of Jammu Kashmir in times of need. By restoring sight, the Army has given patients a new vision of peace, trust, and togetherness," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor affirmed that the 11th camp in Srinagar is not the end but a continuation of the journey. He expressed confidence that Operation Drishti will reach more villages and towns across the country ensuring that quality healthcare is not | [More on P6](#)

'Op Drishti' an ongoing mission: Brig Mishra

Umaisar Gull Ganie

Srinagar, Sep 30: Brigadier Sanjay Kumar Mishra, Head of the Department of Ophthalmology at Army Hospital (Research & Referral), Delhi, on Wednesday said 'Op Drishti' was not merely a medical camp but an 'ongoing mission' aimed at taking specialised eye care to people living in remote and challenging areas.

Addressing at the closing ceremony of Phase-II of the 'Mega Cataract Surgery Camp' under 'Op Drishti' at Chinar Auditorium, 92 Base Hospital, Badami Bagh Cantonment, Srinagar, Brigadier Mishra, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said,

"Nearly 6,000 people had been screened through 18



screening camps conducted across different remote areas. I want to thank everyone who supported this initiative. This is not just a camp; it is an ongoing mission."

Brig Mishra said the initiative focused on patients whose vision had deteriorated, those suffering from advanced cataract and patients requiring glaucoma-related surgical intervention.

He said the | [More on P6](#)

Army's eye camp brings sight, hope to patients

Rehan Qayoom Mir

For nearly three decades, Mohammad Akbar Chechi lived with an eye condition that gradually turned everyday life into a struggle. On Wednesday, after receiving treatment under the Army's | [More on P6](#)

'Graduate numbers in J&K colleges fall by over 22%'

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Sep 30: Colleges in Jammu and Kashmir have seen a steep decline in graduate numbers by over 22 percent in the past three academic years.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the government in a reply to the question tabled by Arjun Singh Raju said that in academic session 2023-24, there were a total of 23,655 graduates in J&K colleges.

The government also informed the house that in session 2024-25, the number of graduates in J&K colleges reduced to 21,153 graduates and 18,312 in the academic year 2025-26 respectively.

The figures reveal that in Jammu, the graduates shrink from 5,930 in 2023-24 to 4,206 in 2024-25 and 3,906 in 2025-26 respectively.

The house was further informed that in Srinagar, the number of graduates | [More on P6](#)

Pashmina artisans true custodians of J&K's cultural heritage: LG Sinha

Calls for fair remuneration, social security, global market access

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Sep 30: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday described Pashmina artisans as the "true custodians" of Jammu and Kashmir's cultural heritage, calling for fair remuneration, social security, global market access and greater institutional support to preserve the centuries-old craft.

Addressing the Pashmina Artisan Awards 2026, organised by the Pashmeena Entrepreneurs Makers and Artisans (PEMA) Foundation at the Sher-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar, Sinha, as per the news

agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the awards celebrated not merely individual artisans but an entire artistic civilisation that has enriched the world through its craftsmanship and brought recognition to J&K and India.

Sinha said India has always regarded artisanship as sacred knowledge, invoking the spirit of Bhagwan Vishwakarma, the divine embodiment of craftsmanship.

"India has always considered handicrafts to be a form of divine knowledge and society bows before every artisan who begins the process of creation from nothing," he said.

Highlighting the patience, skill and dedication behind Kashmir's Pashmina tradition, the Lieutenant Governor said artisans had historically worked with fine threads and intricate weaves without modern factories or



automated machinery.

He particularly highlighted the contribution of women artisans, saying they have played a central role at every stage of Pashmina production, from refining raw fibre to intricate embroidery.

"Women artisans are not merely participants in this tradition but they are its silent

creators, its custodians and its heartbeat," Sinha said.

He said generations of mothers, sisters and daughters had learned intricate techniques such as Kani and Sozni embroidery within their homes, enabling traditional knowledge and artistic skills to pass from one generation to another.

Sinha stressed that recognising and empowering women artisans was essential to safeguarding the region's cultural legacy and strengthening the confidence of future generations.

Recalling the earlier editions of the awards held in 2023 and 2025, he described such initiatives as important avenues of hope and growth for artisans and entrepreneurs.

He said this year's awards were particularly significant as they recognised the contribution of women artisans whose craftsmanship has given Kashmir's Pashmina its distinctive identity and global reputation.

Congratulating the young artisans honoured at the event, Sinha described them as a bridge between the past and present, connecting centuries-old craftsmanship with modern designs and contemporary requirements.

Referring to challenges facing the handmade craft sector, he said competition from machine-made products, fair remuneration, access to digital markets, sustainable availability of raw materials and changing consumer preferences required concerted efforts.

The Lieutenant Governor assured artisans of the Government of India and J&K administration's commitment to supporting the sector in four key areas: fair remuneration and protection of Geographical Indication (GI) tags; access to global markets through e-commerce, exhibitions and digital platforms; skill development and welfare, including healthcare, social security and modern design training; and financial inclusion through schemes such as MUDRA, the J&K Credit Card Scheme and Karkhandar training initiatives.

He said | [More on P6](#)

CS reviews quality, timeliness of public grievance redressal across J&K

Over 1.36 lakh grievances disposed of, JK Samadhan set for AI-enabled upgrades, WhatsApp integration



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo took a comprehensive review of the public grievance redressal mechanism across Jammu and Kashmir, with particular emphasis on assessing the quality of grievance disposal, the average time taken by departments and districts to resolve public complaints and the level of satisfaction among complainants.

The meeting, as per an official statement, besides Commissioner Secretary, DoPG was attended by Administrative Heads of other Departments; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/ Kashmir; Deputy Commissioners; SIO, NIC; HoDs of Departments and a team from BIS-AG-N too.

The review focused on evaluating the responsiveness of different departments and district administrations, identifying areas requiring improvement and exploring technological interventions to make the existing grievance redressal mechanism more efficient, transparent and citizen-centric.

While speaking the Chief Secretary remarked that the success of the grievance redressal mechanism should be measured by the quality of grievance resolution and the satisfaction of the complainants. He enjoined that it is paramount for every department and district administration to resolve public grievances promptly, effectively and to the satisfaction of the citizens.

On departmental accountability and citizen feedback he maintained that the citizen feedback should serve as an important benchmark for assessing the performance of departments and districts. He stressed on the need to identify the causes of delays, address recurring grievances stating that our ultimate objective is to strengthen public trust in the

responsiveness of the administration.

During the meeting, the Commissioner Secretary, Public Grievances, Saurabh Bhagat presented a detailed assessment of the functioning of JK Samadhan and the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS), covering cumulative grievance disposal, department-wise and district-wise performance, urgent complaints, citizen feedback and household registrations on the portal.

The presentation revealed that a cumulative 1,60,685 grievances had been received through the two platforms as of September 25, 2026. Of these, 1,36,977 grievances had been redressed or closed, reflecting an overall disposal rate of 85 percent, while 23,708 were under process.

JK Samadhan alone accounted for 1,40,101 grievances, of which 1,24,534 had been disposed of, achieving a disposal rate of 89 percent. The remaining 15,567 grievances were under process. CPGRAMS recorded 20,584 grievances, with 12,443 disposed of and 8,141 awaiting resolution.

A significant part of the review centred on citizen feedback and the effectiveness of the grievance redressal process. The Department presented an analysis of 5,239 responses, with further scope for enhancing the quality and timeliness of grievance resolution.

Regarding the expansion of the platform's reach, it was informed that 15,75,457 households had been registered on JK Samadhan against a target of 22,49,631 households across J&K, achieving an overall coverage of 70 percent as of September 24, 2026.

The Department also presented its roadmap for upgrading JK Samadhan through technological interventions aimed at enhancing the quality, accessibility and efficiency of grievance redressal.

DC Srinagar conducts on-site inspection of development works at Anchaar Soura

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: In order to expedite the ongoing development works, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, on Wednesday conducted an on-site inspection of Anchaar Jenab Sahib Soura and reviewed the progress of works being executed for the restoration and preservation of the historic spring at the site.

In the occasion, the DC also interacted with local residents and listened to their developmental demands. During the visit, the DC, as per an official statement, was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, IAS Probationer, Sai Kiran, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Executive Engineer R&B, Suhail Rashid, Executive Engineer KPDCI 4th, Nissar Ahmad, Executive Engineer, KPDCI 3rd, Abrar Hussain, Tehsildar Eidgah, Mohammad Iqbal Zargar, Administrator Jenab Sahib Soura and other concerned Officers.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner took stock of the ongoing works and reviewed various components aimed at improving and preserving the historic spring while maintaining its heritage and aesthetic character.

The DC was informed that the project has been allotted a cost of Rs 1.20 crore and includes major components such as desilting of the pool area, dry boulder stone pitching on the floor bed, construction of a peripheral block with Devri stone



tile cladding, and provision of ornamental grills around the periphery of the pool area in panels. The project also envisages reconstruction and realignment of the deck area and steps of the spring using Devri stone, construction of ornamental gates in Devri stone, and installation of ornamental lamp posts around the pool area for illumination. The DC directed the concerned agencies to ensure timely completion of the works while adhering strictly to prescribed quality standards and maintaining the original character and heritage value of the site. He also stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among all stakeholder Department to ensure that the restoration and development works are carried out in a sustainable, systematic and aesthetically appropriate manner.

During the visit, the DC also interacted with members of the Management Committee of Jenab Sahib Soura and local residents, who expressed their gratitude to him for the execution of various developmental works in the area, particularly at the Shrine.

GOVT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT, DEVSAR

E.mail-----mushtaq.sup777@jk.gov.in

Subject: Provisional selection list of Anganwadi Helpers and objectionsthereof .
Reference: 1. Government Order No.222-JK (SWD) of 2022 Dated: 30.11.2022
2. Government Order No.103-JK (SWD) of 2023 dated: 28.04.2023
3. SWD/ICDS/43/2022 dated:14-08-2023

Notification No:- 09 -CDPO-DEV of 2026
Dated:- 30 -09-2026

Pursuant to the Government orders referred above, this office has finalized the Provisional Selection for the post of Anganwadi Helpers (Sahayikas) for below mentioned 05 locations/wards mentioned at Annexure "A" advertised by this office vide Notification No:04 -CDPO-DEV of 2026 dated:24-06-2026 under endorsement No: CDPO/ Poshan/ DEV/2026/73-80 dated: 24-06-2026. Accordingly, it is hereby notified for the information of all candidates or member of the public that the objections regarding the eligibility, merit, residence, qualification or any other aspect of the provisional selection are invited which may be submitted to this office along with documentary evidence within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. Objections received after stipulated time or without documentary evidence shall not be entertained.

No:-CDPO/POSHAN/DEV//2026/ 286-90
Dated:- 30 -09-2026

sdl/
Child Development Project Officer
Poshan Project Devsar

Annexure-A
Provisional Merit Panel/selection for Anganwadi Helper (Sahayika) of Anganwadi Centre Nazim Mohalla Nowpora
Ward No-04 of (Panchayat Halqa Akhran) Poshan Project Devsar
(Advertisement Notice No: 04- CDPO -DEV of 2026 dated: 24-06-2026)

S. No	Application form No	Name of the candidate	Parentage/ Spouse	D.O.B	Residence	Post applied for	Qualification	Total Marks	Marks obtained	Percentage (%age)	Marital Status	Total Merit Points	Remarks
1	03	Afshana Bashir	Raouf Ahmad Ganaie	15-04-1999	Akhran	AWH	10th	500	258	51.6	Married	51.6	Selected
2	04	Irshada Manzoor	Bilal Ahmad Shan	10-10-1991	Akhran	AWH	10th	500	236	47.2	Married	47.2	
3	01	Fahmeeda Akhter	Fayaz Ahmad Shan	17-02-1992	Akhran	AWH	10th	500	217	43.4	Married	43.4	
4	02	Rifat Jan	Idrees Manzoor Naikoo	05-03-1996	Akhran	AWH	10th	500	189	37.8	Married	37.8	

Provisional Merit Panel/selection for Anganwadi Helper (Sahayika) of Anganwadi Centre Mukhpora-I
Ward No-08 of (Panchayat Halqa Zangalpura) Poshan Project Devsar
(Advertisement Notice No: 04- CDPO -DEV of 2026 dated: 24-06-2026)

S. No	Application form No	Name of the candidate	Parentage/ Spouse	D.O.B	Residence	Post applied for	Qualification	Total Marks	Marks obtained	Percentage (%age)	Marital Status	Total Merit Points	Remarks
1	02	Shabnam Shameem	Aadil Hussain Bhat	02-03-1998	Zangalpura	AWH	10th	500	396	79.2	Married	79.2	Selected
2	03	Abeeda Iqbal	Talib Ahmad Bhat	10-03-1996	Zangalpura	AWH	10th	500	388	77.6	Married	77.6	
3	01	Taskeena Shaheen	Zahid Ahmad Bhat	30-10-1992	Zangalpura	AWH	10th	500	276	55.2	Married	55.2	

