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SCAN TO VISIT

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Development of Ladakh top priority for Centre: PM Modi

Inaugurates Leh Airport Terminal, key projects worth Rs 3350 crore, says will ease travel, improve power, water availability, boost trade, tourism, preserve ancient heritage

Sajid Raina



Leh, Oct 15: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday virtually inaugurated and dedicated to the nation five development projects worth around 3,350 crore in Ladakh. The projects cover airport infrastructure, road connectivity, renewable energy, heritage conservation and water security.

Addressing people through video conferencing, PM Modi, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "Projects would make travel easier, strengthen electricity infrastructure, improve water availability and give fresh impetus to the conservation of Ladakh's ancient heritage."

Congratulating the people of Ladakh, he also highlighted efforts to expand educational opportunities, promote sports, boost tourism, strengthen digital connectivity and create new livelihood opportunities for the region's youth.

Referring to the enthusiasm of people waving the tricolour amid fresh snowfall in Zanskar, the Prime Minister thanked the engineers, labourers, local workers and Border Roads Organisation personnel involved in executing the projects under challenging conditions.

PM Modi inaugurated the new terminal building of the Kushok Bakula Rinpoche Airport in Leh, built at a cost of around Rs 650 crore. Recalling that he had earlier laid its foundation stone, he said, the facility would triple the airport's flight capacity and increase its annual passenger-handling capacity from 10 lakh to 35 lakh.

He said the terminal was India's first to incorporate geothermal heating alongside solar energy, taking into account the region's harsh climatic conditions.

The facility would support tourism while ensuring that infrastructure development remained sensitive to the local environment, he said.

The Prime Minister also dedicated the Nimmu-Padum-Darcha road, built at a cost of around Rs 2,500 crore, saying it would reduce travel time on the route from 12 hours to three hours.

Apart from making journeys easier, the road would strengthen connectivity and provide a boost to trade and business in the region, he said.

On power infrastructure, PM Modi dedicated the Hanu hydroelectric project and its associated transmission network. Referring to the earlier inauguration of the Srinagar-Leh transmission line, he said reliable electricity supply was essential for improving people's lives.

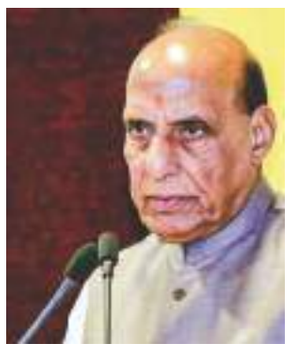
Electricity would benefit households, help children pursue their education, strengthen healthcare services and support small businesses, he said, adding that efforts were also underway to develop modern power generation facilities in Puga Valley. | More on P6

Any future terror attack from Pak will invite befitting response: Rajnath

» India prepared to respond decisively to security threats

» Don't misconstrue our desire for peace as our weakness

Sajid Raina



New Delhi, Oct 15: Stating that India's commitment to peace should not be mistaken for a lack of resolve to defend its sovereignty, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday warned Pakistan that any future terror attack originating from its territory would invite a stronger Indian military response.

Addressing the ASEAN-India Defence Think Tank Forum here, Singh, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "Any future terror attack originating from Pakistan will invite a befitting reply. India could launch a strike more powerful than its previous operations."

He recalled India's surgical strikes following the 2016 Uri terror attack and cited 'Operation Sindoor' as an example of the country's growing military capabilities and use of advanced technology. "Whenever terrorists have attempted to stain Indian soil with blood, India has delivered a fitting response," he said, adding that the impact of those operations was likely still felt by the people behind the terror attacks.

Referring to the Uri attack, Singh said, "Indian soldiers had carried out surgical strikes that destroyed terrorist hideouts."

He said peace, dialogue and peaceful resolution of disputes were integral to India's civilisational values, but the country remained prepared to respond decisively to threats against its security.

Highlighting the role of technology in modern warfare, Singh cited 'Operation Sindoor,' saying it demonstrated the ability of the Indian armed forces to adapt to changing battlefield requirements and deploy advanced indigenous systems.

He referred to the use of the Akash Teer air defence command and control system, the Akash missile system and the BrahMos missile, along with other advanced military equipment, during the operation.

INDIA'S DEFENCE MANUFACTURING CAPABILITIES

Singh said India's defence manufacturing capabilities had also strengthened, with 159 of the 175 types of ammunition used by the armed forces now produced domestically, translating into more than 90 per cent self-reliance in this category.

"India's defence exports have risen from Rs 686 crore in 2013-14 to more than Rs 38,000 crore and Indian defence products were being exported to nearly 200 countries," The Defence Minister said, adding, "The growth in exports has improved India's international standing and strengthened confidence in the country's technological capabilities."

He said the government is working towards building a defence ecosystem that could meet domestic requirements while contributing to economic growth and India's role in global security.

Recalling | More on P6

CM Omar inaugurates Rs 58.26 crore projects in Ganderbal

Reviews Ring Road, Sindh River Front, Town Hall projects

Interacts with fruit growers at Zazuna Mandi



KT News Desk

Ganderbal, Oct 15: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday reviewed the overall development scenario in Ganderbal district, inaugurated five completed development projects worth 16.72 crore and laid foundation stones for two new projects worth 41.54 crore, taking the total value of the projects to 58.26 crore.

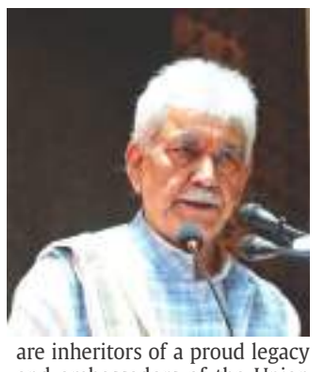
The projects include improved road connectivity, a new school building, a bridge over the River Jhelum and a multi-purpose auction platform at the Fruit and Vegetable Mandi, Zazuna, aimed at strengthening public infrastructure and supporting the district's horticulture economy.

The Chief Minister laid the foundation | More on P6

Sports provide constructive path for youth empowerment: LG Sinha

Congratulates J&K Police for successful completion of Jashn-e-Dal

KT News Desk



Srinagar, Oct 15: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, on Thursday said that sports provide a constructive path for youth empowerment and initiatives such as Jashn-e-Dal channel youthful energy towards nation-building, creativity and positive social transformation.

LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), congratulated Jammu Kashmir Police on the successful completion of Jashn-e-Dal-2026, and in his message said, "Sports is the celebration of human capability, perseverance and collective aspiration."

The Lieutenant Governor urged athletes to dream without limits and strive for excellence with dedication and sincerity.

Referring to the achievements of sportspersons nurtured through initiatives of Jammu Kashmir Police, the Lieutenant Governor in his message said that young athletes are inheritors of a proud legacy and ambassadors of the Union Territory's sporting future.

Emphasising the importance of resilience, hard work and self-confidence, the Lieutenant Governor noted that no challenge is insurmountable when faced with determination and perseverance.

The Lieutenant Governor also called upon athletes and citizens to contribute towards building a healthy and drug-free society. Stressing that sports provide a constructive path for youth empowerment, the Lieutenant Governor said that initiatives such as Jashn-e-Dal channel youthful energy towards nation-building, creativity and positive social transformation.

Appreciating the enthusiasm of the athletes and the efforts of the Jammu Kashmir Police, the Lieutenant Governor said that sports not only produce champions but also instil determination, patience and courage among young people.

Highlighting the growing stature of Jashn-e-Dal, the Lieutenant Governor said that the event has evolved beyond an annual competition into a cherished tradition emotionally connected with the people of Jammu Kashmir. Over the past few days, nearly 600 young athletes participated in 20 water-sports disciplines, including kayaking, canoeing, rowing, sculling and the traditional shikara race, showcasing the region's | More on P6

Omar govt's two years: NC says it delivered despite limited powers

Waris Fayaz

Srinagar, Oct 15: As Omar Abdullah-led government completes two years in office tomorrow, National Conference leaders on Thursday said the administration has managed to deliver despite limited powers, bureaucratic hurdles and constraints of the Union Territory model.

Talking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Member of Parliament Chowdhary Mohammad Ramzan said the government undertook significant work across education, healthcare, agriculture, horticulture, tourism and other sectors during the past two years.

Ramzan said the NC government fulfilled key electoral promises, including introducing a resolution seeking the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in the first session of the Legislative Assembly.

"The Assembly subsequently passed a resolution seeking the restoration of statehood with an overwhelming majority after Cabinet approval," he said, adding that the Assembly also recalled the 2000 Autonomy Resolution and the 2024 resolution on special status.

Highlighting welfare measures, Ramzan said the government increased financial assistance for the marriage of poor families from Rs 50000 to Rs 75,000, introduced free bus services for women, students and persons with disabilities, doubled the quantity of free ration for eligible households, provided 200 units of free electricity to Antyodaya Anna Yojana consumers, and extended the benefit of six free LPG cylinders.

On education, he said restoring the October–November academic session addressed a long-standing demand of students and parents, while the passage of the Private Universities Bill strengthened higher education.

Ramzan added that employment generation remained a priority, with recruitment underway to fill vacant posts.

He further | More on P6

Govind Jaiswal posted as Principal Secy to LG

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 15: The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Thursday ordered the posting of Govind Jaiswal, IAS (AGMUT: 2007) as Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor.

According to an order issued by the General Administration Department, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Jaiswal who was awaiting orders of adjustment | More on P6

ECI defers voter revision exercise for J&K

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 15: The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Thursday said that the schedule for the Special Summary Revision (SSR) of electoral rolls in Jammu & Kashmir will be announced in due course of time, keeping in view the region's weather conditions.

While unveiling the SSR schedule for 17 states, the poll-body said | More on P6

Rain hits parts of J&K, snow in Kashmir's higher reaches

Generally dry weather forecast from Oct 17-24

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Oct 15: Several parts of Jammu and Kashmir received rain on Wednesday, while higher reaches of the Kashmir Valley, including Razdan Pass and Tulail Valley, recorded snowfall, bringing down daytime temperatures across the region.

The Meteorological Centre Srinagar, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), forecast light to moderate rain at many places and light snowfall over higher reaches on Thursday, with thunderstorms, gusty winds and hailstorms possible at isolated places.

Generally dry weather has been forecast from October 17 to 24, followed by another possible spell of rain and snow from October 25 to 27.

According to the India Meteorological Department's evening bulletin, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 17.4 degrees Celsius on Wednesday, 5.4 degrees below the normal of 22.8 degrees Celsius. The minimum settled at 7.3 degrees Celsius, one degree above normal.

Qazigund recorded a maximum of 15 degrees Celsius, 6.4 degrees below normal, while Pahalgam recorded 13.4 degrees Celsius, 6.2 degrees below normal.

Kupwara recorded a maximum of 14.8 degrees Celsius, 8.5 degrees below normal, while Kokernag recorded 14.2 degrees Celsius, 6.2 degrees below normal.

Gulmarg recorded the lowest maximum among the listed Kashmir stations at 6.6 degrees Celsius, 7.1 degrees below normal.

In the Jammu region, Jammu city recorded a maximum of 28 degrees Celsius, 3.1 degrees below normal. Batote recorded 12.9 degrees Celsius and Bhaderwah 13.4 degrees Celsius.

The Meteorological Centre advised travellers, transporters and the general public to plan their journeys accordingly and follow traffic advisories in view of possible snowfall over important passes and roads.

Its extended outlook indicates generally cloudy weather from October 25 to 27, with light rain at | More on P6

Hundreds of families in J&K await PMAY-G assistance as winter approaches

Beneficiaries say verified repeatedly, still waiting for houses, seek transparency, timely disposal of cases

Jahangeer Ganaie



Srinagar, Oct 15: With winter approaching, hundreds of families across Jammu and Kashmir who claim to be eligible for assistance under the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) continue to wait for their cases to be cleared, with many alleging that repeated verifications over the past several years have yielded little progress on the ground.

For families living in makeshift sheds, temporary structures and dilapidated shelters, the delay has become a source of growing anxiety as temperatures begin to fall. They say their living conditions become particularly difficult during winter, when rain, cold and snowfall make it challenging to protect children, elderly family members and other vulnerable household members.

Gulzar Ahmad from south Kashmir's Pulwama district and Nadeem Ahmad from Shopian are among those who say they have been waiting for their cases to move forward despite repeated verification exercises. They claim their experiences reflect the difficulties faced by other economically vulnerable families still hoping to receive assistance to build permanent homes.

The affected families, speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), allege that officials have visited their homes and verified their living conditions on several occasions, but they have yet to see any tangible outcome. They say they have repeatedly provided information about their circumstances and waited for their cases to be processed, only to find themselves facing another winter without a permanent roof over their heads.

"We have been waiting for years, and our circumstances have not changed. Officials have conducted verifications repeatedly, but we are still living in the same conditions. Every winter brings fresh difficulties, and we do not know how much longer we will have to wait," said a beneficiary awaiting assistance.

Gulzar said families like his were not seeking anything beyond the | More on P6

J&K Govt to expand official languages list

'Law to be enacted to declare Punjabi, Gojri, Pahari as official languages'

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Oct 15: The National Conference-led Government has decided to introduce a bill in the 2027 budget session of the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly to declare Punjabi, Gojri, and Pahari as official languages of the Union Territory.

Speaking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), NC's Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament Shammi Oberoi said he had made a commitment to the people on behalf of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah that Punjabi would be included in the list of official languages.

"We have decided to adopt Punjabi, Gojri, and Pahari languages as official languages," Oberoi told KNO.

On Wednesday, Oberoi met Sikh Sangat and representatives of various Gurdwara Prabandhak Committees and assured them that Punjabi language would be adopted under the Official Languages Act of the UT.

Following the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, Parliament enacted | More on P6

J&K IMPARD begins JKAS Foundation Course for Officer Trainees Batch–2024

KT News Desk



SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 15: The JKAS Joint Foundation Course for the Officer Trainees Batch - 2024 was inaugurated Thursday at J&K IMPARD Main Campus, Srinagar by the Director General J&K IMPARD, Rahana Batul.