Provisional Merit Panel/selection for Anganwadi Helper (Sahayika) of Anganwadi Centre Gammander-I
Ward No-02 of (Panchayat Halqa Zangalpura) Poshan Project Devsar
(Advertisement Notice No: 04- CDPO -DEV of 2026 dated: 24-06-2026)

S. No	Application form No	Name of the candidate	Parentage/ Spouse	D.O.B	Residence	Post applied for	Qualification	Total Marks	Marks obtained	Percentage (% age)	Marital Status	Total Merit Points	Remarks
1	02	Kushboo Jan	Subzar Ahmad Mir	05-03-2002	Zangalpura	AWH	10th	500	330	66	Married	66	Selected
2	05	Ferdosa Showkat	Aashiq Hussain Bhat	15-09-1994	Zangalpura	AWH	10th	500	199	39.8	Married	39.8	
3	03	Jozy Majeed	Tariq Ahmad Bhat	03-01-1988	Zangalpura	AWH	10th	500	198	39.6	Married	39.6	
4	01	Rooheda Kowsar	Sajad Ahmad Bhat	20-04-1990	Zangalpura	AWH	10th	500	176	35.2	Married	35.2	
5	04	Filori Jan	Tahir-Bin-Nazir	28-02-1992	Zangalpura	AWH	10th	500	174	34.8	Married	34.8	

Provisional Merit Panel/selection for Anganwadi Helper (Sahayika) of Anganwadi Centre Herpora Kilam
Ward No-04 of (Panchayat Halqa Kilam) Poshan Project Devsar
(Advertisement Notice No: 04- CDPO -DEV of 2026 dated: 24-06-2026)

S.No	Application form No	Name of the candidate	Parentage/ Spouse	D.O.B	Residence	Post applied for	Qualification	Total Marks	Marks obtained	Percentage (% age)	Marital Status	Total Merit Points	Remarks
1	02	Shenu Jan	Feroze Ahmad Dar	01-03-1998	Kilam	AWH	10th	500	231	46.2	Married	46.2	Selected
2	01	Khalida Mashooq	Shabir Ahmad Bhat	03-12-1991	Kilam	AWH	10th	500	227	45.4	Married	45.4	

Provisional Merit Panel/selection for Anganwadi Helper (Sahayika) of Anganwadi Centre Shah Mohalla Kilam
Ward No-02 of (Panchayat Halqa Kilam) Poshan Project Devsar
(Advertisement Notice No: 04- CDPO -DEV of 2026 dated: 24-06-2026)

S. No	Application form No	Name of the candidate	Parentage/ Spouse	D.O.B	Residence	Post applied for	Qualification	Total Marks	Marks obtained	Percentage (% age)	Marital Status	Total Merit Points	Remarks
1	01	Shazee Akhter	Muneeb Yousuf Shah	03-02-2001	Kilam	AWH	10th	500	296	59.2	Married	59.2	Selected
2	03	Shabeena Akhter	Peer Aidil Hussain	30-10-1988	Kilam	AWH	10th	500	248	49.6	Married	49.6	
3	02	Rouhee Jan	Peer Tariq Ahmad	10-05-1990	Kilam	AWH	10th	500	195	39	Married	39	

DIPK-6257/26

DATED: 30-09-2026

Sdl/
Child Development Project Officer
Poshan Project Devsar

From Legislative Assembly

JKPSC, JKSSB receives 21.12 lakh job application forms

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Sep 30: More than 21.12 lakh applications were received for recruitment examinations conducted by the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) and J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB) during the last three financial years, with 15,964 posts advertised, the Jammu and Kashmir government has said.

The government provided the details in a written reply to Question raised by MLA Waheed Ur Rehman Para during the 6th Session of the J&K Legislative Assembly regarding recruitment examinations conducted by JKPSC, JKSSB and other recruiting agencies.

According to the reply of the government through the General Administration Department (GAD), Minister-in-Charge, JKPSC conducted 245 recruitment examinations involving 4,961 advertised posts, while JKSSB conducted 124 examinations involving 11,003 posts during the period covered by the data.

As per the details, JKPSC received 2,76,065 applications, of which 1,85,808 candidates appeared in the examinations.



The commission collected Rs 24.42 crore in application fees. During 2023-24, JKPSC conducted 103 examinations involving 2,586 advertised posts and received 89,864 applications, with 63,919 candidates appearing. The fee collected stood at Rs 7.39 crore.

In 2024-25, it conducted 49 examinations involving 618 posts, receiving 58,341 applications, of which 33,153 candidates appeared. The fee collected was Rs 10.50 crore.

During 2025-26, JKPSC conducted 64 examinations involving 1,400 posts, receiving 1,15,523 applications and recording 78,166 candidates appearing, while Rs 5.74 crore was collected as application fee.

For the period from April 1, 2026 till date, JKPSC conducted 29 examinations involving 357 posts, with 13,237 applications received and 10,570 candidates appearing. The fee collected during this period was Rs 77.90 lakh. The reply further stated that JKSSB conducted 124 recruitment examinations involving 11,003 advertised posts, receiving 18,36,056 applications, of which 9,38,777 candidates appeared. The Board collected Rs 89.49 crore in application fees. During 2023-24, JKSSB conducted 17 examinations involving 4,228 posts and received 6,99,261 applications, with 3,44,264 candidates appearing. The fee collected was Rs 6.76 crore. In 2024-25, the

Board conducted 26 examinations involving 5,044 posts and received 7,99,523 applications, of which 4,36,714 candidates appeared. It collected Rs 23.46 crore in fees.

During 2025-26, JKSSB conducted 81 examinations involving 1,731 posts, receiving 3,37,272 applications and recording 1,57,799 candidates appearing. The fee collected stood at Rs 59.26 crore.

The government said JKPSC had one recruitment examination cancelled/postponed during the period, while 38 examinations remained pending as per the data provided. JKSSB, meanwhile, had nine examinations postponed in 2024-25 and three in 2025-26; the reply noted that such examinations were rescheduled and conducted successfully.

On the issue of refund of application fees, the government said JKPSC, with the assistance of NIC, is devising an online mechanism for refund of fees in cases involving withdrawal of posts or multiple payments, and the mechanism is likely to become operational shortly.

The reply further stated that the J&K PSC Conduct of Examination Rules, 2022 contain

provisions for refund of fee in case of the death of a candidate before appearing in an examination, multiple payments and withdrawal of posts by the indenting department.

Regarding JKSSB, the government said the Board had already refunded Rs 31.75 lakh. Refund of application fees is processed by the Board upon formal withdrawal of the concerned posts by the respective indenting department.

The government clarified that in cases where examinations have only been postponed, no refund is processed, as such examinations remain scheduled to be conducted at a future date and the recruitment process continues.

The JKPSC data also showed Rs 28.76 lakh collected in respect of recruitment examinations that were cancelled/postponed or remained pending.

The government further noted that one post of Superintendent Jail in the Home Department was withdrawn through Notification No. 01-PSC (DR-P) of 2026 dated January 16, 2026. A total of 148 applications had been received for the post, involving Rs 1.48 lakh in application fees—(KNO)

MLA Bhaderwah, delegation call on LG Sinha



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Sep 30: A delegation of Women Entrepreneurs from PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry led by Himani Arora, Chair, Regional Fashion Tex Tech Forum, PHDCCI called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday.

The members of the delegation discussed important matters pertaining to the participation of UT of Jammu Kashmir at the upcoming 20th Punjab International Trade Expo (PITEX)-2026, scheduled to be held from 3rd to 7th December, 2026 in Amritsar.

They also proposed a dedicated "Jammu Kashmir Day" at the Expo, aimed at creating a complete Jammu Kashmir experience, bringing together business, investment, exports, handicrafts, cuisine, tourism and culture.

The proposed "Jammu Kashmir Day" would also feature a J&K Business & Investment Session, Industry and Buyer-Seller Roundtable, Tourism & Investment Presentation, live handicraft and artisan demonstrations, a J&K Food & Cuisine Showcase, cultural performances and a special J&K Cultural Evening.

In the meantime, a public delegation led by Daleep Singh Parihar, Member of Legislative Assembly from Bhaderwah called on Lieutenant Governor and put forth various development issues of Bhaderwah constituency.

Traffic restrictions announced for Kashmir Marathon today

KNO

Srinagar, Sep 30: Traffic movement on Boulevard Road from Lalit Ghat up to Habbak will remain restricted from 06:00 am to 11:00 am on Thursday in view of the "Run for Unity" Kashmir Marathon-2026, Traffic Police said on Wednesday.

The marathon will be organised from Police Golf Course Lake View to Duck Park and back, with VIPs and participants from different walks of life expected to attend. In an advisory, Traffic Police said traffic coming from R.M. Bagh towards Gupkar and Lalit would be diverted towards Badyari Dalgate for onward travel. No traffic, except participants, will be allowed on Gupkar Road until the event concludes. It said motorists travelling towards Nishat, Shalimar and Harwan have been advised to use the Dalgate-Rainawari-Hazratbal-Zakoora-Burzahama-Tailbal-Chandpora-Shalimar route instead of Boulevard Road. Similarly, motorists travelling from Harwan, Shalimar, Nishat and adjoining areas towards Lal Chowk have been advised to use the Shalimar-Chandpora-Tailbal-Burzahama-Zakoora-Hazratbal route instead of the Nishat-Boulevard Road axis.

According to the advisory, motorists travelling from Gulab Bagh, Zakoora, Naseembagh, Habbak and adjoining areas towards Lal Chowk have been advised to use the Habbak-Dargah-Rainawari route instead of Foreshore Road. "All participants have been advised to park their vehicles only at designated parking places at Zabarwan Park and the Botanical Garden. Vehicles parked wrongly on roadsides will be towed," it reads, adding that emergency vehicles will be allowed to take the shortest route, while citizens requiring assistance can contact the Traffic Police Control Room at 103—(KNO)

Notice

I Mohd Rafiq Sheikh F/o Muneeb Rafiq Sheikh R/o New Colony sopore Baramula Jammu & Kashmir 193201 do hereby declare that I have correction my Son's name from Muneeb Rafiq to Muneeb Rafiq Sheikh for all purposes. Including Aadhar card bearing Aadhar No 936524548255 Henceforth, He shall be known as Muneeb Rafiq Sheikh

Notice

I Biba jan W/o Ab Rahim Ganai R/o Lal Baba Sahib sopore Baramula Jammu & Kashmir 193201 do hereby declare that I have correction my name from Beeba Jaan to Biba jan for all purposes. Including Aadhar card bearing Aadhar No 899369824466 Henceforth, i shall be known as Biba jan

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that the father's name of my daughter, Sehrish Yousuf, studying at Govt. Girls Middle School, Chundina, Ganderbal, has been wrongly recorded in the school records as "Mohammad Yousuf Bhat" instead of her correct father's name "Mohammad Yousuf Khan."

The necessary correction is required in the school records. Any person having any objection in this regard may submit the same to the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained after the stipulated period.

Sd/-
Mohammad Yousuf Khan
F/o Sehrish Yousuf
R/o Chundina, Ganderbal

J&K merges nearly 4,000 Govt Schools in 2022-23

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Sep 30: The government on Wednesday said that nearly 4000 schools in Jammu and Kashmir were merged and clubbed during the year 2022-23

The government in a reply to a question tabled by MLA Vijay Kumar in legislative assembly said, "3997 schools were merged and clubbed during 2022-23."

The government however further informed the house that no primary school has been clubbed or merged during the last three years in J&K.

The government in a query regarding whether the clubbing or merger of the schools with other schools deprived the small children of free and compulsory education from the public schools informed the house, "No Children has been deprived of the free and compulsory Education on account of the closure of any school."

The house was further informed that under the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, private schools are legally

mandated to reserve 25 percent of their entry level seats for children belonging to poor to Economically Weaker Sections of the Society, but the same not fully implemented.

"In government schools, education is completely free and compulsory for all children aged 6-14 years, with facilities such as free Textbooks, Uniforms, Mid-Day Meals etc. Besides, poor students are also facilitated by way of providing other requirements through the Red Cross Fund," the government said.

About the opening or reopening of merged schools said, "The opening or reopening of schools is considered on the basis of prescribed population norms, enrollment, distance criteria, availability of infrastructure and manpower, and the requirements of the local area."

"Any such proposal, wherever warranted, shall be examined and processed in accordance with the prescribed norms and availability of resources," the government said—(KNO)

21 addiction treatment facilities functional in J&K: Govt

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Sep 30: Drug-related cases are on the rise in Jammu and Kashmir, with the government acknowledging the growing challenge of substance abuse and outlining a multi-pronged strategy focused on enforcement, prevention, awareness, treatment and rehabilitation.