The programme marked the commencement of the Foundation Course, aimed at providing newly recruited civil servants with essential administrative knowledge, professional competencies, and an understanding of the principles of good governance, public service delivery, and ethical conduct.

Addressing the participants, the Director General congratulated the officer trainees on embarking upon their careers in public service and emphasized the importance of integrity, impartiality, accountability, and dedication in the discharge of official responsibilities. He underscored the need for civil servants to remain responsive, compassionate and with integrity to the aspirations of the public and committed to transparent, efficient, and citizen-centric governance.

The Director General highlighted the significance of joint training in fostering mutual understanding, coordination, and a spirit of cooperation among officers from different services. He observed that such initiatives provide a common platform for sharing experiences, developing leadership qualities, and strengthening interdepartmental coordination, which are essential for effective administration.

The Foundation Course is designed to equip the trainees with a sound understanding of constitutional values, administrative procedures, public policy, governance frameworks, and contemporary challenges in public administration. The course will also focus on capacity building, teamwork, decision-making, and the adoption of innovative approaches to improve public service delivery.

The inaugural function was attended by senior officers and officer trainees of JKAS Batch-2024. The programme concluded with a call to the participants to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and public service and to work towards building an accountable, inclusive, and citizen-friendly administration.

DIPR organises awareness programme on Artificial Intelligence in Ramban



KT News Desk

RAMBAN, OCTOBER 15: The Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) Ramban Centre, in collaboration with the district administration Ramban, Thursday organised an awareness programme on Artificial Intelligence (AI) at Disha Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences under the Youth Empowerment Programme.

The Principal Disha Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Sciences Hilal Wani attended the programme as the Chief Guest and sensitised students to the growing applications of Artificial Intelligence, prompt engineering and emerging career opportunities in the field. He highlighted the importance of developing digital skills and staying abreast of technological advancements to enhance learning and professional growth.

Resource persons also sensitised the participants about the fundamentals of Artificial Intelligence, its practical applications and its potential role in education, innovation and career development. Students actively participated in the programme and prepared posters highlighting Artificial Intelligence and its various uses.

Later, the Information Department gave away Certificates of Appreciation to the participating students, encouraging them to explore emerging technologies and acquire relevant skills to prepare for future opportunities.

SVAMITVA: Property cards distributed among rural household owners in Kulgam

KT News Desk

KULGAM, OCTOBER 15: A programme on the SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas) initiative was organised at the Conference Hall of the Mini-Secretariat, Kulgam, to familiarise participants with its objectives and the process of preparing property records of Abad e Deh through drone-based surveys.

During the programme, various aspects of SVAMITVA were highlighted, including drone-based mapping of inhabited rural areas, preparation and rectification of village maps, verification of property records and issuance of property cards to property owners. Issues encountered during the preparation of maps and ownership records, including disputes among co-sharers, discrepancies in records and matters related to alienation and mortgage, were also discussed.

Addressing the gathering, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, informed that work under SVAMITVA has been completed in 178 villages of the district, while the remaining villages are at different stages of the process.

The DC appreciated the revenue team for starting the assigned work within a short time and stressed the need to expedite the remaining activities to ensure timely completion.

As part of the SVAMITVA scheme, property cards were distributed among owners from different tehsils of Kulgam district in the presence of the concerned Tehsildars.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Kulgam,Vikar Ahmad Giri emphasised the need to complete the pending work in a time bound manner.

The primary objective of the SVAMITVA scheme is to provide a legal "Record of Rights" and property cards to rural household owners by mapping residential land parcels (Abad e Deh) using modern drone technology. Following the conclusion of the programme, the DC chaired a review meeting on Farmer ID generation and Agristack implementation with the concerned revenue officers and field functionaries to assess progress and address issues hindering the process.

DDC Pulwama reviews rural development progress



KT News Desk

PULWAMA, OCTOBER 15: District Development Commissioner Pulwama, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha, Thursday chaired a review meeting to assess the implementation and progress of various schemes and programmes under the Rural Development Sector in the district.

A detailed presentation was made before the Chair, covering the overall physical and financial progress under MGNREGA/VB-G RAM G, including employment generation, job card and worker-related status, Aadhaar seeding and e-KYC, verification of job cards, geo-tagging of assets and generation of Asset IDs.

The review also covered the labour budget and its achievement, material expenditure, material liability, wage component and financial performance, besides the status of material claims and funds released under VB-G RAM G.

The DDC further reviewed the status of ongoing works, work completion, social audit, playground development and other rural infrastructure-related activities across the district. Block-wise progress was assessed to identify areas requiring focused attention and timely corrective action. The DDC stressed the need for close monitoring at the block and field level, timely completion of ongoing works, proper utilisation of available funds and adherence to prescribed guidelines and quality standards.

The Chair further called for strengthening social audit mechanisms, resolving pending issues, ensuring timely e-KYC and verification, improving geo-tagging and Asset ID generation, and maintaining updated records on the Management Information System.

The DDC directed that all bottlenecks and issues relating to playgrounds be resolved immediately and made functional for public use. He also directed that convergence of works under different schemes be ensured wherever feasible to avoid duplication and maximise utilisation of available resources.

He further directed that social audits be conducted within the prescribed timelines, with proper reports generated and maintained. The PMAY-G coverage survey was also directed to be duly verified through Social Audit teams to ensure correctness and transparency.

The DDC directed the ACD, Pulwama, to closely monitor all ongoing works under the Rural Development Sector and ensure their timely completion as per approved specifications and timelines. He also directed the ACD and ACP to conduct a weekly review of the progress of schemes and works.

Furthermore, all BDOs were directed to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of all schemes and initiatives at the field level.

Regarding the DDC Building, the ACD was directed to pursue the DPR at the Directorate level and take necessary follow-up action so that Administrative Approval is accorded at the earliest.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Pulwama, Gulzar Ahmad Bhat, Chief Planning Officer, Pulwama, Aashiq Khanday, Assistant Commissioner Development, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Executive Engineer, REW, Block Development Officers, Assistant Engineers of REW, besides other concerned officials.

DC Bandipora presides over inter-college seminar on 'Gandhian Thoughts' at GDC Ajas

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 15: Government Degree College (GDC) Ajas Thursday organised an inter-college seminar on the theme "Gandhian Thoughts in the 21st Century: Peace, Ethics, Democracy and Sustainable Development" to mark Gandhi Jayanti.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib presided over the programme as the Chief Guest, while Prof. Mohd. Ameen Parray, Department of English, University of Kashmir, South Campus, attended as the Guest of Honour. Students and faculty members from Government Degree College Sumbal and Government Degree College Hajin also participated in the event.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner, released the College Newsletter and College Anthem in the presence of other dignitaries and participants. The College Anthem was penned by noted poet Showkat Ahmed Sofi, popularly known as Sufi Showkat. The releases reflected the institution's academic achievements, literary expression and cultural identity.

Addressing the gathering, the DC highlighted the enduring relevance of Mahatma Gandhi's ideals, particularly truth and cleanliness, in shaping individual character and bringing about positive social transformation. She emphasised that cleanliness reflects civic responsibility and discipline, while truth forms the foundation of ethical conduct and public life. She urged students to imbibe these values and practise them in their daily lives.

Speaking on the relevance of Gandhian philosophy in the digital age, Prof. Mohammad Ameen Parray highlighted the challenges of violence and non-violence on social media. He stressed the need for responsible digital behaviour, respectful communication and the promotion of truth and non-violence in online spaces.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER, BATWARA

Advertisement Notice: No.____92___of 2026

Dated 15 .10. .2026

Subject: Re-Advertisement for Recruitment of Sahayika (Anganwadi Helper) in AWC Kursoo B of Poshan Project Batwara.(6th phase)
Reference: 1. Government order No 222-JK (SWD) of 2022 Dated: 30.11.2022
Approval has been accorded, vide letter No:MD/Poshan/22317-25 dated:18.06.2026 (6th Phase, vacancies from 01.10.2025 to 31.03.2026) Anganwadi Helper/Sahayika in Anganwadi Centres of Poshan Project Batwara, as per the details given below:

Sr. No.	Name of Project	Name of Post	No. of Post
1	Poshan Project Batwara Konkhan Dalgate	AWH	01

Applications are invited in the Prescribed Proforma in Annexure "A" from the eligible candidates at ICDS Project Batwara (Khonkhan Dalgate Hotel Sahara)) for engagement as Anganwadi Helper on Honorarium basis for aforementioned no. of posts of Anganwadi Centres. The important dates/details with regard to the post are as under:

a) Date of commencement for submission of application 16.10.2026
b) Last date for submission of applications is 31.10.2026
c) Annexure B- Name of the Post, Location/War d , Qualification and Criteria for selection
d) Annexure C- Affidavit

ANNEXURE 'A'

Name of POSHAN Project_____
1. Name of Anganwadi Centre_____
2. Post applied for_____
3. Name of the Candidate_____
4. Father's Name _____
5. Husband's Name_____
6. Residence_____
7. Ward .No._____
8. Address for correspondence_____
9. Contact No._____
10. Date of Birth_____
11. Age as on 01.05.2026_____
12. Academic Qualification:

Sr.No.	Examination passed	Board/University	Year of Passing	Marks Obtained	Total Marks	Percentage

13. Do the candidate belong to Retiring AWW/AWH (YES/NO)
14. Document Attached:

Signature of the candidate_____ Date: _____

Detail of Vacant Post (Anganwadi Helper) along with name and location of AWC

S..No.	NAME OF ANGANWADI CENTRE	Electoral WARD NO.	NAME OF POST	NO. OF POSTS
1	Kursoo B	Ward 07 Rajbagh	Anganwadi Helper	01

Eligibility:

Anganwadi Helpers

1. The selection of Helper shall be restricted to the electoral ward where Anganwadi Centre is located.
2. Women candidates in the age group of 18-37 years shall be eligible.
3. The candidate must be domicile of the UT of J&K.
4. Minimum qualification for Anganwadi Helper shall be matriculation.
5. In case no matriculate candidate available in the ward, candidates with qualification not less than 8th standard shall be considered.

A. Document Verification

1) The candidate who is shortlisted for Document verification will be required to appear for Document Verification along-with the original documents as well as self-attested Photostat copy of each document as per the Advertisement Notification. The candidate must be in possession of the prescribed academic qualification and other document like Domicile Certificate, on or before the last date of submission of application form.
a) Marks sheet(s)/Diploma/Degree of the qualification prescribed for the post as per Advertisement Notification.
b) Date of Birth/Matriculate Certificate.
c) Domicile Certificate.
d) Unmarried Certificate (where required)
2) Candidates have to bring two passport size recent colour photographs and one original Photo ID proof. Photo ID Proof can be:
i) Aadhaar Card
ii) Voter ID card.
3) The candidate, who is supposed to furnish various certificates issued by or before the prescribed cut-off date, shall be required to produce them at the time of Document Verification or as may be sought by the Committee; in case of failure, the committee shall take necessary decision which shall be final.
4) ANNEXURE C

All applicants to submit affidavit stating following facts:

1. All Documents submitted are correct, without any mismatch, scanning, duplicate or fallacious in nature. If found incorrect or in any of the above stated situation the candidature of deponent may be cancelled and liable to action under law.
2. Maximum qualification is Graduation for vacancy of Anganwadi worker and Class X for Anganwadi Helper and this is as per facts and ones of proving it to be true lies with the deponent.
3. The deponent has read the HR policy no. 222-JK(SWD) of 2022 dated: 30.11.2022 and is well versed with all salient features of the policy and shall be applicable to the deponent in case of selection as Anganwadi worker/ Anganwadi Helper.

No.:-CDPO/ Btw./ Poshan/ 2026/577-83
Dated: 15 10.2026

Child Development Project Officer
Poshan Batwara

DIPK-6759/26 DATED: 15-10-2026

Sonamarg to become year-round tourism destination: CM Omar

Raja Syed Rather



Ganderbal, Oct 15: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said the government is working to develop Sonamarg as a year-round tourism destination, with plans to promote rafting in summer and skiing, skating and other winter sports, as he inaugurated five development projects and laid foundation stones for two others worth a total of rupees 58.26 crore in Ganderbal.

During his visit, the Chief Minister also reviewed major infrastructure projects, including the Srinagar Ring Road, Sindh River Front and Municipal Town Hall and interacted with fruit growers at the Fruit and Vegetable Mandi in Zazuna.

"With the construction of the tunnel, Sonamarg is now accessible throughout the year. We want to promote rafting during summer and skiing, skating and other winter sports activities," Omar told the media persons.

The CM said he would work with Kangan MLA Mian Mehar Ali to further strengthen Sonamarg's position on the tourism map. He added that while forest, environmental and wildlife clearances sometimes delay tourism projects, the government would follow the required procedures while developing new destinations.

Abdullah inaugurated five completed projects worth rupees 16.72 crore and laid foundation stones for two projects worth rupees 41.54 crore.

The projects include a bridge over the River Jhelum at Guzhama Shilwat, to be constructed at a cost of rupees 39 crore, and a multi-purpose auction platform at the Fruit and Vegetable Mandi, Zazuna, costing rupees 2.54 crore.

The five completed projects include roads connecting Tehsil Bagh with Lar Bypass and Yanihama with Dangerpora; the Dar Mohalla Wattalbagh–Dangerpora road and allied links; a double-storey building at High School Gogjigund; the upgraded road from Fatehpora Dak Bangloo to Gadoora Bridge; and the Pati Waskura–Kharbagh Bund road along the River Jhelum.

Speaking about the Jhelum bridge, the Chief Minister said test piling had been completed, and efforts were underway to meet the construction targets. "We aim to complete the pillars by April and the entire bridge by December next year," he said.

Abdullah reviewed the Srinagar Ring Road project, where engineers briefed him on the ongoing construction and upgradation of the Pandaach–Manigam section.