In response to a question raised by MLA Sham Lal Sharma, the Health and Medical Education Department, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the increase in drug abuse is linked to factors such as the availability and illicit supply of intoxicating substances, misuse of medicines for non-medical purposes, inter-state movement of drugs and psychotropic substances, and various socio-economic and behavioural factors.

The department said a comprehensive approach is being followed, covering prevention, regulation, awareness, treatment, surveillance and enforcement.

As part of preventive measures, awareness programmes are being conducted across districts in coordination with multiple stakeholders to sensitise people about the harmful effects of drug abuse. During 2026-27, up to August, 528 awareness programmes were held across the Union Territory.

The government said the toll-free Health Helpline 104 is being widely publicised through awareness

campaigns and the media to provide guidance, counselling and assistance.

Adopting what it described as a zero-tolerance approach towards violations of drug laws, the department said strict action is being taken against the unauthorised sale, distribution and diversion of narcotic and psychotropic substances.

It said CCTV cameras have been installed at all medical sale establishments and computerised billing systems have been made mandatory for the procurement and sale of medicines. According to the government, compliance stands at 100 per cent for CCTV installation and 99.8 per cent for computerised billing.

The department said compliance is also verified during the issuance and renewal of drug sale licences.

Authorities are monitoring courier service providers to detect and prevent the illegal movement of drugs and medicinal preparations prone to misuse. The government is also coordinating with regulatory authorities in neighbouring states and Union Territories to curb inter-state diversion, smuggling and illegal trafficking.

It said efforts are being undertaken in coordination with agencies such as the Narcotics Control Bureau, police, excise, revenue and air cargo authorities to prevent the illicit supply and trafficking of drugs.

Regular meetings of the

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Sep 30: The Jammu and Kashmir government has allocated Rs 16,926.95 crore under the UT Capex Budget for 2026-27 across various districts and administrative units, of which Rs 10,641.80 crore has been released and Rs 2,984.32 crore utilised so far.

The figures were disclosed by the Finance Department in a written reply to a question raised by Gulmarg MLA Pirzada Farooq Ahmad Shah regarding district-wise UT Capex allocations and funds released and utilised, with specific reference to the Gulmarg constituency.

According to the reply, Anantnag has been allocated Rs 887.26 crore, of which Rs 529.79 crore has been released and Rs 198.85 crore utilised. Budgam has an allocation of Rs 413.99 crore, with Rs 258.03 crore released and Rs 67.73 crore utilised.

Bandipora has been allocated Rs 308.67 crore, against which Rs 178.33 crore has been released and Rs 83.85 crore utilised, while Baramulla has an allocation of Rs 744.18 crore, with Rs 437.55 crore released and Rs 96.60 crore utilised.

The Civil Secretariat has an allocation of Rs 3,459.31 crore, of which Rs 2,386.99 crore has been released and Rs 824.33 crore utilised.

Doda has been allocated Rs 493.56 crore, with Rs 350.52 crore released and Rs 72.53 crore utilised, while Ganderbal has an allocation of Rs 320.83 crore, of which Rs 181.85 crore has been released and Rs 49.82 crore utilised.

Jammu has received the highest district allocation of Rs 3,118.02 crore. Of this, Rs 1,988.22 crore has been released and Rs 527.95 crore utilised.

Kathua has been allocated Rs 569.91 crore, with Rs 367.86 crore released and Rs 99.69 crore utilised, while

Rs 16,926 Cr allocated under UT Capex: Govt

Says Rs 2,984 crore utilised



Kishtwar has an allocation of Rs 341.92 crore, of which Rs 180.85 crore has been released and Rs 29.19 crore utilised.

Kulgam has been allocated Rs 261.08 crore, with Rs 151.48 crore released and Rs 25.82 crore utilised, while Kupwara has an allocation of Rs 471.66 crore. Against this, Rs 369.43 crore has been released and Rs 57.54 crore utilised.

Mumbai has an allocation of Rs 30 lakh, with Rs 15 lakh released and no expenditure reported so far. New Delhi has been allocated Rs 53.33 crore, of which Rs 28.90 crore has been released and Rs 2.23 crore utilised.

Poonch has an allocation of Rs 542.33 crore, with Rs 311.44 crore released and Rs 59.72 crore utilised, while Pulwama has been allocated Rs 592.82 crore, of which Rs 336.20 crore has been released and Rs 86.04 crore utilised.

Rajouri has an allocation of Rs 668.39 crore, with Rs 451.52 crore released and Rs 138.15 crore utilised. Ramban has been allocated Rs 289.75 crore, against which Rs 191.80 crore has been released and Rs 33.64 crore utilised.

Reasi has an allocation of Rs 338.03 crore, with Rs 225.74 crore released and Rs 67.14 crore utilised, while Samba has been allocated Rs 289.41 crore, of which Rs 202.28 crore has been released and Rs 37.38 crore utilised.

Shopian has an allocation of Rs 213.44 crore, with Rs 122.34 crore released and Rs 25.33 crore utilised. Srinagar has been allocated Rs

2,052.74 crore, against which Rs 1,132.02 crore has been released and Rs 321.17 crore utilised, while Udhampur has an allocation of Rs 496.01 crore, of which Rs 358.51 crore has been released and Rs 79.61 crore utilised.

With specific reference to the Gulmarg constituency, the government said Rs 73.01 crore has been allocated during the financial year 2026-27.

Of the total allocation, Rs 40.46 crore has been released so far, while expenditure/utilisation stands at only Rs 6.65 crore, according to the Finance Department.

The department also furnished district-wise UT Capex allocations under the Youth Services and Sports Department, with a total allocation of Rs 202.06 crore for 2026-27.

Under the Youth Services and Sports component, Anantnag has been allocated Rs 13.62 crore, Budgam Rs 1.68 crore, Bandipora Rs 3.27 crore, Baramulla Rs 5.53 crore, Civil Secretariat Rs 15.64 crore, Doda Rs 3.91 crore, Ganderbal Rs 15.04 crore, Jammu Rs 47.51 crore, Kathua Rs 7.11 crore, Kishtwar Rs 2.36 crore, Kulgam Rs 3.26 crore, Kupwara Rs 11.22 crore, Poonch Rs 5.52 crore, Pulwama Rs 7.15 crore, Rajouri Rs 16.71 crore, Ramban Rs 2.29 crore, Reasi Rs 2.62 crore, Samba Rs 7.88 crore, Shopian Rs 5.49 crore, Srinagar Rs 20.75 crore and Udhampur Rs 3.59 crore.

The reply was signed by the Minister In-Charge, Finance Department, and the Under Secretary to the Government, Finance Department—(KNO)

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

EDITORIAL

Buyer-Seller Meets: Time For Long-Term Partnerships

The Jammu and Kashmir International Buyer-Seller Meet, which brought together more than 25 international buyers, over 15 national buyers and more than 80 exhibitors from over 12 countries, is a welcome affirmation that Kashmir's craftsmanship still commands global attention. But the true significance of this event lies not in the numbers it attracted, but in the intent behind it. Chief Minister Omar

Abdullah's message was refreshingly candid. Organising buyer-seller meets is meaningless, he said, if we tie one hand behind the backs of entrepreneurs with unnecessary permissions, delays and inspections. That admission—that governance itself can be an obstacle to enterprise—is a sign of maturity. And the government has acted on it. The Ease of Doing Business legislation introduced in the Assembly promises time-bound

approvals, deemed clearance where action is delayed, reduced inspections, and the decriminalisation of minor procedural lapses. These are practical reforms that allow businesses to breathe. Equally important is the Chief Minister's emphasis on authenticity. "If something is sold in the name of Kashmir, it should be made in the hands of the people of Kashmir," he said. This is about more than brand protection. It is about ensuring

that the benefits of trade reach the artisans, weavers and craftspeople whose skills give these products their value. Strengthening Geographical Indication protection is not a bureaucratic exercise; it is an economic imperative. What Kashmir needs now is continuity. One successful meet does not build an export economy. Sustained relationships, repeat orders and long-term market access are what will truly transform the

region's handicraft and agro-food sectors. The Chief Minister's call for buyers and sellers to build lasting partnerships rather than one-off deals deserves to be taken seriously. Kashmir's artisans have never lacked talent. What they have lacked is access, support and a level playing field. This event, combined with the Government's reformist push, suggests that both are finally being addressed. That is a reason for genuine optimism.

Respect And Dignity For Senior Citizens: The Cornerstone Of Viksit Bharat

The resolve of a Viksit Bharat will be fulfilled only when every senior citizen has the opportunity to live with respect, security and dignity, and every new generation has the opportunity to learn from the experiences and life values of its elders



B L Verma

Every year, 1 October is observed as the International Day of Older Persons. The day gives us an opportunity to renew our commitment to the respect, rights, security and dignified life of senior citizens. Rising life expectancy is a significant achievement of modern society, but a long life is truly meaningful only when every senior citizen has the opportunity to live with security, respect, self-reliance and social participation.

In India, the welfare of senior citizens is regarded as an important part of the government's broader social security framework. Under the leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is working continuously to ensure shelter, health-related support, social security, ease of living and a life of dignity for senior citizens.

The government's vision is not limited to implementing welfare schemes. Its aim is to create an inclusive environment in which senior citizens remain active participants in the mainstream of society, and in which future generations benefit from their experience, knowledge and life values.

A Robust Institutional Framework for Senior Citizens

Ensuring shelter and care for senior citizens who do not have adequate support from family or other sources is among the government's priorities.

Under the Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSC), old age homes and continuous care homes for senior citizens

have been operating since the financial year 2014-15. Run through non-governmental organisations, panchayats and local bodies, these institutions have provided assistance to more than 10.76 lakh senior citizens. Government financial assistance in this area has also grown significantly, rising from about 15 crore per year to more than 124 crore.

This increase reflects the government's sustained commitment to institutional care and social security for senior citizens.

Self-Reliance Through Assistive Devices

Assistive devices play an important role in enabling senior citizens to remain self-reliant. Devices that make reading, hearing, walking and daily activities easier can bring about a significant improvement in their quality of life.

With this objective, camps have been organised across the country under the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana. Through these camps, more than 53 lakh free assistive devices have been distributed to over 9 lakh senior citizens.

These devices include wheelchairs, hearing aids, walking sticks and spectacles, among others. The initiative aims to make senior citizens more self-reliant in daily life and to promote their mobility and social participation.

ELDERLINE 14567: A Strong Channel for Support and Guidance

The ELDERLINE helpline, 14567, is being operated to provide senior citizens with assistance, counselling and guidance in times of need. Run by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the helpline was launched in 2021.

Over 29 Lakh calls have been received on the HELPLINE. The National

Institute of Social Defence (NISD), which monitors its implementation, has catered to more than 8.67 Lakh Actionable Calls covering information, guidance, emotional support and field intervention since FY 2021 upto September 21, 2026 which remains a

continuous process.

Alongside this, attention has also been given to developing trained human resources to improve the quality of care for senior citizens. Since 2023, more than 30,000 geriatric caregivers have been trained. These trained caregivers are assisting senior citizens in rural and urban areas across the country.

Not Just Government Schemes: Social Participation Is Essential Too

Along with strengthening institutional arrangements for senior citizens, it is equally necessary to foster a spirit of sensitivity and participation in society.

Urbanisation, employment opportunities, education and increasing mobility have changed the structure of families. As a result, many senior citizens are living apart from their children and grandchildren. In such circumstances, intergenerational dialogue and engagement become all the more important.

Senior citizens are not merely recipients of assistance. They possess vast life experience, knowledge, skills and social memory. They can serve as mentors, volunteers and sources of inspiration for their families, communities and society.

Likewise, the younger generation, through its energy, technical know-how and understanding of changing times, can make the lives of senior citizens easier. This dialogue between the two generations can play an important role in building a sensitive and inclusive society.

Initiatives to Promote Intergenerational Bonds

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has organised various programmes across the country to strengthen dialogue and relationships between senior citizens and the younger generation.

Programmes such as 'Dada-Dadi Milan Samaroh' (Grandparents' Get-Together) were organised through schools, giving children the opportunity to interact with senior citizens, listen to their life stories

and learn from their experiences.

Similarly, events such as walkathons have also played an important role in bringing senior citizens and young people together and in promoting social participation.

The Ministry has also signed 7 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with social and spiritual organisations working in the field of elderly care, such as the Brahma Kumaris, the Ramakrishna Mission and the All World Gayatri Pariwar.

The experiences, efforts and inspiring stories from various programmes held across the country between 2024 and 2026 have been compiled by the Ministry in the 'SNEHA e-Book'.

Respect for Elders in the Indian Tradition

In Indian culture, the tradition of honouring elders and learning from their experience is centuries old. In the Taittiriya Upanishad, the teaching given to students on completing their education carries the message "Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava" (Regard your mother as God, regard your father as God). This is not merely a message of respect for parents; it also expresses the broader spirit of reverence for family, experience and knowledge in the Indian outlook on life.

What is needed today is to connect these values with the modern social order and further strengthen intergenerational dialogue.

From Service to Social Sensitivity

The government is developing schemes and institutional arrangements for the welfare of senior citizens, but social sensitivity and personal involvement are just as essential.

This year, the International Day of Older Persons falls during the 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan' (Service Pledge Campaign). Through this service campaign, running across the country since 17 September, the spirit of service and social participation is being encouraged.

Serving senior citizens is not limited to grand gestures. Helping an elderly

neighbour with daily chores, assisting them in using digital services, helping them fill out an important form, accompanying them to the bank or hospital, or simply listening to them patiently — these too are important forms of service. Such small initiatives strengthen senior citizens' self-confidence and sense of social connection.

The Important Role of Senior Citizens in a Viksit Bharat

In keeping with the guiding vision of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', the welfare of senior citizens is an integral part of inclusive development. The government can provide policies and an institutional framework, but an environment of respect, belonging and sensitivity towards senior citizens can only be created through the collective participation of society.

A Viksit Bharat is not just about economic progress and modern infrastructure. It is an India where every citizen, whatever their age, can live with respect, security and dignity.

Senior citizens are the living memory of our society and the bearers of its experience and knowledge. Connecting their experiences with the next generation is both our social responsibility and a national necessity.

The respect, patience and sensitivity with which we treat senior citizens today will shape the social character of the India of tomorrow.

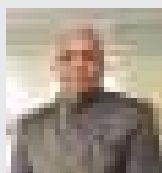
One conversation, one hour and one heartfelt connection — that may be all it takes to begin a positive change in a senior citizen's life.

The resolve of a Viksit Bharat will be fulfilled only when every senior citizen has the opportunity to live with respect, security and dignity, and every new generation has the opportunity to learn from the experiences and life values of its elders.

The author is Union Minister of State of Social Justice and Empowerment

The Cost Of Fragmentation Is No Longer Hidden

Broken information flows have long cost hospitals in lost clinician hours and stuck claims; the case now is for systems built to talk to each other



Dr Girdhar J. Gyani

Across much of India, the patient is still the main link between one doctor and the next. She carries her own medical history from visit to visit — a folder of papers, a phone full of scans, or nothing more than memory. Information is generated at every step of her care and, too often, left behind at each one. For hospitals, closing those gaps has rarely been the priority. For years, a digital mandate raised a narrower question: what would it cost, and how much would it ask them to change?

Healthcare is not an industry where a new system can be installed over a weekend. Hospitals

run on legacy software, different clinical and administrative workflows, and widely varying levels of digital maturity. For smaller hospitals, every rupee spent on technology competes with beds, equipment and staff. The question was always whether a given system would solve a problem worth solving at all.

That question has now changed. The one that matters more is what fragmentation is already costing them.

The path a patient takes makes the loss visible. She may see a local doctor, take tests at a diagnostic centre, consult a specialist and finally be admitted. Each stage will generate information that probably won't between a clinic to a lab.

We are all agonizingly familiar with what happens next: incomplete clinical histories, repeated tests, avoidable delays, and hours spent rebuilding information that already exists somewhere else. Data has too often been treated as an institutional asset to be held onto rather than information meant to

travel with the patient. Proprietary formats and incompatible systems have deepened the fragmentation but now, the cost of keeping information locked away has simply grown too high for all of us.

It is against this cost that private hospitals have started to look at the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) differently.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has emphasised that interoperability standards allow different digital health systems to exchange information and support continuity of care regardless of the software being used. Information generated at one point of care should be usable at the next.

International evidence links poor information continuity with poorer patient experiences, duplicate testing and delays in care. Better interoperability has been associated with reductions in diagnostic testing and hospital readmissions among shared and transferred patients.

The same breakdown shows up

in administration. A hospital deals with many payers and each often works its own system and formats. Claims work turns needlessly slow and costly because those systems do not speak the same language, and it is the hospital's finance team, and its cash flow, that absorb the friction.

This is the friction National Health Claims Exchange (NHCE) addresses by standardizing claims processes. Whether the information is a diagnostic report needed by a clinician or a claim that needs to move between a hospital and payer, information that cannot move is a failure of the system. NHCE and ABDM address different parts of healthcare, but the underlying principle is the same: information must be able to move securely, consistently and with the right safeguards.

But digital adoption cannot be imposed into healthcare; it needs to be built with healthcare providers. The WHO has cautioned that digital interventions implemented as isolated, supply-driven solutions can increase

fragmentation and administrative burdens on health workers. Integration must therefore be the objective.

This is particularly relevant in India, where the private healthcare sector is enormously diverse. A large corporate hospital in a metropolitan city and a smaller hospital in a Tier-2 or Tier-3 town cannot be expected to have the same technology, resources or implementation capacity. A smaller facility may not have a dedicated technology team or resources to absorb a poorly designed workflow. Adoption will therefore depend on practical support and solutions that fit the way care is delivered.

As an ABDM Ambassador and NHCE Champion, the Association of Healthcare Providers of India (AHPPI) has been working alongside the National Health Authority to help providers understand the practical value of these systems, support adoption across a diverse provider ecosystem and carry provider experience back to those

designing them.

The private sector cannot afford to just be a recipient of India's digital health infrastructure. Hospitals are among its most important users and therefore must be among its co-builders. Providers' experiences of information silos and fragmentation have to shape the national push.

The work ahead splits four ways. Hospitals shed the data silos that serve no one; the health-tech industry builds products that interoperate; medical associations help smaller facilities through the first steps; policymakers hold the standards to shared, workable norms.

ABDM will have done its job when hospitals, doctors and patients feel the fragmentation ease. And when that finally happens, and it will, digital health will be viewed universally as a better, more efficient way to treat patients.

The author is Director General, Association of Healthcare Providers of India (AHPPI)

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

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Owner & Editor-In-Chief of Kashmir News Observer (KNO), a leading news agency in Jammu & Kashmir. Website: www.kashmirnewsobserver.com, Mail: info@kashmirnewsobserver.com

J&K ASSEMBLY AUTUMN SESSION 2026

Rs 3 cr released under SDRF for relief in affected Budgam areas: Deputy CM

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: An amount of Rs 3 crore has been released under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for extending relief assistance in the affected areas of Budgam district, including Beerwah Constituency.

This was stated by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary while replying to a Calling Attention raised by MLA Dr. Shafi Ahmad Wani regarding the plight of people affected by the recent flash floods in Beerwah constituency.

The Dy CM, as per an official statement, informed the House that in respect of the flood-related death case reported from the constituency, ex-gratia compensation amounting Rs 4 Lakh has been recommended for release to the legal heirs of the deceased, as per applicable



SDRF norms. He also informed that as per reports a double-storey shopping complex comprising twenty-nine (29) shops, along with one residential shed, was damaged/washed away in the floods at Qasba Beerwah.

The Deputy Chief Minister said that the concerned departments (PWD-R&B, Municipal committee, Revenue and other concerned departments have

made certain preliminary assessment(s) and land title and final assessment of losses/damage regarding the structure is under process.

Surinder Choudhary informed that a detailed assessment of crop and horticulture damage in Beerwah Constituency has also been carried out by the Agriculture Production Department. He

informed that a total crop damage of 5 hectares, comprising 3.15 hectares of Paddy, 1.65 hectares of Vegetables and 0.20 hectares of Maize besides, horticulture damage over an area of 0.334 hectares affecting 7 orchardists, with claims amounting Rs. 30,000/-, has been reported and compensation in respect of these losses shall be extended as per the applicable norms.

He said that the District SDRF Committee has assessed the damage to roads, bridges and culverts in the R&B Division, Beerwah and recommended a fund requirement of Rs. 1,092.92 lakh for their restoration. Further, an amount of Rs. 11.41 Lakh has been recommended for restoration of the 33 KV Ahmad Pora-Beerwah power transmission line under Sub Transmission Division-II, KPDC, Rajbagh, Srinagar.

Tanvir Sadiq congratulates Speaker on successful NeVA rollout

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: MLA Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq on Wednesday congratulated Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather and the Assembly Secretariat for the successful introduction of the National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) during the Autumn Session of the House.

Speaking on the concluding day of the Autumn Session, Tanvir Sadiq, as per an official statement, appreciated the efforts of the Speaker and the Assembly Secretariat in successfully introducing the digital platform for legislative business, describing the initiative as an important step towards making the functioning of the House more accessible and technology-driven.

He said the successful implementation of NeVA would facilitate the availability of



legislative business, questions and replies on a single digital platform, enabling members and other stakeholders to access relevant information more conveniently.

Sadiq expressed his appreciation to Speaker JKLA Abdul Rahim Rather for taking the initiative forward and also placed on record his gratitude to the J&K Legislative Assembly Secretariat and all officials involved in the implementation of the project.

He said that it is a significant step towards digitising the functioning of the House. The availability of questions, replies and other legislative business on the platform will make the proceedings more accessible and transparent.

He also said that transition towards digital legislative processes would contribute to the broader objective of a paperless Assembly, while improving the accessibility.

Govt providing timber assistance, relief to Langate fire victims, ex-gratia under process: Javed Rana

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: Minister for Forest, Ecology & Environment, Javed Ahmed Rana Wednesday informed the Legislative Assembly that timber assistance is being provided to the eligible fire-affected families in Langate while immediate relief has already been extended and ex-gratia assistance under SDRF norms is under process.

Replying to a Calling Attention Notice moved by MLA Langate, Sheikh Khursheed Ahma, Javed Rana said that the Forest Department provides timber assistance to fire victims falling within the A-Zone jurisdiction, subject to completion of codal formalities and availability of fallen/dry standing trees.

Giving the village-wise status, the Minister informed that no application under Kashmir Forest Notice has been received from Tantarigund (A-Zone), Block Haril.

Regarding Lokipora, Superneghama and Gundkuhroo, he said these villages do not fall within the A-Zone concession area and, therefore, are not covered under the Kashmir Notice Rules. However, the J&K Forest Development Corporation has provided timber to one fire-affected person, Mohd Jamal Sheikh of Gundkuhroo, against a sanction of 60 Cft issued vide Sanction No. 58868 dated September 21, 2026. In the case of Neelipora, two applications under Kashmir Notice are presently under process, he added.

The Minister, as per an official statement, further informed that Jammu and Kashmir Forest Development Corporation (JKFDC) shall extend permissible timber assistance to the eligible fire-affected persons on an urgent



and time-bound basis, subject to receipt of requisition and completion of prescribed verification formalities. He also informed that Common Service Timber Depots (CSTDs) have been established at different locations to facilitate receipt and processing of requisitions and each case is verified through field inspection before issuance of timber sanction to the eligible applicant.

The House was also informed that during the current financial year, Langate Forest Division has provided timber assistance to fire victims in the constituency at 10 per cent of the Standard Rate under A-Zone.

On relief measures, the Minister informed that the Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, has provided blankets, kitchen sets and tarpaulins to the affected families as immediate relief. Besides, a cash assistance of 10,000 per family for fully/severely damaged houses and 5,000 per family for partially damaged houses has also been provided from the District Red Cross Fund.

He further stated that ex-gratia relief under SDRF norms for the affected families of the aforementioned villages is under process and shall be sanctioned and disbursed after clearance by the SOP Committee, as per the prescribed procedure.

Govt issues 2,486 EWS certificates in Kashmir, 24,058 in Jammu: Javed Rana

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmed Rana, on behalf of Chief Minister who also holds the portfolio of Revenue Department, informed the House that during the last two years, 2,486 Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) certificates have been issued in Kashmir Division and 24,058 in Jammu Division.

The Minister, as per an official statement, was replying to a Calling Attention Notice tabled by MLA Sajad Gani Lone regarding discrimination with Kashmir Division in issuance of certificates under the EWS category.

The Minister said that the EWS certificates are issued by the Tehsildars in accordance with the eligibility criteria prescribed by the Social Welfare Department.

Raising a supplementary on the subject, MLA Sajad Lone urged the Government to



evolve a uniform and rational definition of the economically weaker sections in Jammu and Kashmir. He suggested that the criteria for determining EWS eligibility could be reviewed by taking into consideration factors such as per capita income,

social conditions and other relevant socio-economic indicators. He also maintained that the criteria for determining the EWS category are not binding on all States and can be reviewed or modified by the present Government in

accordance with the socio-economic conditions of the Union Territory.

Responding to the issues raised, Minister for Social Welfare Sakeena Itoo intervened and said that the rules governing determination of the EWS category are prescribed by the Union Government and that States and Union Territories are required to adopt the prescribed criteria.

CPI(M) MLA Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami also intervened, stating that the criteria prescribed for determining the EWS category are not necessarily applied uniformly across all States. He pointed out that some States have evolved their own criteria and suggested that Jammu and Kashmir could also examine the practices followed elsewhere while framing an appropriate mechanism. Speaker, Abdul Rahim Rather observed that the matter merits examination and the government should study the EWS criteria adopted by different states.