The 12.115-kilometre project, being executed by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) at a cost of rupees 290.51 crore, involves upgrading the existing two-lane road into a four-lane dual carriageway. It includes bridges, a flyover, culverts, service roads and slip roads, with completion scheduled for May 2028.

The CM also reviewed the Sindh River Front project, whose first phase has been approved at a cost of rupees 4.83 crore and includes a protection wall, landscaping, a paved walkway, a viewpoint, a patio cafe and ornamental lighting.

Reviewing the Municipal Town Hall upgrade and extension project, approved at rupees 3 crore, he directed officials to expedite the work and make the facilities available to the public at the earliest.

At the Fruit and Vegetable Mandi in Zazuna, the Chief Minister assessed arrangements for the ongoing harvest season and interacted with farmers and progressive growers. The growers apprised him of issues affecting their businesses and the horticulture sector, following which Omar assured them that their genuine demands would be taken up for appropriate resolution.

He said traders had also sought the expansion of the mandi, construction of a boundary wall and a grade separator. The matter had been discussed with NHAI officials, while other demands had been noted for necessary action.

On the demand for fencing the Power Development Corporation (PDC) canal following repeated incidents involving loss of human lives, Omar said the matter would be taken up with the concerned authorities. "If the decision were within my authority, I would have announced it here. We will raise the public demand with the concerned authorities," he said.

Regarding pending compensation cases related to National Highway projects, he said newly appointed Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal Shreya Singhal would examine the matter after settling into her responsibilities.

On traffic congestion caused by Chinar trees along the Beehama–Kheer Bhawani road, CM Abdullah acknowledged the difficulties faced by commuters and stressed the need for a practical solution. "Development and environmental protection must go hand in hand. We may have to remove some trees and plant eight to ten Chinar trees elsewhere, away from roads," he said.

The Chief Minister also referred to the 70th National School Sports event being held at the College of Physical Education in Ganderbal, where students from across the country are participating in Wushu and Taekwondo competitions.

Reiterating his stand on land acquisition, Omar said written agreements signed with affected families would be honoured. "Whatever commitments were made in the signed agreements will be implemented," he said.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Ministers Sakeena Itoo and Javid Dar, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal Shreya Singhal and other senior officers, engineers and departmental heads accompanied the Chief Minister during the visit—(KNO)

HC bans fuel-powered motorboats, jet skis on Dal Lake



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 15: The High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh has banned fuel-powered motorboats and jet skis from operating on Dal Lake until further orders and directed the government to frame a comprehensive policy balancing tourism and pollution control.

A copy of the order said a Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Dr Pushpendra Singh Bhati and Justice Rajesh Sekhri passed the directions while hearing a petition filed by Mohammad Rafiq Mir and others.

The court directed the Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA), Tourism Department and Police to ensure that no fuel-powered motorboat, including motorised shikaras, or jet ski operates on the lake.

It said any violation would amount to contempt of court and directed the authorities to take strict action against violators.

Boats used by the administration for emergency services, law and order, disaster management and safety have been exempted from the ban.

The petitioners raised concerns over the absence of uniform and transparent criteria for granting licences to motorboat operators and flagged the environmental impact of motorboats and jet skis on Dal Lake.

During the hearing, Senior Additional Advocate General Mohsin S. Qadri, appearing for the government, submitted that the authorities were committed to addressing pollution in the lake while balancing tourism and conservation.

He told the court that certain auctions for motorboats had taken place, while tourism licences had not been reviewed, and said the authorities would adopt a scientific and expert-oriented approach.

The Bench observed that the policy governing motorised boats should balance tourism, pollution control and uniformity among stakeholders. It noted that solar-powered and electric boats could provide alternatives to conventional fuel-powered craft.

The court directed the government to submit a comprehensive policy on motorised boats, prepared in consultation with experts, to minimise pollution while safeguarding tourism interests.

It also asked the government to explore replacing conventional engines with solar-powered or electric alternatives.

The matter has been listed for further hearing on October 30, 2026—(KNO)

Gulmarg to be among Kashmir's best by 2029: Farooq Shah

Waris Fayaz



Srinagar, Oct 15: MLA Gulmarg Farooq Ahmed Shah on Thursday termed his two-year tenure satisfactory, claiming that development works undertaken during the period were comparable to those carried out in the constituency over the previous two decades.

Shah said major projects promised to the people were being implemented, with tourism, healthcare, education, road connectivity and basic infrastructure among his priorities.

Highlighting tourism-related development in Gulmarg, Shah said initiatives included the establishment of what he described as Asia's longest drag lift, a restaurant at Affarwat which he claimed was the world's highest, revival of the heritage golf course, development of pedestrian walkways and improvement of parking facilities.

He said construction of a new hospital building and macadamisation of roads across the Gulmarg-Tangmarg belt had also been prioritised.

Shah said more than 400 people had benefited from livelihood opportunities linked to guide licences, helpers, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and other tourism services.

In Tangmarg, he said the hospital had been equipped with modern facilities and a laboratory, while other New Type Primary Health Centres (NTPHCs) in the constituency had been renovated.

On education, Shah said the degree college had been equipped with modern facilities and higher secondary schools upgraded as model institutions. He said 60 kindergartens had been opened, while additional accommodation had been created in middle and high schools. Fencing and playground facilities had also been developed, he added.

The MLA also highlighted the establishment of a fruit mandi in Tangmarg, saying it would provide better facilities to fruit growers and traders.

He said a reservoir had recently been sanctioned to support irrigation and drinking water needs, while efforts were underway to extend drinking water supply to every household and improve the road network.

Shah said development was an ongoing process and that his focus would remain on fulfilling commitments made to the people.(KNO)

SICOP union challenges 591 surplus staff

Cites 297 vacant posts, BoD resolutions

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 15: The SICOP Employees' Union has challenged the classification of 591 employees as surplus, claiming that 297 vacant posts have been documented in an official file and seeking regularisation of long-serving employees.

As per details, the union has termed the classification administratively distorted and legally untenable, alleging that senior employees appointed before the government ban have been clubbed with those engaged during later periods.

The issue follows the government's reply to a question by MLA Chander Prakash Ganga in the Legislative Assembly, in which the Industries and Commerce Department stated that SICOP has 591 surplus employees following the cessation of its Marketing Wing and Raw Material Depot activities.

The earlier government reply stated that SICOP has a sanctioned strength of 445 employees, including 128 permanent employees, while 317 posts are vacant. The 591 surplus employees have been engaged on 89-day arrangements.

Disputing the classification, the union said the management had documented 297 clear vacant posts in an official file under consideration in the Civil Secretariat. It said senior employees had been rendering services for 12 to 20 years and should not be treated as surplus without considering their service status and the available vacancies.

The union said these employees had been appointed before the government ban and their appointments had been cleared through the corporation's 83rd and 84th Board of Directors' resolutions.

A central argument raised by the union is that several employees appointed under the corporation's 83rd and 84th Board of Directors' (BoD) resolutions have already been regularised in the past. The union argues that treating the remaining staff from the same batches as "surplus" is arbitrary, discriminatory and a violation of established precedent.

It also referred to a Jammu and Kashmir High Court judgment, saying the court had recognised the service records of pre-ban employees and directed the authorities to consider their regularisation with consequential benefits within three months.

The union said the surplus classification should be reviewed in light of the court's directions and the vacant posts it claims have been documented.

The union appealed to Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, who is also chairman of the corporation's Board of Directors, to take cognisance of the issue and direct the authorities to expedite the regularisation file pending in the Civil Secretariat—(KNO)

A CENTRAL ARGUMENT RAISED BY THE UNION IS THAT SEVERAL employees appointed under the corporation's 83rd and 84th Board of Directors' (BoD) resolutions have already been regularised in the past. The union argues that treating the remaining staff from the same batches as "surplus" is arbitrary, discriminatory and a violation of established precedent.

SKUAST-K suspends academic activities at Faculty of Forestry

Orders Ganderbal campus students to vacate hostel on October 16

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Oct 15: Following a month long protest, Faculty of Forestry at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir in Ganderbal campus on Thursday ordered suspension of all academic activities of UG, M.Sc and Ph.D courses.

The Dean Faculty of Forestry of Benhama, Watlaar Ganderbal campus in an order said, " It is for information of enrolled students of Faculty of Forestry that all academic activities including class work of U.G, M.Sc and Ph.D courses except UG 1st year are hereby suspended till further orders."

"As such, all students belonging to J&K and Ladakh residing in the Pine Boys and Girls hostels are hereby directed to vacate their Hostel rooms on October-16 by 10.00 am without fail," it reads.

The order said that any violation shall invite serious consequences under rules. "Warden Boys and Girls hostel shall ensure vacation of both the hostels within stipulated time."

An official informed KNO that the academic activities of UG, M.Sc and Ph.D courses have been suspended in view of a month-long protest by the students.

Pertinently, the students of SKUAST-K are holding protests across multiple campuses regarding job policies and recruitment rule changes.

One of the students said, "We are protesting against the outdated recruitment rules of the Forest Department, where the eligibility criteria for the post of Forester fail to recognize the specialized education of B.Sc Forestry graduates."

"Everyone is eligible for the post, but a degree specifically in Forestry carries no weightage and preferences. We spend years studying Silviculture, Forest Management, Wildlife, Mensuration, Agroforestry, Ecology and other specialized forestry subjects, yet when it comes to recruitment in the Forest Department, our professional qualification is treated no differently from general qualifications," the students said—(KNO)

Chief Secretary Dulloo approves Rs 13.76 Cr farm mechanisation plan

KT News Desk



Srinagar, Oct 15: In a significant push towards agricultural modernisation and enhanced farm productivity, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Thursday approved a revised Annual Action Plan (AAP) worth Rs 13.76 crore for 2026–27 under the Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) component of the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY).

The meeting was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department; Secretary, Rural Development Department; Secretary, Planning; Secretary in APD; Heads of Departments of the Agriculture Production Department; and other concerned officers.

Emphasising the critical role of irrigation in improving agricultural productivity across Jammu and Kashmir, the Chief Secretary stressed the need to accord focused attention to irrigation schemes to strengthen the farming sector and enable farmers to realise its full potential.

He advised the Agriculture Production Department to take forward key interventions under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP), drip irrigation and the Command Area Development component. He underscored the significance of these interventions in improving water-use efficiency, expanding irrigation coverage and ensuring optimal utilisation of agricultural land.

The Chief Secretary stressed that mechanisation and irrigation must progress in tandem to enhance farm efficiency, improve crop productivity and strengthen the overall agricultural economy of Jammu and Kashmir.

The plan, approved by the State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) chaired by the Chief Secretary, aims to expand access to modern farm machinery, improve operational efficiency and promote technology-driven agricultural practices across Jammu and Kashmir.

The revised plan has been restructured through rationalisation and pooling of available resources in accordance with the financial ceilings prescribed by the Government of India.

The approved outlay is intended to strengthen mechanisation interventions across the Agriculture and Horticulture sectors while ensuring balanced regional coverage and targeted support to farmers from different socio-economic categories.

On this occasion it was given out by the ACS, APD, Dr. Ashish Chandra Verma that out of the total outlay of Rs 1,376 lakh, Rs 960 lakh has been earmarked for the Agriculture Sector and 416 lakh for the Horticulture Sector.

Moreover He added that the Agriculture Sector allocation comprises Rs 505 lakh for Kashmir Division and Rs 455 lakh for Jammu Division. Under the Horticulture Sector, Rs 215 lakh has been earmarked for Kashmir Division and Rs 201 lakh for Jammu Division.

To promote inclusive development, the plan provides Rs 1,116.63 lakh for general-category farmers, Rs 147.39 lakh under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) and Rs 111.98 lakh under the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP).

A targeted allocation of Rs 118.62 lakh has also been earmarked for aspirational districts under the PMDDKY outlay, comprising Rs 92.45 lakh for Kishtwar district and Rs 26.17 lakh for Baramulla district.

Similarly for modernizing the farm machinery to boost productivity an allocation of 1,116.50 lakh has been earmarked for the distribution of 2,113 units of agricultural machinery and modern equipment to farmers.

The major physical targets include 95 four-wheel-drive tractors at a cost of Rs 342 lakh, 77 two-wheel-drive tractors worth Rs 154 lakh and 184 power tillers with an allocation of Rs 184 lakh.

The plan also provides for two combine harvesters at Rs 25 lakh, ten reaper-cum-binders at Rs 27.50 lakh and two super seeders to strengthen harvesting and sowing operations.

To improve access to irrigation at the farm level, 470 petrol, diesel and portable irrigation pumps of up to 15 HP will be provided at a cost of Rs 47 lakh.

In a push towards technology-enabled agriculture, ten Kisan Drones will be introduced through Custom Hiring Centres, including eight for the Agriculture Department in Jammu Division and two in Kashmir Division.

The Horticulture Sector will also benefit from the distribution of specialised equipment, including power-operated horticultural tools, brush cutters, walnut dehullers, aluminium pruning ladders and mist blowers to improve efficiency in orchard management and related operations.

The meeting was also apprised that in order to make costly agricultural equipment accessible to small and marginal farmers, the plan places considerable emphasis on community-based machinery-sharing infrastructure.

Kashmir Thunder

EDITORIAL

Let Parents Choose Where To Buy Books

The Education Minister has said something that many parents have been wanting to hear for a long time. Private schools should not force parents to buy textbooks from one particular shop. The choice should belong to the parents. This is a small statement, but it means a lot. Every year, before the school session starts, parents run from one shop to another. Sometimes they are told the books are only available at a certain outlet. Sometimes the prices are higher there. Sometimes the books are not even needed, but parents still buy them because the school said so. Many families quietly bear this burden because they don't want their child to face problems in school. The minister also spoke about extra books that some private schools teach. She said there is nothing wrong with those books helping the child learn more. But if the books are not useful and the child is not interested, then forcing them is not right. And using books just to make money from parents is clearly wrong. What is most welcome is the plan to form a committee. This committee will have members from parent associations, private school associations and NGOs. If any parent has a complaint, it will be looked into. If the complaint is found to be true, action will be taken against the school. This is how it should work. Parents should not feel helpless. Schools should not act like shops. And education should not become a business where the child's interest comes last. Of course, the committee has to actually work. It should not just be on paper. Parents should be able to complain without fear. And schools that do wrong should face real consequences. For now, the message is clear. Let the parents decide where to buy books for their own children. It is their right. And it is a small but important step towards making schools more accountable.