Javid Dar lays CAG Reports in Assembly



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Javid Ahmad Dar Wednesday laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly two Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), on behalf of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, for periods ended March 2023 and March 2024.

The Reports, as per an official statement, laid before the House include the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the period ended March 2023 (Report No. 03 of 2026, Composite Audit Report-Civil and PSEs) and the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the period ended March 2024 (Report No. 04 of 2026, Composite Audit Report-Civil).

56 WSSs worth Rs 11649.66 lakh taken up under JJM in Pahalgam Constituency: Javed Rana

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: Minister for Jal Shakti Department Javed Rana informed the House that the Jal Shakti Department is implementing various Water Supply Schemes (WSSs) under Jal Jeevan Mission, NABARD and UT CAPEX (SASCI) for providing adequate and potable water supply to the habitations of Pahalgam Constituency.

The Minister was replying to a Calling Attention notice moved by MLA Altaf Ahmad Wani.

The Minister, as per an official statement, said that a total of 56 water supply schemes

have been taken up under JJM at an estimated cost of Rs. 11649.66 lakh to cover the entire area of Pahalgam constituency with the Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCS). Of these, 31 schemes have been completed and made functional while the remaining 25 schemes are under execution and have achieved more than 75% physical progress, he added.

The Minister said that the balance works will be completed and the schemes commissioned within the extended timeline prescribed under JJM 2.0, as the Mission has now been extended up to December, 2028.

The Minister informed that in case of water supply Scheme Regional Dachnipora, the pace of execution could not be maintained as the matter remains sub-judicious since long time due to land dispute. The villages/habitations coming under the scope of WSS Regional Dachnipora viz, Awoora, Dehwatoo, Nagipora, Charigam, Kullar, Wullerhama, Sofipora Hardekathal Movera, Yanner, Wehdan, Sallar, Livar Zaigund, Bagwani are being provided drinking water supplies partly through an existing old water supply schemes, he said.

The Minister further

informed that there is one more water supply scheme (WSS Litroo) which has been taken up under NABARD with an estimated cost of Rs. 564.75 lakh which has achieved 80 percent physical progress.

He said that the water supply to the villages/habitations of Wullerhama, Hardekathal and Sofipora was adversely affected due to back-to-back cloudbursts in Nallah Awoora during July and August. The affected water supply infrastructure has, however, been temporarily restored and a proposal for permanent restoration has been submitted. He informed the House that the drinking water to these affected

areas is being provided through an old existing system besides tanker services are deployed as per the need within available resources.

He said that the proposals for augmentation/coverage of some left out habitations restoration works have been reflected under various other programmes like UT Capex, District Capex and SASCI.

The Minister said that the department is taking all necessary measures to resolve the water supply issues and will continue to take necessary steps to ensure uninterrupted drinking water facilities in the Pahalgam Constituency.

New building for Gandhi Nagar Hospital in pipeline: Sakeena Itoo

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo Wednesday informed the House that the proposal regarding construction of new building for Gandhi Nagar Hospital is in pipeline.

The Minister was replying to a Calling Attention Motion moved by MLA Vikram Randhawa regarding declaration of the old hospital building of Government Hospital, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, as unsafe pursuant to the Safety Audit conducted by the Superintending Engineer (Structural Wing), Jammu, necessitating its demolition and construction of a new, modern hospital building at the site.

The Minister informed the House that, during 2025, the old building of Government Hospital, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, developed severe water seepage and waterlogging issues. Accordingly, a Structural Safety Audit was



conducted by PWD (DIQC), Jammu, which highlighted certain safety concerns pertaining to the building, she added.

Keeping in view the safety of patients and staff, the Minister said that all hospital services, except the OPD Block, were shifted to the 200-bedded MCH Building of GMC Jammu. She added that, simultaneously, the necessary process for construction of a new hospital building at the existing site has been initiated.

Sakeena Itoo informed the House that the requisite floor-wise service plans, duly

approved by the Committee constituted for the purpose, have already been submitted to the Chief Architect and Chief Engineer, PWD, Jammu. The total station site plan, required for preparation of the architectural design, is presently under finalization, she added.

The Minister further informed that, upon completion of the requisite formalities and documentation, the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for construction of the new hospital building will be prepared by the PW(R&B) Department.

Govt takes serious note of premature apple fruit fall in Shopian, orders probe, FIR registered: Javid Dar

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 30: The government has taken serious cognizance of premature and extraordinary fruit fall reported in apple orchards of Zainapora and other areas of Shopian district and certain areas of Anantnag district.

This was stated by Minister for Agriculture Production, Javid Ahmad Dar, while replying to a Calling Attention Notice raised by MLA Showkat Hussain Ganai regarding premature fruit fall in orchards of Zainapora.

The Minister said the issue has caused substantial losses and hardship to fruit growers. He informed that a Joint Enquiry Committee comprising Director Horticulture Kashmir and Director Law Enforcement, J&K, has been constituted to examine the matter from scientific, regulatory, enforcement and crop-damage perspectives. The Committee submitted its status

report to the government on September 21, 2026 while the complete report is awaited.

As part of the scientific investigation, Javid Dar said multidisciplinary teams from Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) conducted field inspections in the affected areas on June 18, June 29 and July 3, 2026. During the inspections, 37 villages and 61 farmers/orchards were surveyed and premature fruit drop was observed in all 61 orchards. Of these, 20 growers had reportedly used the fungicide marketed as "Super M-45" alone while 41 had used it in combination with other agro-chemicals.

The Minister said the extent of fruit fall in several orchards increased progressively from around 30 percent during the initial inspection to nearly 70 percent during the second visit and close to 90 percent in certain cases during the

third visit. Simultaneously, the Law Enforcement Wing of the Agriculture Department undertook verification of the manufacture, distribution and sale of the product. Twelve licensed dealers dealing with Batch No. SP-1902 were identified while 238 kilograms of the said batch were seized in District Shopian.

The enquiry, he said, has revealed serious discrepancies concerning regulatory particulars and provenance of the batch. Discrepancies were noticed in the QR code, registration number, manufacturing licence particulars, approved label, manufacturing date and Certificate of Analysis (COA).

Javid Dar informed the House that the QR code printed on the package reportedly corresponded to a different registered entity besides discrepancies in manufacturing licence particulars and other regulatory documents.

"Legal and police action has already been

initiated. Proceedings under the Insecticides Act, 1968 and the Insecticides Rules, 1971 are underway in connection with the alleged misbranding. In view of discrepancies relating the identity of the manufacturer, registration, licence, label and other regulatory particulars, the matter was also referred for police investigation. Accordingly, FIR No. 0200 dated September 23, 2026 has been registered at Police Station Shopian against the suspected persons. The investigation will establish the actual source of manufacture and packaging of the batch, trace its supply chain and determine responsibility in accordance with law," said the Minister.

The Minister said the government has also undertaken orchard-wise assessment of crop losses. In District Shopian, the consolidated assessment covers five Horticulture Zones of Kachdora, Keller, Shopian, Imamsahib/Kaprin and

10-day autumn

details, eight government Bills were received and introduced in the session. Of which six were passed and two withdrawn..

As many 49 previous Private Members Bills and 23 fresh Bills were received by the Assembly secretariat. Of the fresh Bills submitted, 22 were admitted and one disallowed.

Out of them, only one Bill was taken up in the House.

As per details, a total of 646 starred and unstarred questions were received, comprising 328 starred and 318 unstarred questions. Of these, 625 were listed. Twenty questions were disallowed and one withdrawn.

The House received 79 calling attention notices, of which 56 were admitted and 23 disallowed. Thirty were listed during the session.

According to details, 70 Private Member Resolutions were received. Of which 63 were admitted and seven disallowed.

According to details, one only resolution was taken up in the House but none was adopted.

Concluding the proceedings, Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the House should end the session on a “positive note” and urged members not to leave with any grudges.

He thanked all members who participated in the proceedings and said his responsibility as the presiding officer was to facilitate members in raising issues concerning the people who elected them.

“I have tried to accommodate everyone irrespective of party, and I reiterate that I don’t belong to any party,” he said.

Acknowledging that the session was brief, the Speaker said that longer sittings would have provide greater opportunity for members to participate in discussions and raise public issues.

He also referred to the disruptions, saying protests and ruckus were normal in legislatures across the world, but stressed that situations were handled appropriately.

He added that he could have marshalled members during disruptions but preferred to exercise patience.

The Speaker said that despite protests, the functioning of the House remained largely uninterrupted and important legislative and parliamentary business was completed.

“Questions and business were not allowed to go waste,” he said.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, delivering the concluding remarks, said that despite the brief duration of the session, efforts were made to address issues concerning the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

He said the government had acted on issues raised by both opposition and treasury bench members and directed officers accordingly. Choudhary added that the concerns raised by MLAs had been noted by the government and expressed hope that officers would take the directions of the House and concerns of legislators seriously.

He thanked the Speaker for accommodating members during the session, besides acknowledging the efforts of Assembly employees, security personnel and the media. (KNO)

Social media trolling

he said private matters were increasingly being put in the public domain. He also sought verification of journalists covering the Assembly and action against those responsible for circulating objectionable content.

NC MLA Tanvir Sadiq said social media was important for disseminating information but called for safeguards against image morphing and the misuse of digital platforms.

MLA Nazir Ahmad Gurezi praised the role of the press but expressed concern over unregulated social media handlers. He said anyone carrying a microphone and a press card could claim to be a journalist and sought legislation to regulate the sector.

PDP MLA Waheed Para opposed restrictions, arguing that media could not be controlled and that the answer to problematic content was greater access to information, not censorship.

BJP MLA RS Pathania sought a clear timeline for the proposed legislation, while MLA Nizam-ud-Din Bhat said the issue required wider deliberation and greater public awareness about responsible social media use.

Responding to the debate, Sakina said the government recognised the vital role of print and electronic media but acknowledged existing loopholes. She said a House committee examining the issue had already met on July 30 and that work on the new policy was underway.

The minister said accountability should not rest solely with the media, alleging that misleading and “mischievous” content was also being circulated through social media pages linked to political actors.

She said the number of Facebook-based media pages far exceeded registered media organisations and alleged that some were being used to malign individuals. She also suggested stricter checks on mobile phones carried by legislators, visitors and mobile-based media personnel entering the Assembly.

Reaffirming the government’s

commitment to the policy, Sakina said clear rules would be defined once it was introduced and violators would face legal action.

During the discussion, she also criticised the circulation of personal content involving public figures, including Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, and called for greater responsibility in the use of social media platforms. (KNO)

Art 370, pre-1953

on Wednesday said restoration of statehood cannot be linked with the pre-1953 position or restoration of Articles 370 and 35A.

Talking to reporters after the conclusion of the Autumn Session, the LoP Sharma, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), questioned the statehood resolution passed by the Assembly and criticised references to the pre-1953 position and Articles 370 and 35A.

LoP Sharma said this 7-day session was most unfortunate and historic for the wrong reasons.

Sharma said the Chief Minister is calling it a fruitful session. “Fruitful from which angle? You dashed the hopes of all sections. People were waiting for your Statehood resolution, which you chant as an answer to every question.”

“After abrogation of 370, all confusion is over and the full Constitution of India is implemented in J&K. By raking up Pre-53 again, you have prolonged and sabotaged Statehood,” Sharma said.

He reminded that when Late Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah demanded a separate Constitution and separate Flag, then PM Late Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru jailed him for 22 years.

Sharma questioned Congress leadership, from Rahul Gandhi to Mallikarjun Kharge: “What is your stand on this resolution seeking Statehood with Pre-53 and 370? Do you want to divide India again and bring separatism back? By supporting this unconstitutional resolution, Congress has unmasked itself and should be ashamed. The nation is asking how can they support this.”

He also questioned Speaker Rather under which Rule he allowed such an unconstitutional resolution in the Assembly, which was declared illegal by the Law Department, and further demanded that the Speaker should step down on moral grounds for allowing such bills in the Assembly.

“The BJP is committed to statehood. However, the pre-1953 position and restoration of Articles 370 and 35A cannot be linked with the issue of statehood,” he said.

On the pre-1953 issue, the LoP said the matter should be examined by the appropriate constitutional institutions and agencies.

He said Jammu and Kashmir had an “inclusive character”, comprising people from different religious and social communities, and opposed any demand for a separate Constitution or flag.

CM OMAR LED ADMIN HAS FAILED TO ADDRESS CONCERNS

Turning to the functioning of the government, he accused the Omar Abdullah-led administration of failing to address the concerns of various sections of society during the seven-day autumn session, alleging that the session had disappointed people waiting for action on their issues.

He said the BJP had raised issues collected from people across all district headquarters on the first day of the session, including those concerning delivery workers, contractual and daily-rated employees, NHM and NYC workers, ASHA and Anganwadi workers, GRS and technical assistants, CAMPA workers and water-testing laboratory employees.

He said the government failed to provide answers on these issues despite the BJP raising them during the session. He also questioned the government’s description of the session as “fruitful”, saying people had expected clarification on commitments and announcements made by the government.

The LoP said the party had prepared a dossier titled “Promises versus Performance”, which, he said, highlights the government’s commitments and its performance.

On healthcare, he said Jammu and Kashmir is facing a shortage of around 13,000 doctors and paramedics, saying hospitals continued to face staff shortages. He said the government had failed to adequately utilise the Public Service Commission and Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board.

He said around 3.75 lakh people still lacked tap-water connections and alleged that implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission had not progressed adequately. LoP Sharma said staff shortages in schools and hospitals at various places reflected what he termed the government’s failures.

He also raised concerns of delivery workers, NHM employees, NYCs, paramedics, ASHA and Anganwadi workers, GRS and technical assistants and CAMPA employees.

He said questions raised by ruling-party MLAs in the Assembly reflected dissatisfaction among members of the treasury benches over the functioning of the government.

NO LOCAL YOUTH HAS JOINED

TERROR RANKS IN 2025, 2026

On terrorism, Sharma said there had been a decline in the recruitment of local youth. “No youth from Jammu and Kashmir had taken up arms against the country during 2025 and 2026 and the participation of around 50,000 youth in a tournament in Pulwama is an indication of changing circumstances,” the LoP said.

He further said the ecosystem earlier available to foreign terrorists has weakened, while the number of foreign terrorists has declined.

On reservation, he said everyone had the constitutional right to raise their voice and demand their rights, but declined to comment further, stating that the matter was sub judice. (KNO)

Speaker directs

regarding alleged discrimination against Kashmir under the EVWS category.

The Speaker observed that the matter merits examination and stressed that the Government should look into the matter.

“You should look into the matter. If some states have adopted different criteria, examine why they have done so and study that,” the Speaker said.

He said that Lone was challenging the definitional clause of the EVWS criteria rather than its percentage.

“What I understood from his question is that he is not saying you should keep 10 percent or 5 percent. He is saying that whatever percentage you keep, keep it. His problem lies with the definition of poverty,” the Speaker remarked.

Raising the issue in the House, Lone said data tabled in the Assembly revealed that 24,058 certificates had been issued in Jammu against 2,486 in Kashmir over the last two years.

He argued that the criteria for determining the EVWS category are not binding on all States and could be reviewed or modified by the present Government in accordance with the socio-economic conditions of the Union Territory.

Citing Government data, Lone said the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department records over 37 lakh AAY and BPL priority household ration cards in Kashmir against around 29 lakh in Jammu. “Roughly 24,000 EVWS certificates had been issued in Jammu compared to about 2,400 in Kashmir, translating into nearly 92 per cent of the certificates going to Jammu and eight per cent to Kashmir,” he said.

“The per capita is the same and the social conditions are the same,” Lone told the House, while arguing that the asset criteria were at the core of the disparity.

He said a person earning below Rs 8 lakh annually could be considered economically weaker, but ownership of a house on three-and-a-half marlas could make the person ineligible under the existing criteria.

He added that the criteria create a contradiction, as a person eligible for a poor-family ration card could be considered well-off while applying for an EVWS job.

Citing replies received in the Assembly, Lone said around 7,500 recruitments had been made since the Government took office, with nearly 750 posts going to the EVWS category. “Of them, 690 have gone to Jammu and 60 to Kashmir,” he said.

“If a ration-card-based criterion was applied, around 412 of those EVWS posts would have gone to Kashmir and 337 to Jammu,” he added.

With around 40,000 recruitments pending, Lone said nearly 4,000 posts could fall under the EVWS category. Of them, 320 posts would go to Kashmir and 3,680 to Jammu. “Under an AAY/BPL-based criterion, around 2,200 such posts would go to Kashmir and 1,800 to Jammu,” he said.

Lone said the existing reservation structure already posed challenges for Kashmiri youth in the job market and that the EVWS disparity further compounded the issue. He cited Kerala as an example, saying the State uses AAY and BPL ration-card status as its EVWS yardstick, and provided the Kerala EVWS certificate formats to the Speaker and the concerned Minister for examination.

He further said the criteria were not constitutionally binding on the Union Territory. Referring to the Constitution (103rd Amendment) Act, he said States could notify economically weaker sections on the basis of family income and other indicators. “The Centre’s 2019 Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) definition could continue for central government jobs, while Jammu and Kashmir could adopt its own criteria for posts under the Union Territory,” he said.

Lone argued that a poor person is one who holds a priority household ration card or an AAY card, urging the Government to adopt one definition for both employment and food supplies. “You cannot have two definitions,” he said.

Responding to the issues raised, Social Welfare Minister Sakeena Itoo intervened and said the rules governing determination of the EVWS category are prescribed by the Union Government and that States and Union Territories are required to adopt the prescribed criteria.

CPI(M) MLA Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami also intervened, stating that

the criteria prescribed for determining the EVWS category are not necessarily applied uniformly across all States. He pointed out that some States have evolved their own criteria and suggested that Jammu and Kashmir could also examine practices followed elsewhere while framing an appropriate mechanism. (KNO)

‘Op Drishti’ Army’s

confined to big cities. He reiterated that the Tangdhar camp serves as an inspiring example for remote areas across India.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed gratitude to PM Modi and Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh and commended the Indian Army for their dedication. The Lieutenant Governor also appreciated the selfless service of Brigadier Sanjay Kumar Mishra and his team.

The experience of Operation Drishti gives us confidence that with determination, better planning and compassion, modern medicine can be delivered to every corner of the country. This is the resolve of “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas” and under the leadership of Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, it is being ensured that no citizen is left behind,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised that Operation Drishti is a living embodiment of service, compassion, courage, and resolve. He highlighted that 144 surgeries were successfully performed at the Srinagar camp, while the Tangdhar camp in Kupwara district marked a historic milestone as the first mega eye surgery camp on the border. Despite challenging terrain and the constant threat, doctors and soldiers created an underground operation theatre and restored vision to 220 patients in just two days.

“Those who have seen Tangdhar’s geographical conditions understand that reaching there with assistance is itself a challenge. One must cross mountains, traverse difficult terrain and at times advance even amidst the danger. Yet, in this very challenging and uncertain environment, our doctors and brave soldiers, under the leadership of Brigadier Sanjay Mishra, created a centre of hope,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor noted that modern surgical tools were airlifted to Tangdhar, enabling advanced eye care in a region where such facilities were previously unimaginable. Patients from Khawarpora, Tangdhar, Bagbella, and surrounding villages benefitted from the camp.

The Lieutenant Governor affirmed that the 11th camp in Srinagar is not the end but a continuation of the journey. He expressed confidence that Operation Drishti will reach more villages and towns across the country ensuring that quality healthcare is not confined to big cities. He reiterated that the Tangdhar camp serves as an inspiring example for remote areas across India.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor felicitated the doctors and medical staff of defence forces for their valuable services during the camp. He also handed over post-operative kits to the beneficiaries.

Lieutenant General Balbir Singh, General Officer Commanding (GOC), Chinar Corps; Brig Sanjay Kumar Mishra, Senior Consultant and HOD Department of Ophthalmology, Army Hospital R&R; Brig B.V. Rao, Commandant, 92 Base Hospital, and senior officials of Defence Forces attended the closing ceremony.

Anshul Garg, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Dr. GV Sundeep Chakravarthy, SSP Srinagar; Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar were also present. (KNO)

‘Op Drishti’ an

first phase of the surgeries was conducted at an underground operation theatre at Tangdhar, while the second phase was carried out at the operation theatre of 92 Base Hospital in Srinagar.

He said patients were identified through screening camps conducted in remote areas, including Machil and Tangdhar, and were subsequently brought for treatment. “This is an initiative to reach people living in difficult and challenging areas of the country and provide them the assistance they need,” he said.

Brig Mishra said the initiative was the 11th such camp conducted so far, with similar initiatives also held in places including Lakshadweep and Leh.

He expressed gratitude to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, the Army Chief, the Air Force, and the teams from Delhi, Srinagar and Tangdhar for their support in making the initiative possible.

He also thanked the people of Kashmir for their trust and support, saying their encouragement had strengthened the resolve of the medical teams to continue such outreach programmes.

Brig Mishra acknowledged the contribution of 92 Base Hospital and its Commanding Officer in successfully conducting the campaign.

Meanwhile, an official, told KNO, said the mega surgical programme was conducted in two phases, with 200 cataract surgeries performed at the Underground Forward Surgical Centre in Tangdhar on September 24–25, followed by another 200 surgeries

at 92 Base Hospital, Badami Bagh Cantonment, Srinagar, on September 28–29.

The official said the screening exercise was conducted through 18 camps across forward and remote locations, including Tangdhar, Dawar, Machhal, Uri, Baramulla, Bandipora, Khanabal and Kangan, where nearly 6,000 patients were screened and around 400 were identified for cataract surgery.

The official said the Tangdhar phase marked the first time cataract surgeries on such a scale were conducted at an underground Forward Surgical Centre, allowing specialised ophthalmic treatment to be taken closer to people living in difficult border areas.

The official added that the surgical team and specialised equipment were subsequently moved from Tangdhar to 92 Base Hospital in Srinagar for the second phase of the programme. (KNO)

Army’s eye camp

Mega Cataract Surgery Camp, Op Drishti, at Badami Bagh Cantonment (BB Cantt), Chechi said the intervention had given him renewed hope.

“I had been suffering from an eye problem for nearly 30 years. The Indian Army helped me receive treatment. After living with this condition for so many years, I now feel hopeful that my life can improve,” Chechi told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) on the sidelines of Phase II of the camp, which concluded at Chinar Auditorium in Srinagar.

Chechi was among several beneficiaries who shared their experiences at the camp, where patients suffering from vision-related ailments received specialised treatment and care.

Ghulam Mahudin Sofi from Anantnag said the support extended beyond medical treatment.

“There is a lot of comfort here. The Army has treated us very well. The doctors speak to patients, listen to them and make them feel at ease before treatment begins. That itself builds confidence,” he said.

An elderly beneficiary from Tral’s Machama area said the procedure had already made a noticeable difference.

Wearing protective glasses after treatment, he said he could feel his vision improving.

“I feel the light has returned to my eyes. I am deeply grateful to the Indian Army and the doctors who treated me,” he said.

Many beneficiaries travelled from remote areas to attend the camp, where Army medical teams provided specialised eye care and guided patients through the treatment process. (KNO)

Top Lashkar commander

the Army’s Chinar Corps, troops observed suspicious activity during the operation. When challenged, the terrorists opened fire, triggering an exchange of gunfire in which one terrorist was killed.

In a post on X, the Chinar Corps said the body of a Pakistan-based LeT terrorist, identified as Mohammad Asif alias Hashim Musa, was recovered during a search operation in the Palmaidan area early Wednesday. Arms, ammunition and other war-like stores were also seized. The operation was continuing, it said.

Meanwhile, the MHA said Musa had been under surveillance for a long time and that security agencies recently put in place a coordinated plan for his neutralisation after receiving technical and human intelligence inputs about his movements.

Describing his killing as a major setback to the LeT network in Jammu and Kashmir, the Ministry said Musa was part of a four-member group of top LeT commanders active in the region since 2022 and allegedly involved in several major terror attacks.

According to the MHA, the other three members of the group were killed in separate operations: Junaid Bhat in Dachigam on December 3, 2024; Suleman during Operation Mahadev on July 28, 2025; and Yasir during Operation Asdhar on September 4, 2026.

The Ministry said the group was allegedly linked to several attacks, including those at Halan (August 2023), Kandi (May 2023), DKG (December 2023), Shahstar (May 2024), Shiv Khori (June 2024), Gagangir and Bootapathri (October 2024), and Baisaran (April 2025).

Musa’s killing comes weeks after Yasir was eliminated in the Asdhar Gali area of Budgam. Musa had reportedly escaped during that operation, prompting security forces to intensify searches across the mountainous and forested Pir Panjal region.

The MHA said the latest action was part of Operation Sheruwalli, an ongoing counter-terrorism campaign launched in May 2026.

It added that the Jammu and Kashmir Police, Army and Central Armed Police Forces have been conducting coordinated anti-terror operations across the Union Territory.

Search operations in the Korag-Palmaidan-Gurwatkalan area were continuing at the time of filing. (KNO)

Army Commander reviews

and troops for their synergy, dedication, perseverance and commitment to sustained counter-terror operations.

Operation Korag was launched on specific intelligence inputs about the

presence of terrorists in the Korag-Yousmarg area of Budgam.

A joint operation by the Indian Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police, and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) led to an exchange of fire in which Pakistan-based LeT commander Musa alias Asif Fauji was killed.