The Relationship Between Integrity And Time: The Message Of Surah Al-ʿAsr

From an Islamic perspective, time is an amanah through which individuals demonstrate the values they profess and the responsibilities they undertake. Allah declares: "By the passage of time! Surely humanity is in grave loss, except those who have faith, do good, and urge each other to the truth, and urge each other to perseverance." The surah teaches that we can overcome this state of loss through faith, good deeds, upholding truth and practising patience—four interconnected qualities.

SHUKRAN ABD RAHMAN



An hourglass, scales of justice, and the Qur'an symbolize the Islamic principles of time, integrity, and accountability. Inspired by Surah Al-Asr, the image reflects the importance of faith, truth, patience, and righteous action in fostering an ethical society free from corruption. (Image: IslamiCity, AI-generated illustration)

Integrity is more than honesty or compliance with rules. It reflects the consistency between what a person believes, professes, and practises, particularly when personal interests are at stake or when actions are unlikely to be observed by others. Derived from the Latin integer, meaning whole or complete, integrity represents moral wholeness and inner strength, demonstrated through amanah (trustworthiness), adherence to ethical principles, and accuracy and truthfulness in fulfilling duties and responsibilities.

From an Islamic perspective, integrity is grounded in ī mī n (faith), expressed through iī sī n (God-consciousness), and demonstrated through ī amal ī ī liī (righteous deeds). Faith nurtures the moral conviction necessary to uphold an amanah, while awareness of accountability before Allah encourages individuals to act ethically, honour their commitments, and exercise their responsibilities conscientiously, even in the absence of external supervision.

This understanding has important implications for combating corruption. Although rules, monitoring, investigations, and enforcement remain essential, they cannot independently guarantee ethical conduct. Sustainable integrity also requires sound moral character, a conscious commitment to accountability before Allah, and an organisational culture that values honesty, fairness, transparency, and mutual responsibility.

Integrity, therefore, extends beyond individual virtue. It must be reflected in leadership behaviour, institutional systems, and everyday decisions. When personal conviction is aligned with organisational practices, integrity becomes a shared commitment that strengthens trust, promotes responsible stewardship, and supports institutional excellence. Ultimately, an enduring culture of anti-corruption requires not only the prevention of wrongdoing but also the cultivation of individuals and institutions committed to doing what is right.

The Relationship Between Integrity and Time: The Message of Surah Al-ī AsrThe relationship between integrity and time is profound. From an Islamic perspective, time is an amanah (trust) through which individuals demonstrate the values they profess and the responsibilities they undertake. How we use our time reflects our priorities, our sense of responsibility, and the consistency between our moral commitments and actual conduct. This relationship is particularly relevant to the fight against corruption, as corruption involves not only the misuse of authority and resources but also the betrayal of trust and the neglect of responsibilities. Deliberate delays, wasted resources, and the failure to fulfil entrusted duties can undermine institutional integrity and deprive others of their rightful benefits.

In his talk, Prof. Emeritus Dato' Sri Dr Osman Bakar emphasised the importance of understanding Surah Al-ī Asr in the context of combating corruption. Although brief, this chapter of the Qur'an presents a profound framework for an ethical and purposeful life, connecting time with faith, righteous action, truth, and perseverance. Allah declares: "By the passage of time! Surely humanity is in grave loss, except those who have faith, do good, and urge each other to the truth, and urge each other to perseverance." (Qur'an, 103:1-3; translation adapted from The Clear Quran.)

The surah begins with an oath by time. This invites us to reflect on the significance of time in human existence. Time is not something we create or possess absolutely. It is part of Allah's creation, and our lives unfold within it. Every moment that passes represents an opportunity that cannot be recovered in precisely the same form.

The declaration that humanity is in a state of loss should prompt serious reflection. We are constantly losing time, opportunities, and possibilities. We may also lose resources, relationships, credibility, and the trust of others through our failure to manage time and fulfil our responsibilities. At the organisational level, we may fail to achieve strategic objectives, make timely decisions, use resources effectively, and respond adequately to the needs of our stakeholders. In turn, we lose opportunities to serve society, improve institutional performance, and fulfil our responsibilities.

Essentially, Surah Al-ī Asr teaches that we can overcome this state of loss through faith, good deeds, encouraging one another to uphold the truth, and practising patience. These four qualities are interconnected. Faith establishes the moral foundation; righteous deeds translate faith into action; truth provides the ethical direction; and patience sustains the commitment to do what is right even when it becomes difficult. This understanding has a direct implication for integrity. To value time is not simply to work faster or complete more tasks. It is to use the time entrusted to us for purposes that are truthful, beneficial, and morally responsible.

When we understand Surah Al-ī Asr in this way, time management becomes more than an administrative skill. It becomes an expression of personal discipline, professional responsibility, and spiritual accountability.

Faith and Righteous Action as Foundations for Combating Corruption

Why does corruption persist despite the existence of laws, regulations, monitoring systems, and disciplinary procedures? One important part of the answer lies in the relationship between personal integrity and ethical conduct. Rules and enforcement mechanisms are indispensable, but they cannot, by themselves, guarantee that individuals will always choose to do what is right. People may comply when they are being monitored yet behave differently when they believe that no one is watching.

From an Islamic perspective, strengthening faith in Allah provides an important moral foundation for resisting such behaviour. Faith reminds individuals that their actions have consequences beyond immediate personal gain, social approval, or the possibility of punishment. Surah Al-ī Asr connects faith directly with righteous deeds. This connection is significant because integrity cannot remain an abstract belief or a declaration of good intentions. It must be demonstrated through conduct.

A person may speak eloquently about honesty yet manipulate information for personal benefit. A leader may advocate accountability yet misuse institutional resources. An employee may endorse organisational values yet deliberately neglect responsibilities. In such cases, there is a gap between professed principles and actual behaviour.

Righteous action helps close this gap. It requires individuals to translate their beliefs into honest decisions, responsible work, fairness in dealing with others, and the rejection of practices that undermine the common good.

Corruption, by contrast, involves the abuse or distortion of entrusted responsibilities for improper purposes. It can take the form of bribery, fraud, favouritism, conflicts of interest, or the misuse of authority and resources. Its consequences extend beyond the immediate transaction. Corruption erodes trust, weakens institutions, and diverts resources from their intended beneficiaries.

Faith and righteous action therefore complement formal anti-corruption measures. Faith provides an internal moral compass, while righteous action demonstrates that the compass is genuinely guiding behaviour.

Truth and Patience: Building an Organisational Culture of Integrity

The final verse of Surah Al-ī Asr contains a particularly important lesson for organisational life. It emphasises that people are not only expected to uphold the truth and practise patience themselves, but also to encourage one another to do so. The phrase tawī ī aw bi al-ī aqq conveys mutual advice to truth, while tawī ī aw bi al-ī abr conveys mutual advice to patience and perseverance. The emphasis on mutual encouragement suggests that ethical responsibility is a collective responsibility.

Within an organisation, this principle should shape relationships between leaders and subordinates, supervisors and employees, and colleagues at every level. Leaders have a responsibility to remind their subordinates of the importance of honesty, accountability, and responsible conduct. However, the responsibility does not flow in one direction only. Prof. Emeritus Dato' Sri Dr Osman Bakar emphasised that subordinates must also be able to remind their leaders when decisions or actions appear inconsistent with ethical principles. Such reminders should be offered respectfully, constructively, and with a genuine commitment to the organisation's well-being.

Equally, leaders must be willing to listen to criticism, acknowledge mistakes, and correct decisions when necessary. This is what a healthy culture of integrity should look like: a culture in which people are not afraid to speak the truth, wrongdoing is not concealed to protect personal interests, and ethical concerns are addressed rather than ignored.

Upholding the truth may invite pressure, resistance, or personal inconvenience. Employees who reject misconduct, leaders who resist favouritism, and individuals who report wrongdoing may face opposition. In such situations, patience means remaining steadfast in doing what is right rather than passively accepting misconduct. Organisations that uphold truth and practise patience are better able to build trust, correct mistakes, and maintain ethical standards over time.

In many meetings, we begin with Surah Al-Fatihah and conclude with Surah Al-ī Asr. These practices can serve as reminders of our spiritual and moral responsibilities. Yet their significance depends on whether we carry their teachings into our decisions and behaviour after the meeting ends. Moreover, reciting Surah Al-ī Asr without practising its message risks reducing a profound ethical teaching to a routine. If we genuinely understand its message, we should become more conscious of how we use time, more committed to doing good, more willing to uphold the truth, and more patient in fulfilling our responsibilities. An organisation achieves excellence not merely when its members know the right values, but when they practise those values and help one another uphold them.

Corruption as a Breakdown of Order and Integrity

To understand the importance of integrity, we must also consider the nature of corruption itself. The English word corruption derives from the Latin corruptio, related to corrumpere, meaning to destroy, spoil, or corrupt. The term is associated with decay, moral degradation, and the deterioration of something from its proper condition. In the context of organisational and social life, corruption can be understood more broadly as a serious disorder that disrupts the proper functioning of individuals, institutions, and society, undermining integrity, trust, and the responsible exercise of authority.

Although corruption is commonly understood in terms of bribery and the abuse of entrusted power, its consequences can be considered more broadly. Corruption distorts the proper functioning of individuals, families, organisations, and societies by replacing legitimate responsibilities with improper interests.

At the individual level, corruption reflects a departure from honesty and moral responsibility. Within a family, dishonesty and the abuse of trust can damage relationships and undermine its stability. Within an organisation, corruption can distort decision-making, weaken accountability, and divert resources away from their intended purposes. At the societal and global levels, widespread corruption can erode public confidence, weaken institutions, and undermine collective efforts to achieve justice and well-being.

Why do individuals engage in corrupt practices? There is no single explanation. Corruption can be encouraged by opportunities for personal gain, weak oversight, conflicts of interest, organisational pressures, poor accountability, and social norms that tolerate misconduct. At the individual level, it may also reflect a weakened commitment to moral principles. This is why strengthening integrity must accompany institutional reform. Systems should be designed to reduce opportunities for corruption, while individuals should cultivate the character and convictions needed to resist it.

Integrity is not simply the absence of corrupt behaviour. It is the positive commitment to act honestly, fulfil one's responsibilities, and use entrusted authority and resources for their legitimate purposes. The objective is not merely to prevent disorder. It is to cultivate individuals and organisations that actively contribute to justice, trust, and the common good.

Iī sī n and the Consciousness of Divine Accountability

At the heart of Islamic integrity lies iī sī n, a concept that deepens our understanding of accountability. The concept offers a profound Islamic foundation for personal integrity, ethical conduct, and organisational excellence. It is beautifully expressed in the words of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), which may be translated as: "That you worship Allah as though you see Him, for although you do not see Him, He surely sees you." This is part of the famous Hadith of Jibrī l, recorded in ī aī ī ī Muslim (Hadith 8), in which the Prophet (PBUH) explains the meaning of iī sī n.

The Hadith encourages a person to act rightly because doing so is part of a sincere commitment to Allah, even when no human observer is present. This spiritual dimension is especially important in the fight against corruption. Monitoring systems may be limited. Supervisors cannot observe every decision, and formal audits cannot capture every instance of misconduct. Some ethical choices are made in private, beyond the immediate reach of institutional controls.

The consciousness of divine accountability addresses this limitation by reminding believers that the absence of human witnesses does not mean the absence of accountability. Islamic teachings describe the recording of human deeds by appointed angels. This understanding reinforces the idea that every action matters, including actions that escape public scrutiny or formal institutional monitoring.

We may think that a private decision will never be discovered. We may believe that a small misuse of resources is insignificant or that a minor act of dishonesty will have no consequences. Yet the Islamic conception of accountability calls us to consider not only whether others can see what we do, but whether our actions are consistent with our responsibilities before Allah. One way to understand this is to imagine that every action is being recorded in an 'internal video'. This analogy helps us appreciate the idea that our conduct is preserved and that we will ultimately be accountable for it.

In short, a strong internal safeguard against wrongdoing is a conscience informed by faith, guided by iī sī n, and conscious of accountability before Allah. Such a conscience should reinforce, rather than replace, transparent systems and institutional controls. Surah Al-ī Asr highlights the importance of integrity, responsible use of time, and mutual accountability in achieving organisational excellence. Time should be treated as an amanah, while integrity must be reflected in everyday conduct rather than merely in formal declarations.

Conclusion: Do Not Merely Recite, but Practise

Time is an amanah that must be used responsibly. Surah Al-ī Asr reminds us to strengthen our faith, practise righteous deeds, uphold the truth, remain steadfast in adversity, and encourage mutual accountability. Through iī sī n, we recognise that our actions matter even when they are unseen by others. By translating these principles into daily conduct, personal accountability becomes the foundation for an enduring culture of integrity, anti-corruption, and ummatic excellence.

Dr. Shukran Abd Rahman is a Professor of Psychology at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and Principal Director of its Office of Strategic Institution Transformation (OSIT). His expertise includes Industrial and Organisational Psychology, Islamic Psychology, career development, organisational transformation, and higher education leadership.

Courtesy: IslamiCity

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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Environment Committee reviews Anchar Lake conservation

Inspects SKIMS waste management, directs time-bound remedial action

KT News Desk



SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 15: The Committee on Environment of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, under the Chairmanship of MLA Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, Thursday conducted an extensive visit to Anchar Lake and its adjoining areas to assess the measures being undertaken by the Government for conservation, restoration and pollution control of the lake besides identifying further interventions required for its effective protection and sustainable management.

Members of the Committee, including MLAs Daleep Singh Parihar, Showkat Hussain Ganie, Javaid Ahmad Mirchal, Dr. Sajjad Shafi, Salman Sagar and Javaid Reyaz Bedar besides MLA Mubarak Gul, accompanied the Chairman during the visit.

During the inspection, the Committee, as per an official statement, expressed serious concern over the rampant encroachments in and around Anchar Lake. It said that immediate and effective measures shall be taken for removal of illegal encroachments and retrieval of encroached land in accordance with the law. The Committee stressed that any further encroachment on the lake and its adjoining areas must be prevented through stringent enforcement, regular monitoring and coordinated action by the concerned departments.

The Chairman directed the Vice-Chairman, Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA), to furnish a detailed report on the nature and extent of illegal encroachments around Anchar Lake, the status of land retrieval and the action taken against the violators. He also called for clear timelines and an account of the measures proposed to prevent fresh encroachments and ensure strict compliance with the applicable environmental and land protection regulations.

Expressing concern over the deteriorating ecological condition of the lake, the Chairman observed that Anchar Lake is facing serious environmental challenges due to encroachment, pollution, siltation and other anthropogenic pressures. He emphasised that the protection and restoration of the lake require sustained institutional efforts, effective implementation of environmental safeguards and close coordination among all concerned departments.

He underscored the need for a comprehensive and time-bound conservation strategy, encompassing the prevention of untreated sewage and waste discharge, scientific desiltation wherever required, restoration of the lake's natural water channels, protection of its catchment areas and regular monitoring of water quality. He stressed that all interventions must be guided by scientific assessments and ecological considerations to ensure the long-term sustainability of the lake.

The Chairman also emphasised that the preservation of Anchar Lake is a shared responsibility of the government and the public. He called for greater community participation, public awareness and strict adherence to environmental norms while urging the concerned authorities to adopt a proactive approach towards safeguarding the lake from further degradation.

As part of the visit, the Committee also inspected Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) to assess the concerns regarding the management and disposal of hospital waste and its potential impact on Anchar Lake. The Committee stressed that biomedical waste and other hospital effluents must be handled, treated and disposed of strictly in accordance with the prescribed environmental and biomedical waste management norms to prevent contamination of the lake and its surrounding ecosystem.

The Committee called upon the concerned authorities to ensure proper functioning of effluent treatment and waste management systems, conduct regular inspections and maintain effective monitoring mechanisms to prevent any discharge of untreated waste into water bodies. It also emphasised the need for accountability and interdepartmental coordination to address any identified deficiencies and ensure compliance with environmental standards.

Secy RDD reviews flagship rural development schemes

Stresses timely execution, accountability

KT News Desk



SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 15: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Ramesh Kumar, on Tuesday conducted a comprehensive review of schemes and programmes being implemented by the Department across Jammu and Kashmir.

The review was focused on physical progress, financial discipline, timely utilisation of funds and strengthening the service delivery in rural areas.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Secretary in RDD Rachna Sharma; Mission Director, NRLM, Shubhra Sharma; COO, Himayat, Rifat Kohli; Director, RDD Jammu, Shahnaz Akhtar; Director Finance, Umar Khan; CEO, IWMP, Rajnish Kumar; Joint Director Planning, Kamal Kumar Sharma; Additional Secretary, RDD, Waseem Raja; Joint Director, RDD, Mantasha Binti Rashid; Deputy Director Rural Sanitation, Kashmir, Shabir Ahmed Hakak and other officers.

The Secretary reviewed the progress under major programmes, including Viksit Bharat–Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-GRAM-G), Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana–Gramin (PMAY-G), Swachh Bharat Mission–Grameen (SBM-G), Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM), Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA), Himayat and the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP).

Reviewing VB-GRAM-G, the Secretary assessed employment generation, implementation of works and financial progress under the programme. He was informed that 3.21 lakh persons had availed employment, generating 59.19 lakh person-days.

The Secretary emphasised financial discipline, timely processing of wage and material payments, effective monitoring of works and coordination between district and block-level functionaries to ensure that implementation remains on schedule and funds are utilised efficiently.

He observed that although the planning process is digital, errors and discrepancies often emerge at the finalisation stage. He directed the concerned officers to adhere to prescribed timelines, review entries carefully and ensure that Gram Panchayat-level functionaries are fully familiar with the list of permissible works.

The Secretary also emphasised that village plans should reflect local needs, geographical conditions and the specific vulnerabilities of each area. He called for prioritising works according to ground requirements, including water conservation, drainage, protection structures and connectivity in vulnerable and disaster-prone locations.

Reviewing PMAY-G, the Secretary assessed the progress of rural housing under the SECC and Awaas Plus categories. As per the data, 3,27,210 houses had been completed against 3,34,586 sanctioned houses, taking the overall completion rate to approximately 98 per cent.

The Secretary stressed the need to accelerate the completion of pending houses through regular district-level monitoring, close follow-up with beneficiaries and prompt resolution of implementation bottlenecks. He also emphasised proper verification of beneficiary records, timely release and utilisation of available funds, and effective convergence with other schemes to ensure that eligible rural households receive the intended housing benefits without avoidable delays.

Master artisan Rafiq Ahmed Sofi wins National Award



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 15: Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, has extended heartiest congratulations to the master artisan Rafiq Ahmed Sofi of Eidgah, Srinagar, on being conferred with the National Award 2025 in the Hand-Knotted Carpet category by the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.

Sofi is the sole awardee from Jammu & Kashmir in this category for 2025, winning it for a carpet that features intricate floral motifs, traditional architectural patterns and calligraphic elements.

In a press statement issued here Thursday, a spokesman of the Department paid rich tributes to the master artisan for making the famed handicrafts and handloom sector of Kashmir proud at the national stage. "This honour recognises his exceptional craftsmanship and contribution to the traditional art of hand-knotted carpet weaving," he stated, adding it will give further traction to the Valley's carpet industry.

Kashmir's hand-knotted carpets represent a centuries-old tradition that combines fine knotting techniques with distinctive design elements and taleem, for which it was awarded GI registration in the year 2016, based on its source of origin.

The spokesman further stated that recognition of Sofi's work at the national level reaffirms the continued excellence and relevance of this heritage craft. "The Directorate encourages artisans across the region to draw inspiration from this achievement and continue upholding the standards of quality and artistry that define Kashmir handicrafts," he added.

A formal award ceremony is scheduled in the emonth of December 2026 in which amongst other winners, Rafiq Ahmad Sofi shall also be felicitated.

Yasha Mudgal chairs 5th AGM of BCCB

Emphasises mission-mode NPA recovery, financial revival

KT News Desk



JAMMU, OCTOBER 15: The 5th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Baramulla Central Cooperative Bank Limited (BCCB) was held Thursday, under the chairpersonship of Yasha Mudgal, Chairperson, Professional Board of Directors (PBOD), BCCB and Commissioner Secretary Cooperative Department.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla, members of the Professional Board of Directors, Director Horticulture, Kashmir and other senior officers of the department along with representatives of Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS).

Dr. Khalid Hussain, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, BCCB, as per an official statement, made a detailed presentation on functioning of the Bank. He highlighted the significant role of PACS in strengthening the cooperative credit structure at the grassroots level.

During the statutory proceedings, the House unanimously adopted the audited financial statements of the Bank, including the Balance Sheets, Profit and Loss Accounts and related schedules for the financial years ended March 31, 2025 and March 31, 2026. The House also ratified the appointment of M/s IMT & Company, Chartered Accountants, as the Statutory Auditor for the financial year 2026–27, as approved by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Addressing the AGM, Yasha Mudgal emphasized that the financial revival of BCCB, improvement in asset quality and restoration of public confidence must remain the foremost priorities of the Bank's management. She stressed the need for a result-oriented and time-bound approach towards the recovery of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs). She directed the management to establish clear, branch-wise recovery targets, strengthen the field-level monitoring and ensure accountability at every level.

The Chairperson called for a comprehensive borrower-wise review of overdue accounts. She directed the Bank to formulate specific recovery plans for chronic defaulters, supported by time-bound legal and administrative action wherever warranted.

Emphasizing the importance of sound credit management, Yasha Mudgal directed the Bank to strengthen its credit appraisal and pre-disbursement assessment procedures, improve post-disbursement monitoring and address deficiencies in loan underwriting. She also stressed the need for closer coordination with all 92 PACS to facilitate field-level follow-up, improve recovery efforts and reinforce the cooperative credit network.

The Chairperson further underscored the importance of financial discipline, prudent resource management and strict adherence to applicable RBI guidelines and prudential norms. She directed the management to exercise greater control over administrative expenditure and take sustained measures to improve the Bank's financial position, operational efficiency and institutional accountability.

Reiterating her focus on institutional revitalization, Yasha Mudgal stated that the Bank's turnaround would depend on disciplined execution, transparent functioning and clearly measurable outcomes. She called upon the management, field functionaries and PACS representatives to work collectively towards strengthening the cooperative banking system and ensuring that the Bank effectively fulfils its role in meeting the credit needs of its members and the wider cooperative sector.

From Classroom To Skies

KU holds workshop on aviation careers, pilot training

Capt. Nistish Arora shares essential steps towards becoming a commercial pilot



KT News Desk

Srinagar October 15: The Centre for Career Counseling, Coaching and Placement (CCCP), University of Kashmir (KU), organised a first-of-its-kind day-long workshop on 'Pilot Training & Career Pathways in Aviation' at the Main Campus.

It aimed to familiarise students with pilot training, licensing requirements and career opportunities in the aviation sector.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Chancellor, KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, as per a KU statement, emphasised the need to help students explore emerging career opportunities through informed guidance and industry engagement.

"Career awareness and expert guidance are essential in helping students identify opportunities beyond conventional career paths. By engaging with industry professionals, our students can gain a better understanding of emerging fields such as aviation and make informed choices based on their interests, abilities and aspirations," she said.

Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, highlighted the need to broaden students' exposure to specialised professional fields. He noted that such initiatives help them understand the skills, qualifications and practical preparation required to pursue diverse career opportunities.

Delivering the keynote address, Capt. Nistish Arora, senior aviation expert and Founder of November Alpha Aviation Academy (NAAA), Mumbai, spoke about the various stages of pilot training and the requirements for entering the profession. He guided participants on pilot eligibility, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) requirements, medical examinations, licensing, flying training opportunities in India and abroad, and preparation for airline careers.

Capt. Arora also discussed the career opportunities available in aviation and emphasised the importance of proper planning, accurate information and a clear understanding of the financial and academic commitments involved in pilot training.

The workshop featured an interactive question-and-answer session, allowing students to seek clarification on training pathways, eligibility criteria and career prospects.

Earlier, Director CCCP, KU, Prof. Nazir Dar, in his welcome address, highlighted the Centre's efforts to familiarise students with diverse career opportunities and provide them access to expert guidance and industry insights.

Representatives from NAAA, including Capt. Krish Khanti Lal, Capt. Ishrat Mansuri also attended the programme. Capt. Ishrat shared her experiences and perspective on aviation careers.

Faculty members and students from the University participated in the workshop. The proceedings were conducted by Fatima Ali, faculty, CCCP, KU while vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. Yahya Bakhtiyar, Deputy Director CCCP KU.

ACB J&K, CEO Shopian organises Vigilance Awareness Programme

KT News Desk



SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 15: Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), Jammu and Kashmir in collaboration with Chief Education Officer (CEO) Shopian organised a Vigilance Awareness Programme at the Meeting Hall of the CEO Office, Mini-Secretariat, Arhama, Shopian.

The programme was conducted with the objective of promoting integrity, transparency, accountability and ethical conduct in public service.

The event, as per an official statement, witnessed participation from key administrative and police dignitaries, including, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), ACB, Mohammad Saleem; Chief Education Officer (CEO), Shopian, Bashir Ahmad Shah; Principal, DIET Shopian, Neetu Gandotra; Senior Prosecuting Officer, ACB, Umar Mansoor; DySP, ACB, Deputy Chief Education Officer, Shopian, Principal, GHSS Zainapora, District Vigilance Officer (DVO),

Principals of all Government Higher Secondary Schools, Zonal Education Officers (ZEOs) and Headmasters of Government High Schools across District Shopian.

Senior Superintendent of Police, ACB, delivered a comprehensive address highlighting how corruption undermines public confidence, impedes institutional progress and adversely affects essential service delivery. He urged all participating officers to uphold honesty, impartiality, and transparency in official dealings.

He further stressed the importance of preventive vigilance, institutional accountability and collective effort in creating a corruption-free administrative environment.

Resource person, Umar Mansoor, Senior Prosecuting Officer, ACB delivered a detailed presentation on the theme "Probity for Prosperity." He elaborated on the close link between integrity in public life, good governance, and sustainable development.

He stressed that probity is a fundamental value that strengthens public trust and ensures effective utilization of public resources. He also sensitised participants on relevant Conduct Rules and the importance of maintaining professional discipline.

The Chief Education Officer, expressed gratitude to ACB officials for sensitising the education fraternity on issues of vigilance and official conduct. He issued clear directives to all Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs), Principals, ZEOs and Headmasters to maintain strict adherence to prescribed rules, regulations and established administrative procedures.

"Officers must lead by personal example, Vigilance must not remain confined to an annual observance but must become a continuous institutional practice reflected in daily actions and decisions," he added.

DySP, ACB, Mansoor Ahmad, delivered an informative talk on preventing and combating corruption.

Kashmir Thunder

Srinagar Police intensify anti-drug crackdown, attach assets worth Rs 13.43 cr under NDPS Act

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 15: Srinagar Police has frozen and attached multiple residential properties and a vehicle worth over Rs 13.43 crore in a major crackdown targeting drug trafficking and its financial networks.

The coordinated operation was conducted by Police Stations Khanyar, Pantha Chowk, Shalteng, Safakadal, Soura and Ahmadnagar across different sub-divisions of Srinagar.

According to a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the assets were identified during financial investigations and are allegedly linked to proceeds from illicit drug trafficking. The action has been initiated under Sections 68-E and 68-F of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, following the prescribed legal procedures.