The operation was continuing at the time of filing. (KNO)

Minister rules

announced that no payments would be released in schemes under audit until the outcome was known. “Funding and execution of the remaining schemes, where no issues have been reported, must be allowed to progress,” he said.

On the issue of procurement of pipes, the Minister said the Anti-Corruption Bureau had already closed the matter as “not substantiated.” “Regarding procurement of pipes under JJM, I want to inform the House that the total value of pipes procured is approximately Rs 3,100 crore, of which HDPE pipes account for only Rs 273 crore, not Rs 600 crore as stated in the report. All procurements were made as per the financial powers under S.O. 15 of 2020. A complaint in this regard has already been examined by the Anti-Corruption Bureau, and it has closed the matter as ‘Not Substantiated.’ A protest petition against the closure report was dismissed by the Anti-Corruption Court. There is therefore no need for another Committee on the same issue,” he said. (KNO)

‘Graduate numbers

reduced from 4,190 in 2023-24 to 4,002 in 2024-25 and 3,352 in 2025-26 respectively.

It also said that the other districts including Rajouri Udhampur, Kulgam and Doda registered more than a one-third decline in total graduates over three years.

The government further informed that house that at present, no consolidated course-wise employability rate of graduates from Government Degree Colleges, Universities and Cluster Universities of Jammu & Kashmir is available in standardized form.

“The employability of graduates varies across courses and institutions and is also dependent upon further education, competitive examinations, skill acquisition and employment opportunities in the relevant sectors,” the government said.

It also said that there was no comprehensive formal assessment or survey covering employment outcomes, placement rates, average salary packages and sector wise absorption of graduates from all Degree Colleges, Universities and Cluster Universities of Jammu & Kashmir have been conducted and compiled in a uniform manner so far.

“However, the Department is in the process of devising a comprehensive policy framework for systematic assessment and monitoring of graduate employability and employment outcomes, including placement rates, sector-wise absorption, skill requirements and other relevant indicators,” the government informed the house. (KNO)

Pashmina artisans true

the economic value of a Pashmina product should appropriately reflect the months or years of labour, skill and dedication invested by artisans in creating it.

Referring to the GI tag and authentication mechanism, Sinha said these measures provide an important protective mechanism for genuine Pashmina products. He noted that 18 crafts have been granted GI tags and that a QR-based system has been developed to help establish their authenticity.

Sinha said the major challenge before the sector was to ensure greater access to global markets.

“The world wants to see your art,” he said, stressing that e-commerce, digital platforms, international exhibitions and new markets could help take the stories and products of women and young artisans to the global luxury market.

He also stressed the importance of social security, healthcare facilities, welfare schemes and modern design training for artisan families.

The Lieutenant Governor called for continued cooperation between the PEMA Foundation, Industries and Commerce Department, and Handloom and Handicrafts Department to strengthen the sector and improve the lives of artisans.

Addressing the artisans, Sinha urged them never to consider their work ordinary, saying their craftsmanship represents devotion, creativity and a contribution towards keeping India’s cultural memory alive.

“Whenever a person anywhere in the world carries an original Pashmina product from Jammu Kashmir on their shoulders, they carry with them a part of India’s culture and history,” he said.

He urged artisans to embrace modern opportunities while preserving traditional excellence and called for continued efforts to connect the younger generation with Pashmina and other traditional crafts.

Sinha congratulated all the award winners and appreciated their contribution towards preserving Jammu and Kashmir’s rich handicraft heritage. (KNO)

PM Modi hails Cabinet's approval of Green Energy Corridor, wheat MSP hike

PTI

New Delhi, Sep 30: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday hailed the Union Cabinet's approval of the Green Energy Corridor Phase-III (GEC-III) scheme and raising of the minimum support price (MSP) of wheat.

Modi said the approval of Green Energy Corridor will strengthen power grids across states and UTs besides creating more jobs in manufacturing, construction and energy storage while the raising of wheat MSP will ensure that millions of farmers in the country receive a remunerative price for their produce.

"Cleaner power. Stronger grids. More opportunities. The Cabinet decision on the Green Energy Corridor Phase-III will ensure: 135 GW renewable energy



evacuation, 50 GWh battery storage. Stronger power grids across States and UTs. More jobs in manufacturing, construction and energy storage. Big push towards 900 GW non-fossil capacity by 2035," he said in a post on 'X'.

On the increase of MSP of wheat, the prime minister said the government is leaving no

stone unturned to protect the interests of farmers across the country while also working to increase their income.

"In this direction, our government has approved an increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for rabi crops for the 2027-28 marketing season. This will ensure that millions of farmer

brothers and sisters in the country receive a remunerative price for their produce," he said in another post on 'X'.

The government on Wednesday raised the MSP of wheat marginally by Rs 25 to Rs 2,610 per quintal for the 2027-28 rabi marketing year, while increasing support prices of pulses and oilseeds by up to Rs 675 per quintal.

The proposal from the agriculture ministry on MSP for wheat and five other rabi crops was cleared at a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Modi.

The Union Cabinet approved the Green Energy Corridor Phase-III scheme with an outlay of Rs 1.86 lakh crore to set up an intra-state transmission system with battery storage to evacuate 135 GW of renewable energy.

No change of guard ceremony on Oct 3: Prez office

PTI

New Delhi, Sep 30: There will be no change of guard ceremony on October 3, the President's office said on Wednesday.

The ceremony is a military tradition held every week to enable a fresh group of the President's Bodyguard (PBG) to take charge.

The PBG, raised in 1773, is the senior-most regiment of the Indian Army and carries out ceremonial duties for the President of India.

"The Change of Guard Ceremony will not take place on October 3, 2026, at the Forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan," it said in a statement.

The PBG personnel are excellent horsemen, capable tankmen and paratroopers.

EC withdraws SIR declaration from Form 6 in states where exercise is over



PTI

New Delhi, Sep 30: The Election Commission has withdrawn the additional SIR-related declaration from the online voter enrolment Form 6 in states where the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls has been completed, days after the full Commission decided that the requirement would apply only during the exercise.

The declaration, which requires new applicants to furnish details linking themselves or their parents or grandparents to electoral rolls prepared during an earlier intensive revision, remains available on the ECINET portal in states and Union Territories where the SIR is underway.

In states where SIR has concluded, the additional declaration has now been removed from the ECINET app and portal as well as the respective Chief Electoral Officer portals, leaving applicants seeking enrolment to fill only the statutory Form 6 prescribed under the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960.

The move follows a September 26 meeting of the full Commission comprising Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi.

After the meeting, the poll panel had said that the declaration attached to Form 6 was meant for SIR and that "for non-SIR period, the Forms applicable as per Rules (the Registration of Electors Rules 1960) will be used". The issue had become a point of controversy after it emerged that Sandhu and Joshi had raised objections over changes relating to Form 6. Form 6 is the statutory form used by eligible citizens to apply for inclusion in the electoral roll. Joshi had objected to changes to the form on the grounds that a form prescribed under the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, could not be modified without amending the rules.

'Zero vision, 100 pc frustration' outcomes of INDIA bloc meeting: BJP 'Rahul rejected as its leader'

PTI

New Delhi, Sep 30: The BJP said the outcomes of the INDIA bloc meeting on Wednesday were "zero vision, 100 per cent frustration, and an advance excuse for poll defeats", with the leaders of the opposition grouping rejecting Rahul Gandhi's leadership.

"The INDI Alliance fell apart even before the meeting took place. The DMK did not attend the meeting. Akhilesh was busy elsewhere. The AAP had already declined," Union minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said at a press conference at the BJP headquarters.

The senior BJP leader further pointed out that Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray said he will join the meeting virtually.

"Why is this happening? It is because the INDI Alliance is simply not willing to accept Rahul Gandhi as its leader. His leadership is not being accepted; that is why they are not even showing up," Chouhan said, contending that Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav would have come to attend the meeting if it was "really so important."

Chouhan claimed that the opposition INDIA bloc is crumbling.

"No matter how many times they (Congress) try to re-launch Rahul Gandhi, the INDIA bloc does not consider him their leader," he said.

"Leave the INDIA bloc aside; even Congress leaders and members of the party are not willing to accept Rahul Gandhi as their leader. Rahul himself,



during Congress Working Committee meetings, keeps pleading: 'Accept me as your leader, trust me,'" the BJP leader said, and wondered how the country could accept someone as a leader whom his own party does not.

The BJP's remarks came after the INDIA bloc leaders met here to finalise an action plan for a joint agitation over alleged irregularities in the SIR.

The Congress asserted that the opposition stands united to protect the Constitution from "repeated assaults" of the Modi government, including its "vote chori gameplan" to remain in power.

While the DMK and the AAP skipped the meeting, Akhilesh Yadav did not attend it on account of nominations for Rajya Sabha polls in Uttar Pradesh. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, former party chiefs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, AICC general secretaries Jairam Ramesh and K C Venugopal, the TMC's Mamata Banerjee, and leaders from the SP, CPI, CPI(M), NCP(SP) and Shiv Sena (UBT), among others,

attended the meeting.

Chouhan alleged that the INDIA bloc's proposed marches from October 2 to October 8 at various locations in the country are not meant to save democracy, but to save the "dynasty" of the Congress and its constituents.

The minister also took exception to the bloc members' opposition to the Special Intensive Revision of voter lists underway in India.

"An accurate voter list is the soul of democracy, and if incorrect names are included in it, democracy will perish. I want to ask the Congress party what objection could you possibly have to the removal of the name of someone who is no longer alive from the voter list?" Chouhan said.

For a "pristine democracy", the voter list must be accurate, the minister stressed.

"What is the problem if a name is removed from one location in cases of duplication? Why should the name of someone who is not even a citizen of the country be included in the voter list?" he added.

She now needs Congress: Adhir's jibe at Mamata



PTI

Kolkata, Sep 30: Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Wednesday took a sharp dig at Mamata Banerjee over her participation in an INDIA bloc meeting in Delhi, questioning whether her renewed engagement with the grand old party also meant she was now willing to accept Rahul Gandhi's leadership of the opposition ahead of the

2029 Lok Sabha elections.

Chowdhury, a former West Bengal Congress president and a vocal critic of the ex-CM, said opposition parties should recognise the Lok Sabha LoP as the face of their political fight, while questioning Banerjee's earlier reservations about Rahul Gandhi's leadership.

"Didi had to go to Delhi, you all know the reason... It's because she has lost in West Bengal," Chowdhury said at a

press conference.

"Many so-called leaders had earlier opposed Rahul Gandhi's leadership of the opposition bloc. But the reality is that only Rahul Gandhi can lead the alliance and he should be at the forefront," he said.

Had Banerjee supported Gandhi's leadership when the INDIA bloc held its initial meetings, "the situation in the country today might have been different", Chowdhury said.

"As Mamata Banerjee has lost elections in West Bengal and her party has split, she wants an alliance with the Congress, after trying to wipe out our party in the last 15 years. All these years, TMC did everything to undermine the INDIA bloc and the Congress," he added.

His remarks came after Banerjee attended a three-and-a-half-hour meeting with INDIA bloc leaders in New Delhi on Wednesday to chalk out a joint strategy on the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and opposition concerns over the functioning of the Election Commission.

Give BJP a chance, will wipe out drug menace from Punjab by Dec 31, 2029: Amit Shah



PTI

Jalandhar, Sep 30: Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched a blistering attack on the AAP government in Punjab on Wednesday, accusing it of allowing the trade of "chitta" (synthetic drugs) to run openly, and vowed that the BJP would free the state from the scourge by December 31, 2029, if voted to power in next year's Assembly polls.

Shah said the saffron party will fight the upcoming Assembly election solely on the issue of "Nasha Mukht Punjab" (drugs-free Punjab).

Assuring women of his party's resolve to free Punjab from the menace of drugs, he said the BJP-led Centre has eradicated Naxalism and terrorism.

"We have done it in Kashmir, we have done it in the northeast. We have eradicated Naxalism, ended terrorism. Give us a chance, we will wipe out chitta from Punjab," the senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader said while addressing a rally at Paragpur in Punjab's Jalandhar district to mark the culmination of the party's "Nasha Mukht Punjab Yatra", which began on September 18.

"I promise the mothers and youngsters of Punjab -- support the BJP in this election, vote for the 'lotus' and before December

31, 2029, we will free Punjab from the trade of chitta," he asserted.

"Can the AAP make Punjab drugs-free? Only the BJP can make Punjab drugs-free," he added.

Hitting out at the AAP government led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, Shah alleged that it allowed the trade of "chitta" to run openly.

On his arrival at Jalandhar in the afternoon, the home minister paid obeisance at the Shree Devi Talab temple here. Later, he met some families affected by the menace of drugs.

"I met the families of those who lost their kin due to drug addiction. A mother, holding pictures of her two sons, said the drug scourge should be ended," Shah said.