Police Station Khanyar attached five assets valued at approximately Rs 8 crore. These include a three-storeyed residential house on seven marlas of land in Budoobagh, Khanyar, valued at Rs 1.60 crore and allegedly belonging to Aijaz Ahmad Bhat, son of Bashir Ahmad Bhat. The action is linked to FIR No. 37/2022.

A Volkswagen Polo, bearing registration number DL3CBW-3549 and valued at Rs 6.50 lakh, allegedly belonging to Aaqib Hyder Khan, son of Mohammad Ayoub Khan of Ghat No. 01, Dalgate, was also attached in connection with FIR No. 46/2025.

Police also attached a three-storeyed residential house with 12 marlas of land, valued at Rs 2.50 crore, allegedly belonging to Majid Ashraf Wani, son of Mohammad Ashraf Wani of Sheeshgari Mohalla, Khanyar. The property is linked to FIR No. 47/2022.

Two more residential properties allegedly belonging to Shabir Ahmad Bangroo, son of Gh. Qadir Bangroo of Bangroo Mohalla, Safakadal, were attached. These include a three-storeyed house on 11 marlas and 145 square feet of land, valued at Rs 2.80 crore, and a single-storeyed house on five marlas of land, valued at Rs 1.10 crore. The action is linked to FIR No. 07/2016, registered at Police Station Khanyar.

Police Station Pantha Chowk attached a concrete residential house in Khanmoh, valued at Rs 1.24 crore, allegedly belonging to Saqib Bashir Bhat alias Sakpal, son of Bashir Ahmad Bhat. The accused is linked to three NDPS cases registered at Police Stations Pampore, Banihal and Khrew under FIR Nos. 106/2024, 128/2025 and 55/2026, respectively.

At Shalteng, police froze a two-storeyed residential house built on one kanal of land in Panzinara, Srinagar, valued at Rs 1.21 crore. The property allegedly belongs to Danish Ahmad Bhat, son of Ab. Ahad Bhat, and is linked to FIR No. 43/2023. Police said the property was identified during the investigation and the freezing order was duly served.

Police Station Safakadal attached a three-storeyed residential house with an attic, valued at Rs 10,15,383, allegedly belonging to Faizan Firdous Khanday alias Farzan Pujj, son of Firdous Ahmad Khanday of Malik Sahib, Safakadal. The case is registered under Sections 8/22, 25, 27A and 29 of the NDPS Act, Sections 3/4/25 of the Arms Act and Section 111 of the BNS. The attachment is part of the ongoing investigation into an alleged organised drug trafficking network.

Police Station Ahmadnagar froze a residential house valued at approximately Rs 1 crore, allegedly belonging to Adil Ahmad Patoo, son of Ali Mohd Patoo of Shah Mohalla, Ahmadnagar. The property was identified during a financial investigation under Section 68-E of the NDPS Act, and the proceedings were conducted in the presence of an Executive Magistrate.

Police Station Soura also initiated freezing and attachment proceedings against a residential house in Umar Colony-B, Lal Bazar, allegedly belonging to Khalid Nazir Chiloo, son of Nazir Ahmad Chiloo. The property is valued at Rs 1,18,00,751, excluding the land value, and is linked to FIR No. 23/2025. The proceedings were carried out in the presence of an Executive Magistrate and local witnesses.

In a separate action, Police Station Ahmadnagar froze and attached another residential house valued at Rs 80 lakh, allegedly belonging to Adil Ahmad Patoo of Shah Mohalla, Ahmadnagar. The action is linked to FIR No. 16/2023, registered at Police Station Ahmadnagar.

Srinagar Police said the coordinated action reflects its sustained efforts to target the financial resources that support drug trafficking networks, going beyond arrests and the seizure of narcotic substances.

By tracing and attaching assets allegedly acquired through illicit drug proceeds, the police aims to dismantle the financial infrastructure sustaining organised narcotic activities.

J&K State Taxes Commissioner sets ₹800 crore monthly revenue target

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 15: Commissioner State Taxes, Jammu and Kashmir, P. K. Bhat, on Thursday chaired a meeting to review the revenue performance of the Kashmir Division.

The meeting was organised by the Additional Commissioner State Taxes, Kashmir Division, Parveez Ahmad Raina, which was attended by State Taxes Officers of all circles of the division.

The Additional Commissioner presented an exhaustive and comprehensive appraisal of the performance parameters of all the Circles functioning under the Kashmir Division. He apprised the Chair of the cumulative revenue realised to date, delineated the multifarious measures and strategic interventions being undertaken to augment revenue mobilisation, and outlined the prospective course of action envisaged for the ensuing months, with a view to ensuring the unequivocal attainment of the revenue target stipulated for the current financial year.

The Commissioner observed that the impact of GST rate rationalisation has largely stabilised, creating favourable prospects for enhanced revenue realisation in the ensuing months. Noting that the national average growth in GST revenue exceeds 15 per cent, he exhorted the officers to intensify revenue mobilisation efforts to ensure that Jammu and Kashmir maintains parity with the national growth trajectory. He emphasised the need to augment cash collections, including through effective IGST settlement commensurate with value addition within the Union Territory, and reiterated the monthly revenue target of 800 crore.

Emphasising the significance of timely compliance, the Commissioner directed focused monitoring of September returns, including quarterly filings under the QRMP scheme. He underscored that timely GSTR-1 filing is fundamental to revenue realisation, safeguarding ITC integrity and curbing fraudulent transactions, and directed officers to strive towards positioning Jammu and Kashmir among the leading States and Union Territories in this regard. Referring to approximately 2,500 crore reflected in GSTR-7 returns, he instructed systematic follow-up to ensure timely realisation of the corresponding revenue.

In view of simplified registration and return-filing procedures, the Commissioner stressed the need to pivot towards data-driven enforcement, particularly through analytics-based scrutiny of purchases from unregistered persons and verification of their underlying supply chains. He also directed effective utilisation of Section 71 of the GST Act for inspection and verification of business records, wherever legally permissible, and advised the issuance of consolidated show cause notices covering multiple financial years, subject to statutory limitations and applicable legal provisions.

The Commissioner cautioned against initiating proceedings solely on third-party information, emphasising independent verification and judicious application of mind by proper officers. He further directed strict, time-bound follow-up of show cause notices, accountability of proper and adjudicating officers, and comprehensive preparation for defending departmental cases before the GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT).

Highlighting the revenue potential of the tourism and hospitality sectors, he instructed officers to undertake targeted inspections at prominent destinations, including Gulmarg and Sonamarg, to ensure proper tax compliance and realisation of legitimate dues.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Development of Ladakh

The Prime Minister dedicated 40 newly constructed reservoirs under Project Amrit Him Sarovar, saying they would help ensure water availability for farmers during crucial agricultural periods.

The reservoirs would support irrigation and strengthen the agricultural economy in the high-altitude region, where water availability is important for cultivation, he said.

DEVELOPMENT SINCE LADAKH BECAME UNION TERRITORY

Highlighting infrastructure development since Ladakh became a Union Territory in 2019, PM Modi said the region's road network had expanded from 1,800 km to more than 4,000 km.

The number of major bridges had increased from 19 to nearly 75, while the number of helipads had risen from seven to more than 40, he said.

Tap-water coverage had grown from 3.5 per cent of households to nearly 99 per cent, while the number of hospital beds had doubled, the Prime Minister said.

He also referred to the ongoing Zojila Tunnel project, saying it would provide all-weather connectivity and improve access to the region.

The Centre was giving priority to Ladakh's development, with a focus on improving infrastructure and creating opportunities for people living in remote areas, he said.

TOURISM, AGRICULTURE AND LIVELIHOODS

PM Modi said the government was promoting winter tourism and adventure tourism to unlock Ladakh's economic potential and generate employment.

More than 40 border settlements were being developed under the Vibrant Villages Programme to encourage economic activity and create livelihood opportunities in far-flung areas, he said.

The number of homestays in Ladakh had increased from around 150 to 3,000, reflecting the expansion of tourism-related activities, he said.

He also highlighted the promotion of protected cultivation, noting that around 11,000 greenhouses were operational in the region.

These initiatives, he said, were creating new opportunities for farmers to increase their incomes and diversify agricultural production.

The Prime Minister also referred to the potential of Ladakh's local products, including sea-buckthorn, handicrafts, GI-tagged apricots, high-altitude commercial floriculture and traditional Pashmina wool produced by the Changpa community.

He said he frequently gifted products from Ladakh to foreign dignitaries, including the German chancellor, the Swedish prime minister and the president of Kyrgyzstan.

The government was working to strengthen the global identity of Ladakh's Pashmina and improve branding and market access for regional products, he said, adding that efforts should ensure producers directly benefit from the growing demand.

HIGH COURT BENCH, HIGHER EDUCATION AND DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Addressing the demand for improved access to justice, PM Modi said the government had approved the establishment of a High Court Bench for Ladakh in August this year.

The move would help bring the justice system closer to people and improve access to legal remedies alongside administrative services, he said.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the expansion of BharatNet and high-speed internet connectivity in remote parts of Ladakh.

Improved digital connectivity would facilitate e-governance, online education and access to wider markets for local entrepreneurs, including those running hotels, restaurants and homestays and those engaged in traditional crafts, he said.

PM Modi said the Centre was particularly focused on the younger generation and wanted students in Ladakh to have access to quality education and new technologies without having to move to other cities.

A major Centre of Excellence was being built in Leh, while proposals for satellite campuses of IIT Jammu and IIM Jammu were also being advanced, he said.

These institutions would expand opportunities for higher education, research and skill development within the region, enabling local youth to acquire modern technological knowledge, he said.

SPORTS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

PM Modi said the government's new sports policy for Ladakh was aimed at identifying and nurturing local talent, particularly in ice hockey, winter sports and mountaineering.

He said efforts were underway to provide young athletes with better training and facilities so they could compete at national and international levels.

The Prime Minister also underlined the importance of preserving Ladakh's cultural and historical heritage, including its ancient monasteries, Buddhist traditions and festivals associated with the legacy of revered Kushok Bakula Rinpoche.

He inaugurated India's first Petroglyph Conservation Park in Leh, aimed at protecting the region's ancient rock art.

The initiative would help preserve Ladakh's historical legacy for future generations while allowing visitors from India and abroad to learn about its rich past, he said.

PM Modi congratulated the people of Ladakh on the projects and expressed confidence that collective efforts would take the region to new heights of development. (KNO)

Any future terror

the country's earlier dependence on imports for military equipment, the Defence Minister said India was now developing the capacity to manufacture everything from basic defence requirements to sophisticated military systems.

INDIA'S ARMED FORCES FULLY PREPARED TO CONFRONT ANY CHALLENGE

"Our commitment to peace remains steadfast, yet India's armed forces are fully prepared to confront any challenge," he said, adding that national security depended not only on military preparedness but also on the country's collective resolve.

Singh said India aimed to become a developed nation by the centenary of its independence and emerge as a global leader in technology, the economy and defence.

He also described the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) as a national innovation platform that connects industry, universities, start-ups and scientists, rather than an institution limited to defence research.

The government is working to expand the role of start-ups and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in defence production, he said.

According to Singh, the Defence Ministry has approved procurement worth more than Rs 2,400 crore from these enterprises, while projects exceeding Rs 1,500 crore had been sanctioned for developing new technologies.

He said 75 per cent of the capital budget for modernising the armed forces had been earmarked for procurement from Indian industries.

The new defence procurement process being introduced by the government included reforms aimed at accelerating domestic production and strengthening the country's defence industrial base, Singh added. (KNO)

Omar govt's two

highlighted the government's approval of an option for eligible employees under the New Pension Scheme to switch to the Old Pension Scheme.

Defending the government's performance, Ramzan said it should be assessed in the context of limited powers under the UT framework. "Demanding complete accountability from elected representatives while denying them the requisite powers goes against democratic principles," he remarked.

Minister for Rural Development Department Javed Ahmad Dar told KNO that restoration of statehood and constitutional guarantees remained among the top priorities of the NC-led government.

He said the Government was working to fulfil its manifesto promises despite limited financial resources.

Dar highlighted initiatives in agriculture and horticulture, including establishing Centres of Excellence in all 20 districts, developing pesticide and fertiliser testing labs in Shopian and Baramulla, and proposing similar facilities in Srinagar. He said the government had raised subsidies on anti-hail nets for traditional orchards from 50% to 75%, strengthened cold-chain infrastructure, modernised fruit mandis through digitalisation, and encouraged high-density plantations.

He added that the government was pursuing weather-based crop insurance, establishing a separate enforcement directorate for agriculture and horticulture, and implementing the Yuva Mission to provide employment opportunities to over 4.5 lakh youth. Welfare measures included restoring the Darbar Move, increasing marriage assistance, announcing six gas cylinders under manifesto commitments, and providing amnesty on electricity dues up to March 2026.

Dar said the government remained committed to equitable development across Jammu, the Chenab Valley, Pir Panjal and Kashmir, and would continue efforts to expand welfare measures, strengthen agriculture and horticulture, and create more opportunities for youth during the remaining three years of its tenure. (KNO)

Sports provide

immense sporting potential and vibrant water-sports culture.

Commending the Jammu Kashmir Police for its Civic Action Programme and youth-oriented initiatives, including "Run for Unity" and the upcoming "Pedal for Paradise" rally, the Lieutenant Governor said these efforts have strengthened trust, community participation and youth engagement.

Congratulating medal winners, the Lieutenant Governor urged them to remain humble, while encouraging other participants to view setbacks as stepping stones towards future success. In his message, the Lieutenant Governor expressed confidence that Jammu Kashmir's water-sports ecosystem would continue to expand, creating greater opportunities for young athletes in the years ahead. (KNO)

CM Omar inaugurates

stone for the construction of a bridge over the River Jhelum at Guzhama Shilwat at a cost of 39 crore. The bridge is expected to improve connectivity for local residents. He also laid the foundation stone for a multi-purpose auction platform at the Fruit and Vegetable Mandi, Zazna, at a cost of 2.54 crore to strengthen trading facilities for fruit and vegetable growers.

The Chief Minister inaugurated five completed projects, including roads connecting Tehsil Bagh with Lar Bypass and Yanihama with Dangerpora; the road from Dar Mohalla Wattalbagh to Dangerpora and allied links; the double-storey building at High School Gogjigund; the widened and upgraded road from Fatehpora Dak Bangloo to Gadoora Bridge; and the Pati Waskura to Kharbagh Bund road along the River Jhelum. These works, completed at a combined cost of 16.72 crore, are expected to improve local connectivity and educational infrastructure.

During the tour, the Chief Minister reviewed the progress of the Srinagar Ring Road project and was briefed by engineers at Dr Farooq Abdullah Environmental Park, Manigam, on the ongoing construction and upgradation of the Pandaach-Manigam section.

The 12.115-kilometre highway project, being executed by the National Highways Authority of India at a cost of 290.51 crore, involves upgrading the existing two-lane road to a four-lane dual carriageway. The project includes bridges, a flyover, culverts and service and slip roads, and is scheduled for completion by May 2028.

The Chief Minister also reviewed ongoing works on the Sindh River Front and the Municipal Town Hall in Ganderbal. The first phase of the Sindh River Front project, being developed at an approved cost of 4.83 crore, includes a protection wall, landscaping, a paved walkway, a viewpoint, a patio café and ornamental lighting.

Reviewing the Town Hall upgrade and extension project, approved at a cost of 3 crore, the Chief Minister directed the concerned officers to expedite the works and ensure their early completion so that the facilities could be made available to the public at the earliest.

During his visit to the Fruit and Vegetable Mandi at Zazuna, the Chief Minister assessed arrangements and activities during the ongoing harvest season and interacted with farmers and progressive growers. The growers apprised him of issues affecting their work and the horticulture sector. Omar Abdullah assured them that their genuine demands would be taken up for appropriate resolution.

The Chief Minister's visit focused on reviewing ongoing infrastructure projects, assessing the implementation of development works and addressing issues raised by local residents and growers.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Ministers Sakina Itoo and Javid Dar, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal Shreya Singhal, along with senior officers, heads of departments, engineers and other concerned officials, accompanied the Chief Minister during the tour.

Govind Jaiswal

in the GAD has been posted as Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor.

The order further states that he shall also hold the additional charge of the post of Chief Executive Officer, Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, in addition to his own duties, till further orders.

The post of Principal Secretary to LG fell vacant after Mandeep K Bhandari (IAS: 2001: AGMUT) was appointed as Chairman, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on September 25, 2026. (KNO)

ECI defers

that a similar exercise for Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh will be notified separately.

"Also, for the three States/UTs namely Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, where the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) has not been started so far, the schedule for roll revision will be announced in due course of time, keeping in view their weather conditions," the ECI said, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

The Special Summary Revision is the Election Commission's annual exercise to update the electoral rolls. There has been no revision of electoral rolls in Jammu & Kashmir since the 2024 Assembly elections. Officials said the revision is necessary for holding municipal polls. While the State Election Commission carries out the revision of rolls for Panchayat elections on its own, it depends on the ECI's exercise for updated rolls in municipal areas.

The five-year term of municipalities in Jammu & Kashmir ended between October and November 2023, while the term of Panchayats concluded on January 9, 2024. (KNO)

Rain hits parts

scattered places and light snowfall over higher reaches. Thunderstorms and gusty winds are also possible at a few places. (KNO)

Hundreds of families

opportunity to build a modest, permanent home where they could live with dignity and security. He said living in a temporary shelter had become increasingly difficult, particularly for families with children and elderly members.

"We are not asking for anything luxurious. We only want a safe house for our families. Our circumstances have been checked several times, yet we are still waiting. If the verification has already established our condition, the authorities should tell us why our cases have not progressed," he said.

Similarly, Nadeem said the prolonged wait had left his family uncertain about its future, with the prospect of another harsh winter adding to their worries.

"Every year, we hope that our case will finally be cleared and that we will be able to start building a proper house. But the years pass, and we remain where we were. Another winter is approaching, and our family is still struggling to live in a makeshift shelter," he said.

The issue has assumed greater significance as the Centre has extended PMAY-G for the period from 2024-25 to 2028-29, with assistance aimed at providing permanent houses to additional eligible rural households. The scheme provides financial assistance of 1.30 lakh per house in hilly areas, including Jammu and Kashmir, subject to prescribed eligibility and implementation guidelines.

However, the affected families said the extension of the scheme would offer little immediate relief unless their pending cases were examined and eligible beneficiaries were brought into the assistance process.

They also called for greater transparency in beneficiary selection, saying authorities should clearly communicate whether an application is pending verification, awaiting approval, excluded from the relevant list or held up for any other reason.

In September 2026, the government informed the Legislative Assembly that the inclusion of beneficiaries under PMAY-G was being undertaken in accordance with prescribed guidelines. It also acknowledged that some deserving households were not appearing in the draft Permanent Wait List, apparently because of automated scrutiny, validation and eligibility checks.

The affected families said such cases required careful examination so that eligible households were not left out because of procedural issues or discrepancies in the verification process.

They urged the Rural Development Department and concerned district administrations to review long-pending cases, conduct a fresh assessment wherever necessary and communicate clear decisions to applicants.

With winter approaching, they said, the immediate priority should be to identify genuinely deserving families living in unsafe conditions and ensure that eligible beneficiaries receive assistance in accordance with the scheme's rules.

For Gulzar Ahmad, Nadeem Ahmad and other families in similar circumstances, the demand is simple: after years of waiting and repeated verification, they want a clear decision and a realistic path towards a permanent home. (KNO)

J&K Govt to

the Jammu & Kashmir Official Languages Act, 2020, which declared Kashmiri, Dogri, Urdu, Hindi, and English as the official languages of the Union Territory. The Act also mandated that the Administrator of the UT shall make special efforts to promote and develop Gojri, Punjabi, and Pahari languages through institutional mechanisms such as the Academy of Art, Culture and Languages.

It is worth mentioning that the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019 empowers the UT Assembly to enact legislation for the adoption of any language as an official language of the Union Territory. (KNO)

End of Naxalism doesn't erase five decades of suffering it caused: Amit Shah

■ PTI



New Delhi, Oct 15: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said efforts were being made to improve primary infrastructure and facilities in Chhattisgarh, where the Congress rule had failed to provide even basic amenities for decades.

Outlining the BJP government's efforts to rebuild Bastar and rehabilitate victims of Left-Wing Extremism, Shah said eliminating Naxalism was not enough; the government must also address the suffering it had caused over five decades, particularly among the region's poor tribal communities.

Addressing virtually a ceremony to provide assistance to Chhattisgarh's Naxal-affected, Shah said a disability assistance programme held in Jagdalpur from October 5-7 had benefitted more than 3,600 people with disabilities, including around 1,570 in Bastar alone.

The current initiative provides assistive devices, including artificial limbs, wheelchairs, tricycles, hearing aids and walking sticks, to people affected by Naxalism.

"The end of Naxalism does not mean that we can erase the suffering of these five decades," Shah said, adding that the government must help victims rebuild their lives and dignity.

He assured the state government of Central support in such efforts.

Citing the measures taken to rehabilitate former extremists and to extend basic services in affected areas, the Home Minister said approximately 8,526 Naxalites had surrendered. Around 7,500 people without bank accounts were provided with them, and 1,625 people received reward money.

Incentive payments were provided to 7,882 people; 455 received jobs, and 129 were allotted land, he said.

He said security camps will be converted into service centres and community facilities, allowing government officials to focus on health, education, employment and other development needs.

"The very places where our security personnel once sat to protect you will now become the places where officials from the Government of India and the Chhattisgarh government will lay the foundation for a developed Bastar," The Union minister said.

The centres would help address children's health and education needs, employment concerns among young people and the economic needs of tribal communities, he said.

Shah also highlighted the state government's initiatives such as the Bastar Olympics, Bastar Pandum and the Niyad Nellanar scheme, saying they were intended to revive tribal culture, improve infrastructure and restore normal life in areas affected by violence.

He said the Bastar Olympics has brought people together for sports in places where gunfire and bomb blasts once created an atmosphere of fear.

Through Bastar Pandum, the government seeks to revive tribal art and culture, while the Niyad Nellanar scheme will improve basic facilities in remote areas, he said.

Shah said the government was determined to eliminate the remaining traces of Naxalism and restore Bastar as a peaceful and prosperous region.

"Simply eliminating Naxalism will not be enough. We must eliminate every trace of it and rebuild Bastar as a happy and vibrant place," he said.

Jitendra Singh urges industry to become co-creators in India's technology journey

■ PTI



New Delhi, Oct 15: Union Science Minister Jitendra Singh on Thursday urged industry to become co-creators in India's technology journey and work with researchers from the conception of projects through development, scale-up and commercialisation.

The minister was addressing the third edition of IIT Kanpur's industry-academia innovation summit "Samanvay 2026" at Bharat Mandapam here.

"India has abundant scientific talent, creativity and innovation capacity, but translating these strengths into globally competitive technologies requires a larger pool of financial resources and stronger industrial participation.

"I urge the industry to work with the government and research institutions to develop commercially viable models for investment in frontier and deep technologies, including through greater domestic and international participation," Singh said.

The minister asserted that the industry must engage with researchers from the earliest stages of a project, helping identify practical applications, develop viable business models and take innovations to scale.

Calling for a shift from conventional collaboration to co-creation, he urged industry leaders to help accelerate the journey "from lab to land, from idea to impact, and from prototype to product".

"India is witnessing a significant transformation in science and technology, supported by an enabling policy environment and a growing emphasis on future-ready initiatives. Unlike earlier industrial revolutions, in which Indiwa adopted several technologies after they had advanced elsewhere, the country now has an opportunity to participate in shaping the next phase of technological progress.

"With India advancing in artificial intelligence, quantum technologies and biotechnology, the country is moving into areas expected to drive the next industrial revolution," he said.

Organised by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur, under the theme "Emerging Technologies, Enduring Partnerships," IITK Samanvay 2026 brought together stakeholders from government, industry, academia, startups and research institutions to strengthen collaboration and accelerate the translation of research into market-ready technologies and societal solutions.

"India's long-term development would depend on its ability to build self-reliance through indigenous manufacturing, technology development and the effective use of domestic resources. Scientific and technological self-reliance would also shape India's geopolitical sovereignty and its standing in the international arena," the minister said.

Scientific validation of Ayurveda will boost patient trust, says VP

■ PTI



New Delhi, Oct 15: Vice President CP Radhakrishnan on Thursday called for strengthened scientific research to establish how Ayurvedic medicines work and the time they take to produce results, saying evidence-based validation would strengthen patient confidence and enhance the global acceptance of traditional medicine.

Addressing the KAUMARACON 2026-International Conference on Kaumarabhritya organised by the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), he urged students and researchers to take a keen interest in studying the mechanisms of Ayurvedic treatments and validating their effectiveness through scientific research.

"Now we have to prove how it works. That is your job, especially the young students who are sitting here. You should take special interest in a particular subject and you have to establish how it works," Radhakrishnan said.

He said Ayurveda had been practised for centuries, but it was important to scientifically establish how its medicines work and how much time they take to deliver results.

"If these two things are established, then there is no need for anything else. The patient's confidence will go up," he said.

Referring to the need to preserve traditional medical knowledge, the vice president congratulated the Ministry of AYUSH for its efforts to document India's traditional medical heritage in written texts, noting that much of the knowledge had historically been passed down orally.

He expressed confidence that stronger scientific evidence and growing patient trust could significantly increase the number of people seeking Ayurvedic treatment.

Emphasising the importance of confidence among medical students, he said they should develop faith in Ayurvedic treatment and medicines while working to understand their mechanisms through research.

Stressing the need for scientific rigour and patient-centred care, Radhakrishnan said Ayurveda could support preventive healthcare and lifestyle management, while modern medicine remained vital for diagnostics, emergencies, surgery and the treatment of serious diseases.

"Their responsible integration must be guided by evidence, safety, quality, and respect for established clinical standards," he said.

Defence ministry inks Rs 4,106-cr contracts for IAF communication satellite, Navy torpedoes

■ PTI

New Delhi, Oct 15: The government on Thursday signed contracts worth nearly Rs 4,106 crore for acquisition of a dedicated communication satellite capability for the Indian Air Force and heavyweight torpedoes for the Navy to boost their combat capabilities.

The two contracts mark a significant step towards advancing the development of domestic defence manufacturing capabilities while promoting self-reliance in critical technologies in line with the Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make-in-India vision of the government, the defence ministry said.

The ministry inked the contract for dedicated communication satellite GSAT-7C, valued at Rs 2,563 crore, with New Space India Limited, Bengaluru.

"This indigenously designed, developed and manufactured satellite will enhance the secure, resilient and seamless communication capabilities for the assets of the Indian Air Force, thereby strengthening operational effectiveness," the ministry said in a statement.

Sensex jumps 1,534 points, Nifty surges to nearly 3-week high

■ PTI



Mumbai, Oct 15: Benchmark stock index Sensex rallied 1,534 points or over 2 per cent to close at a three-week high on Thursday following heavy buying in banks, IT and Reliance Industries amid easing crude oil prices.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,533.72 points, or 2.11 per cent, to settle near the day's high at 74,315.61. During the day, it surged 1,548.4 points, or 2.12 per cent, to 74,330.29.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 374.65 points, or 1.66 per cent, to close at 22,997.35, its highest level since September 25.

From the 30 Sensex firms, Tech Mahindra jumped 4.61 per cent, ICICI Bank 4.17 per cent, Bharti Airtel 2.94 per cent, Eternal 2.77 per cent, HCLTech 2.58 per cent, HDFC Bank 2.51 per cent and TCS 2.28 per cent.