He added that the woman told him that she has lost her sons to the scourge, but no other mother should face her plight. "Today, I have come to tell the people of Punjab -- there are many issues in the upcoming election. There are farmers' issues, industry issues, law-and-order issues and then there is the issue of women's safety."

"However, the BJP is going to fight the upcoming election solely on the issue of a drugs-free Punjab," he said.

Without naming anyone, Shah said those who themselves

remain intoxicated and disrespect Sikh gurus cannot free Punjab from 'chitta'.

"When I say that we will make Punjab drugs-free before December 31, 2029, what (AAP supremo Arvind) Kejriwal and company are going to say behind me? I want to tell the people of Punjab that we have done what we had earlier said we would do," he said.

The home minister said those indulging in the drug trade will be sent behind bars and asserted that this is BJP's promise to the mothers of Punjab that after December 2029, there will be no one to supply drugs to youngsters in the state.

He asked people to remove the "incompetent" AAP government once and said, "Within two years we will eradicate the drug menace."

The brave land of Punjab, the land of farmers, the land of athletes, that "rangila" Punjab, they have painted it with the colour of "chitta", he alleged.

Comparing the drug recoveries with that of the previous Congress government, Shah said from 2004 to 2014, 26 lakh kg of "chitta" was seized and from 2014 to 2024, when the Modi government was in power, 1.2 crore kg of drugs was seized.

Further lashing out at the Mann government over the issue of corruption, he alleged that one scam after another is taking place in Punjab.

He named some of them -- the Moga outdoor media advertisement "scam", the Amritsar Smart City "scam", the Barnala Truck Union Land "scam", the panchayat fund "scam" and the anganwadi Panjiri "scam".

Shah claimed that the AAP government spends Rs 785 crore annually on advertisements.

"I have come today to ask Bhagwant Mann, what happened to your promises? You had promised 25 lakh jobs, filling 1.25 lakh vacant posts. What happened? Nothing happened," he said.

Mahatma Gandhi visualised ideal model of governance as 'Ram Rajya': NCERT textbook



PTI

New Delhi, Sep 30: Mahatma Gandhi visualised an ideal model of governance as "Ram Rajya" rooted in principles of probity, transparency, compassion and welfare, according to a new Class 9 social science textbook prepared by the NCERT.

The book titled "Understanding Society India and Beyond-Part 2" was released on Tuesday, six months after the new academic session began. The first part of the textbook was released in June.

The chapter called "Governance and Public Policy" cites the Sanskrit saying "Prajasukhe sukham rajnah, prajanam cha hite hitam", which translates to "in the happiness of the people lies the happiness of the ruler, and in the interest of the people lies the interest of the ruler".

"Mahatma Gandhi visualised 'Ram Rajya'

as an ideal model of governance, rooted in probity, transparency, compassion, welfare and people-centric orientation in governance and public policy. Gandhi's views on Ram Rajya reflect the collective imagination of Indians from their distant past to the present day," the textbook read.

It described Ram Rajya as "one of the best examples of good governance and a good collective life" as represented in the Ramayana and the 16th-century Ramcharitmanas.

The textbook also draws on the Mahabharata and the Vedic tradition to explain the idea that governance involves responsibilities towards society and is not limited to the exercise of power.

"From the Vedic period to the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, Indian tradition has consistently viewed governance as a

sacred responsibility rather than merely a means of exercising power," the chapter said.

"Good governance was measured not only by the ruler's authority but by the peace, prosperity, justice and well-being in society," it added.

The chapter uses these references while discussing the broader concept of Rajdharma, or the duties and responsibilities associated with righteous governance.

The Part 2 textbook is part of the wider transition to revised Class 9 learning material under the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023 and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

The published syllabus of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) includes six chapters spanning history, geography, political science

Stocks, bonds hold steady after encouraging inflation update



AP

New York, Sep 30: Some of the pressure that's ballooned in the bond market is easing on Wednesday after a report said inflation across the United States wasn't as bad last month as economists expected.

The better-than-expected data helped Treasury yields pull back a bit, a day after the 10-year Treasury yield touched its highest level since 2002. That in turn helped US stocks to stabilise.

The S&P 500 rose 0.3 per cent and is close to finishing September with a small gain instead of a loss. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 78 points, or 0.2 per cent, as of 9:35 am Eastern time, and the Nasdaq composite was 0.4 per cent higher.

Easier Treasury yields help

the broad stock market because higher yields slow the overall economy by making borrowing more expensive for everyone, while undercutting prices for all kinds of investments.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury fell to 5.24 per cent from 5.26 per cent late Tuesday. Shorter-term yields, such as for the two-year Treasury, sank even more as traders pulled back on bets that the Federal Reserve will raise its main interest rate next month to get high inflation further under control. They now see less than a coin flip's chance of that, according to data from CME Group.

The morning's report said that US consumers had to pay prices that were 3.4 per cent higher overall in August for the cost of living than a

year earlier. While that's still worse than the Fed's 2 per cent target, it was not as bad as the 3.7 per cent that economists expected.

The report followed others from earlier in the month about inflation during August, but this is the one that the Federal Reserve prefers to use.

To be sure, worries about high inflation are just one of the reasons yields have jumped in the United States and around the world. Another has been signals that the overall US economy continues to chug along despite its many challenges, and a report on Wednesday said its growth during the spring was stronger than earlier estimated.

Other factors sending yields higher are also continuing to churn, including worries about the big debt loads that Washington and other governments worldwide are supporting. The 30-year Treasury yield, which takes into account expectations for inflation and economic growth many years down the line, edged up to 5.60 per cent from 5.59 per cent late Tuesday.

The bond market also felt upward pressure from another climb for oil prices, which have been swinging on uncertainty about when the war with Iran will allow the flow of crude to be fully restored. Brent crude, the international standard, rose 2.7 per cent to USD 98.72.

In stock markets abroad, indexes dipped in Europe following a mixed session in Asia. Japan's Nikkei 225 jumped 1.9 per cent, while France's CAC 40 fell 0.6 per cent for two of the world's biggest moves.

Russian missiles, drones kill 7 in Ukraine, Zelenskyy says



AP

Kyiv, Sep 30: Russia pressed its missile and drone barrage of Ukraine, killing seven people, including a child, while mainly targeting the power grid, officials said Wednesday.

Moscow's steep escalation of its aerial campaign since the end of August is putting pressure on Ukraine as it braces for winter, when Russia regularly bombards energy facilities to deny Ukrainians heat, power and running water.

The heavy overnight attack caused power outages and prompted questions about whether it marked the start of Russia's anticipated cold weather campaign, which Ukrainian officials describe as an attempt to "weaponise winter."

"There has been virtually no day since summer when the enemy did not attack energy infrastructure," Prime Minister Serhii Koryntskyi said on Telegram. "But such a massive and combined attack happened for the first time since the end of the last heating season." Ukrainian Foreign

Minister Andrii Sybiha noted the increase in Russian strikes has brought "days of almost uninterrupted air raid alerts across Ukraine."

"Russia is intensifying its terror: jet-powered drones during the day, ballistic and cruise missiles at night, constant attacks against our cities and civilian life," Sybiha said on X.

Ukrainian officials say Moscow is not engaging with US efforts to halt the fighting, 4½ years after Russia invaded its neighbor. Moscow says it wants a comprehensive settlement rather than a temporary truce, but its demand for Ukraine to surrender land is unacceptable for Kyiv.

Russia exploits Ukraine's air defence gaps Nationwide, the Russian attacks killed seven Ukrainian civilians and wounded 24, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, without providing details.

A boy was killed in an attack on a private home in Vyshhorod, a city in the wider Kyiv region, said Tymur Tkachenko, head of the regional military administration.

US completes troop withdrawal from Iraq

AP

Baghdad, Sep 30 : The US military announced on Wednesday that it has completed the withdrawal of all American troops from Iraq, ending a 12-year mission to fight the Islamic State group. The last US troops left an air base in northern Iraq under a deal between Baghdad and Washington.

The withdrawal, agreed on two years ago, comes against the backdrop of the ongoing war between the United States and Iran that has also sometimes spilled over into Iraq, with Iran-backed militias firing on US troops and the US striking the groups' strongholds.

In recent years, Washington has appeared to seek to shift its focus from the Middle East toward Asia, but that shift has been inconsistent, with the Pentagon alternating between reducing its Mideast presence and then finding itself engaging in new conflicts – including the ongoing war in Iran.

Baghdad touted the end of the US mission as a sign of the country's increasing strength and sovereignty.

The withdrawal was also celebrated by Iran-backed groups but raised concerns among some other Iraqis, particularly in the Kurdish region, where many fear a resurgence of IS as well as more attacks by Iran-linked groups, possibly emboldened by the departure of U.S. forces.

Hockey: India women beat Korea 2-0 to reach Asiad final

PTI

Nagoya, Sep 30 : The in-form Indian women's hockey team placed itself on the verge of ending a 44-year wait for an Asian Games gold, beating South Korea 2-0 to enter the final of the continental showpiece here on Wednesday.

Ishika Chaudhary (44th minute) and skipper Salima Tete (48th) were the goal scorers for India.

India are now just a victory away from securing its only second Asian Games women's hockey gold medal. The previous triumph came way back in the 1982 New Delhi games.

India will take on defending champions China in the final on Friday. China beat Japan 4-2 in a shoot-out after both sides failed to break the deadlock in the entire 60 minutes of the first semifinal.

Auqib Nabi makes maiden appearance for India

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Sep 30 :Jammu and Kashmir fast bowler Auqib Nabi made his international debut after being named in India's playing XI for the second ODI against the West Indies. The Baramulla-born pacer becomes the third cricketer from Jammu and Kashmir to represent India at the international level, following Parvez Rasool and Umran Malik.

Popularly known as the "Baramulla Express", Nabi has risen through the ranks on the back of consistent performances in domestic cricket before making his mark during his recent stint in county cricket. His maiden India call-up marks another significant milestone in the 28-year-old pacer's career and adds to the growing list of J&K cricketers who have reached the international stage.

Nabi's inclusion in the playing XI also means he will miss J&K's Irani Cup clash against Rest of India, beginning Thursday at the Sher-i-Kashmir Stadium in Srinagar.—(KNO)



J&K to face rest of India in Irani Cup today; Pant, Dogra stress focus



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Sep 30 : Ranji Trophy champions Jammu and Kashmir will face another major test when they take on a star-studded Rest of India side in the Irani Cup at the Sher-i-Kashmir Stadium here from Thursday, with both captains stressing the need to remain focused on the five-day contest.

Rest of India will be led by India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant, while Paras Dogra will captain J&K, who will be without pacer Auqib Nabi, currently with the Indian team.

Speaking ahead of the fixture, Pant said he remained focused on making the most of every opportunity.

"For me, it's very simple.

Whatever is in front of me, I will give my best. That is how I play. I keep it very simple. Whatever opportunity I get, I try to get better." Pant said during the pre-match press conference. The Irani Cup will also provide Pant with valuable red-ball game time as he continues to build match rhythm.

"Playing cricket is always good. The more you play, the better you can get for sure," he said. Pant acknowledged J&K's impressive campaign but said Rest of India would remain focused on its own plans.

"The way J&K have played most of the season has been exceptional. They have done really well. But at the same time, we want to focus on ourselves," he said. Dogra, meanwhile, said J&K had

already put their Ranji Trophy triumph behind them and were looking ahead to the next challenge.

"We won the championship and it was a very good atmosphere. We have forgotten that now. We have taken the good things and made memories, but now we have to think about the future," he said.

"The next name is Irani. What has happened is in the memories now."

The J&K skipper said the team was well prepared despite the absence of some key players, including Nabi.

"Everyone is in good shape. Everyone is hungry and everyone wants to do well. There will obviously be a lack, but we have replacements. We want to play good cricket," Dogra said.—(KNO)

UT-level taekwondo championship held in Doda

J&K taekwondo athletes compete for national selection

KT NEWS DESK

Doda, Sep 30: District Youth Services & Sports Department today organised the Inter-Division UT-Level Taekwondo Championship here at the Indoor Stadium, bringing together promising Taekwondo athletes from across Jammu & Kashmir for a high-level competitive sporting event.

The championship was organised in accordance with the Activity Calendar issued by the Directorate of Youth Services & Sports, J&K. Chief Education Officer Bhushan Kumar Pathak and District Youth Services & Sports Officer declared the championship open. Addressing the participating athletes, they encouraged them to compete with discipline, determination and true sporting spirit, while extending their best wishes for the championship. The Indoor Stadium witnessed an energetic display of power, precision, speed and sporting excellence as athletes competed with determination to make their mark and advance towards the national stage.

The championship is being conducted under the directions of the Director General, Youth Services & Sports, J&K Anuradha Gupta and under the supervision of DYSSO Ashok Kumar.

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06:20 PM

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03:25 PM
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