Reliance Industries surged 4.03 per cent after its digital and telecom arm, Jio Platforms, set a price band of Rs 1,065 to Rs 1,119 per share for its initial public offering, which could raise about Rs 30,213 crore at the top of the range, making it India's largest.

The IPO, comprising a fresh issue of up to 27 crore equity shares of Rs 10 face value each, opens for subscription on Wednesday, October 21, and closes on Friday, October 23.

Bharat Electronics, Trent and Hindustan Unilever were the laggards among Sensex shares.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, declined 2.34 per cent to USD 103.6 per barrel.

"Indian equities rallied sharply as concerns over stretched AI valuations and higher US inflation triggered a sell-off across tech-heavy global markets, improving India's relative appeal and encouraging rotation toward domestic large-cap technology, private financials and defensive heavyweights," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Correcting bond yields, rupee stability and softening crude prices further supported sentiment, while hopes of possible reconsideration of equity taxation added to risk appetite, Nair added.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,857.44 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

"Indian equity benchmarks staged a broad-based rebound on Thursday as buying gathered pace through the session. The gains erased Wednesday's losses, with both indices holding near their intraday highs despite a weak global backdrop. Information technology stocks led the advance, while private banks, automakers and oil and gas companies also attracted strong buying interest," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

Legal drafting on in US trade pact: Goyal

'To be operationalised once we get competitive advantage'

■ PTI



New Delhi, Oct 15: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Thursday said the first phase of the India-US trade pact has been finalised and is undergoing legal drafting.

He expressed the hope that it would be finalised soon and operationalised once India secures a competitive advantage over its peer countries.

"US bilateral trade agreement's first tranche has been finalised and it is going through final contours, the legal drafting, and we hope to be able to finalise that soon and operationalise that once we get the competitive advantage over our peer countries," Goyal said here at an event.

He also said that the free trade agreement between India and the European Union will be inked in December and would come into force from February or March next year.

Later Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said that the negotiations on the US trade pact are moving in the right direction.

"Probably we are in a very good zone. We anticipate closing the deal and signing the deal at the earliest possible time," he told reporters here.

Agarwal added that the trade deal has to be signed when the overall tariff structure would be formalised in the US.

"So there is a parallel work being done in the US also to get back the tariff structure and based on some of the outcomes under (Section) 301, we will progress towards signing the deal at a mutually agreed time," he said.

Regarding the legal drafting of the pact, Agarwal said it is going on.

'Big items done', both sides very close to landing it: US envoy

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 15: US Ambassador to India, Sergio Gor, on Thursday said negotiations for a bilateral trade deal were moving at an "incredible pace", and the "big items are done", underlining that he was confident that both sides will get the pact through.

During an interactive session at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum here, Gor also echoed External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's assessment of the progress in the proposed India-US trade pact, saying "we are very close to landing it".

Asked about the status of the negotiations, Gor said, "I won't like to get into too many details at this stage, and let the ministers announce that. But in the grand scheme of things, big items are done."

"We're actively engaged... Within three weeks of arriving here, we announced a trade deal. The European Union trade deal took almost 20 years. So we're at an incredible pace, and I am confident that we will get it done," Gor said.

The India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was successfully concluded in January after nearly 20 years of negotiation.

"We have been at it for a year-and-a-half. We are at an incredible pace, I would say almost an unheard of pace... So I am confident that we will get it (the deal) done," Gor said.

India has maintained that both sides remain engaged for a mutually beneficial bilateral trade agreement.

The two sides continue to engage to iron out differences on the proposed deal, and negotiations are heading towards a "landing point", Jaishankar had said at an earlier session at the Forum, noting that the core fundamentals of the bilateral strategic partnership remained unchanged.

Jitendra Singh urges industry to become co-creators in India's technology journey

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Quick Read

New China-North Korea bridge opens after more than a decade of delays

AP

Beijing, Oct 15 : A new bridge linking China and North Korea opened Thursday after more than a decade of delay, signalling deeper ties between the two countries.

China's official Xinhua News Agency reported that a ceremony for the launch of the New Yalu River Bridge was held, and an on online video from state media outlet China News Service showed the bridge and trucks waiting on it adorned with the national flags of China and North Korea.

Beijing expected that the four-lane, 3-kilometre (1.8-mile) crossing, which connects the northeastern Chinese city of Dandong to the North Korean city of Sinuiju, would further promote economic, trade and "people-to-people" exchanges.

"The relations between China and North Korea have entered a new stage, embarking on a new chapter," Chinese Premier Li Qiang said in a video address at the ceremony, Xinhua reported.

Li said that the crossing would become a new landmark symbolising the two nations' traditional friendship. He hoped both sides would seize the opportunity of the opening to continue to enhance connectivity and explore potential for cooperation in border areas, Xinhua said.

Downtown Heroes FC beat SCFA 2–0 in Youth League U-18 match at TRC Turf Ground



KT News Desk

Srinagar Oct 15: Downtown Heroes FC defeated SCFA 2–0 in the final match of the Youth League U-18, played at the TRC Turf Ground, Srinagar, on Thursday.

Organised under the aegis of the Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council, the match showcased the talent and competitive spirit of young footballers from both sides.

The Youth League U-18 provided emerging footballers with a platform to demonstrate their abilities, gain valuable match experience, and develop their technical skills, teamwork, and competitive spirit. The competition also contributed to promoting grassroots football and nurturing young sporting talent across the region.

Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council, Tazayun Mukhtar, congratulated Downtown Heroes FC on their victory and appreciated SCFA for putting up a competitive fight. She also commended both teams for their efforts and sporting spirit.

The Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council remains committed to promoting football at the grassroots level and creating opportunities for young athletes to hone their skills and progress in the sport.

Saudi Arabia reports foiled missile strike on Medina amid regional developments



AP

Dubai, Oct 15 : The Saudi-led coalition fighting the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels said Thursday it has thwarted a missile attack on the holy city of Medina as well as another attack in the eastern part of the kingdom.

Meanwhile, an Israeli strike in Gaza killed one man, hospital officials said.

Here is the latest news from the Middle East on Thursday.

Houthis deny responsibility for new attack on holy city

The Saudi-led coalition confirmed in a statement that it intercepted and destroyed a cruise missile over the province of Medina, but notably did not assign blame for the attack.

The Houthis' military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree denied carrying out the attack. The rebel group previously pledged not to attack airports in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia.

Medina is where the Prophet Muhammad established the Muslim community, while Mecca is where the prophet was born and received his revelations. It's viewed as the holiest city in Islam.

The international airport in the capital, Riyadh, has suspended service because of Houthi attacks. Dozens of flights also were cancelled or delayed at Jeddah airport, according to Flightradar24, a flight tracking platform. Earlier Thursday, Saudi Arabia also said it destroyed a drone over Eastern province, a major oil-producing region.

The latest conflict between the Saudis and the Houthis began last month after the rebels seized key areas along the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a critical waterway for the transport of Gulf oil and other goods at the southern end of the Red Sea off Yemen. The Saudi-led coalition, backing forces aligned with Yemen's internationally recognised government, has been trying to retake them.

Deploying Turkish forces to help Saudis needs parliament approval

Turkiye's Defence Ministry said Thursday that a mutual defence pact between Turkiye, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, as well as any deployment of Turkish forces under the agreement, requires parliamentary approval.

In a statement, the ministry also indicated that no final decision had been made on the type of assistance Turkiye might provide to Saudi Arabia.

The three countries signed the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement in August, and Turkish officials say it is expected to be ratified by parliament in the coming days. Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and other officials have ruled out the deployment of combat troops, stressing that the pact is purely defensive.

Israel carries out deadly strike in Gaza

An Israeli strike north of Gaza City killed one man on Thursday morning, according to officials at Shifa Hospital.

Israel's military said it struck a "terrorist" in the area, without elaborating.

The strike came over a year after a ceasefire deal was reached between Israel and the Hamas militant group, a period during which Israel continued to launch deadly strikes on the enclave.

More than 1,500 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire since the ceasefire was reached in October last year, according to the territory's Health Ministry. Its figures are seen as generally reliable by UN agencies and independent experts. It doesn't give a breakdown of civilians and militants.

Syria sentences 5 over last year's coastal violence

A Syrian court on Thursday sentenced two people to death and three others to prison terms over their roles in last year's sectarian violence in the country's coastal region.

In March 2025, loyalists of ousted Syrian President Bashar Assad attacked members of the new government's security forces in areas where a large segment of the country's Alawite religious minority live. The government's counterinsurgency spiralled into widespread violence in which hundreds of civilians — most of them Alawites — were killed.

Two members of the pro-Assad groups were sentenced to death and a third to 12 years in prison. Two members of the security forces received prison terms.

EU-GCC meeting has been postponed

The European Union announced in a statement that the joint meeting with Gulf Cooperation Council members set for Oct. 24 in the Saudi capital has been pushed back.

No new date has been set for the gathering that would bring together leaders from the 27 EU economies and the Gulf states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

The EU did not explain why the meeting was being delayed, but the security situation in Riyadh remains uncertain following back-and-forth strikes between the Houthis and the Saudi-led coalition.

PM meets Asian Games medal winners, lauds their strong performance



PTI

New Delhi, Oct 15 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday met India's Asian Games medal-winners, including the gold-winning men's and women's cricket teams, at the Major Dhyan Chand Stadium here and was presented with memorabilia ranging from signed jerseys to a bow from 17-year-old archery sensation Kumkum Mohod.

The PM posed for pictures with the contingent that was accompanied by top officials of the sports bodies, including International Cricket Council Chairman Jay Shah.

"You have made 140 crore Indians proud. The biggest success is to make the tri-colour fly high. That's why your success is not just yours but it belongs to crores of our countrymen. I congratulate you on behalf of the entire country," the PM said in his address to the medal winners.

India won 85 medals at the games, including 21 gold.

"I especially want to congratulate our women athletes, they contributed 38 medals to our tally and 11 of those medals were gold," Modi said lauding the cricket teams, the hockey teams and the performance of archers, who won five gold medals.

Taiwan chipmaker TSMC explores Texas investment to expand production in US

AP

Hong Kong, Oct 15 :Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. is exploring potential investments in Texas to expand its chip production in the United States, the advanced chipmaker said after posting another record profit on strong artificial intelligence demand.

TSMC said during an earnings conference Thursday that it is open to collaborating with Elon Musk's planned "Terafab" chip manufacturing complex in Texas. TSMC, which produces over 90 per cent of the world's most cutting-edge chips, supplies to US technology giants include Nvidia and Apple and has pledged USD 265 billion of investments in building plants in Arizona, including USD 100 billion the company committed in July.

The company's earnings results are seen as a barometer for the world's AI development during a global scale-up in AI computing power. For the July-September quarter, the chipmaker reported a record 763.1 billion new Taiwan dollars (nearly USD 24 billion) in net profit, which was better than expected and up 69 per cent from the year before.

It lacked common sense: Ashwin questions India"s decision to drop Kuldeep

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 15 :Former India spinner R Ashwin has questioned the team management's decision to drop spinner Kuldeep Yadav from the playing eleven, saying it lacked common sense as his presence could have made a difference in the ongoing T20I series against the West Indies. Kuldeep played the first two matches in Lucknow and Ranchi before being left out for the next two games in Indore and Hyderabad. The left-arm wrist spinner returned figures of 2 for 33 in the opening match but conceded 53 runs in the Ranchi match, which India lost. India's bowling struggles continued in the fourth T20I in Hyderabad, where the West Indies scored 247 for 3 and went on to win by 24 runs after dismissing India for 223.

"It is very surprising because, on a ground where you expect to get some bounce, I know it has not always been a happy hunting ground for spinners. But the West Indies batters are struggling to pick his (Kuldeep) googly and leg-spin. So, if you are leaving Kuldeep out against them, it lacks a bit of common sense. It is very surprising because I think his presence could have made a difference of 15-20 runs," Ashwin said on his YouTube channel.

J&K Police to organise 240 sporting events this year: DGP

Says 2,000 children to be sent on Bharat Darshan tours

Rehan Qayoom Mir



Srinagar, Oct 15 : Jammu and Kashmir Police will organise 240 district-level sporting events this year, up from 144 last year, as part of its efforts to engage youth and steer them away from drug abuse, Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat said on Thursday.

Addressing the concluding ceremony of Jashn-e-Dal 2026 at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar, Prabhat said channelising the energy of young people into constructive activities was important in tackling the drug menace and narco-terrorism.

The DGP said sports were an important part of the police's civic action and public outreach programmes and helped promote discipline, teamwork and social harmony.

"Last year, we organised 144 sporting events with the support of the Government of India, while 240 events are being conducted this year at the district level," he said.

Secretary Tourism reviews facilities at RSGC Srinagar

KT News Desk



Srinagar Oct 15: Avny Lavasa, Secretary, Tourism Department, who is also the Chief Executive of Royal Springs Golf Course Srinagar, conducted her first review meeting at the Royal Springs Golf Course, Srinagar, to assess the overall functioning, operational efficiency, and maintenance of the facilities at the prestigious Golf Course.

During the visit, the Chief Executive, accompanied by the Secretary RSGC, and the allied team, undertook a comprehensive inspection of the golf course premises and its various facilities. The visit was aimed at taking stock of the existing arrangements, reviewing the efficiency of the overall setup, and assessing the functioning and upkeep of the facilities to ensure smooth and effective operations.

The Chief Executive visited different sections of the Golf Course to gain first-hand insight into the working of the golf course and the facilities being extended to members and visitors.

The interaction with the Secretary RSGC, and the concerned team provided an opportunity to review the existing operational arrangements and assess areas requiring attention for further improvement.

Secretary Tourism was apprised about the initiatives being taken to improve the Course, Club House, enrolment of new members and follow up action being taken on the decisions taken in the Board of Governors meeting of RSGC that was chaired by the Chief Minister on 2nd June, early this year.

The visit reaffirmed the importance of maintaining high standards of service, effective management, and the continued upkeep of infrastructure at Royal Springs Golf Course, which remains one of Srinagar's prominent tourism and recreational destinations.

