



CM Omar asks party colleagues to stop lobbying for ministerial berths

Says list finalised: 'don't knock on my or Farooq Sahib's door, stop sending WhatsApp messages'; meets LG Sinha at Lok Bhavan; cabinet expansion expected in next 2-3 days

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 24: Asking party colleagues to stop lobbying for ministerial berths ahead of the expected cabinet reshuffle and expansion within the next two to three days, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday said the list of ministers stands finalised after consultations with National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah, adding that there was "no scope" for further changes.

Talking to reporters after meeting Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Lok Bhavan here, Chief Minister Omar as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "We discussed the reshuffle. I requested the Lieutenant Governor to fix a time during the first two or three days of next week so that I can carry out certain changes and expansion in my Council of Ministers."

The Chief Minister said the schedule would be decided by the Lieutenant Governor, following which the cabinet expansion would be carried out.

Making it explicitly clear that the selection process has already been completed, the Chief Minister said there is no



need for anyone to approach him or Dr Farooq Abdullah seeking a ministerial berth. "The list has already been prepared after consultations with Dr Farooq Abdullah. There is no need for anyone to knock on Farooq Sahib's door, my door or anyone else's door. The decision regarding who will become a minister has already been taken," he said.

The Chief Minister said he had been receiving numerous WhatsApp messages, phone calls and detailed biodatas from people seeking ministerial positions. "I request my party colleagues to refrain from such

efforts," he added.

"Please do not send me WhatsApp messages, make phone calls or knock on doors. People are sending me their complete biodata as though I do not know them. I already know them. Decision has already been taken," he said.

CM Omar asked his colleagues to remain patient, adding that those selected for ministerial positions would get their opportunity within the next two or three days.

The Chief Minister said he had also met the Lieutenant Governor to enquire about his health following | [More on P6](#)



Workers and civic labourers cleaning Baba Demb (also known as the Brari Nambal lagoon), a historical freshwater body located in the heart of Srinagar. Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

World recognizing India as reliable partner: LG Sinha

Says vision of 'Viksit Bharat 2047' requires active participation of every citizen

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 24: Stating that vision of 'Viksit Bharat 2047' requires the active participation of every citizen, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, on Saturday said India is showcasing its capabilities across diverse sectors and is increasingly being recognised by the world as a reliable partner.

LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) paid rich



tributes to eminent litterateur Dr. Rahi Masoom Raza on the occasion of his birth centenary celebration event and highlighted his immense contribution to Indian literature and cinema.

In a message delivered for the commemorative programme organised in

Ghazipur, the Lieutenant Governor said, "Vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 requires the active participation of every citizen and the accelerated development of all the regions so that they can play a vital role in India's transformation."

"Today, India is demonstrating its capability in many fields, from space to digital public infrastructure and the world sees our country as a reliable partner. I want us to move forward with a collective resolve and a single goal to build an India that is developed, prosperous, strong, self-reliant, and technologically advanced."

He noted that Rahi's writings reflected | [More on P6](#)

STRANDED UMRAH PILGRIMS IN SAUDI

J&K Govt coordinating with MEA, says CM Omar

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 24: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has expressed concern over the Jammu and Kashmir pilgrims currently stranded in Saudi Arabia after undertaking Umrah, stating that the J&K Government is in active coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs to facilitate their safe and early return.

The Chief Minister reaffirmed the Government's commitment to taking all necessary measures in coordination with the concerned authorities to ensure the safe and expeditious return of the stranded pilgrims.

He also assured the pilgrims and their | [More on P6](#)

Police bust clandestine separatist module, 4 women among 6 held

'Investigations reveal Pak-based funding, use of females for anti-national agenda'

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Oct 24: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Saturday said that it arrested six people, including four women, for their alleged involvement in a clandestine module linked to the banned organisation Ittihad-ul-Muslimeen in

North Kashmir's Bandipora district

In a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), a police spokesman said that the investigations revealed suspected links of the accused with a Pakistan-based handler, prison-based coordination, covert | [More on P6](#)

Fresh snowfall in higher reaches

» Dry weather likely till Oct 31

» Gulmarg coldest at 1.6°C, Jammu hottest at 29.7°C

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Oct 24: The higher reaches of Kashmir received fresh light snowfall on Saturday, with Sinthan Top and Peer Ki Gali among the areas witnessing fresh snow, while the Meteorological Centre Srinagar has forecast generally dry weather across Jammu and Kashmir till October 31.

A brief spell of light rain is possible in a few districts on the afternoon of October

25, according to the weather department.

The forecast, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), also indicates generally cloudy conditions with the possibility of light rain in the plains and light snowfall in higher reaches at isolated places from November 1 to 5.

The minimum temperature in Srinagar settled at 6.6 degrees Celsius, 2.8 degrees above the seasonal normal, while the maximum temperature on Friday was recorded at 21.3 degrees Celsius, slightly above the normal of 21 degrees, the department's data showed.

Pahalgam recorded a minimum temperature of 2.6 degrees Celsius, two degrees above normal, while the tourist resort of Gulmarg registered a low of | [More on P6](#)

We are not enemies of country: Dr Farooq

Says J&K chose India in 1947 despite it being Muslim-majority region

Waris Fayaz

Baramulla, Oct 24: National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah on Saturday said that people of J&K have never said that they are not Indians and had chosen India in 1947 despite being a Muslim-majority region.

Addressing a party workers' convention here North Kashmir, Dr Farooq, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "We never said we are not Indians. We have always reiterated that we joined Gandhi's India, Nehru's India."

He said, "Jammu and Kashmir had chosen India at the time of Independence in 1947 despite being a Muslim-majority



region."

Dr Farooq said the people of Jammu and Kashmir wanted to live with dignity and enjoy their rights. "Region's constitutional status and political

future needs to be secured with collective efforts," he added.

"We are not enemies of the country, but want to develop alongside the nation," he said, urging | [More on P6](#)

Dr. Sajjan Singh Yadav is new J&K Chief Secretary

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 24: The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Saturday appointed Dr. Sajjan Singh Yadav, a 1995-batch IAS officer of the AGMUT cadre, as the new Chief Secretary of Jammu & Kashmir.

In an order, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the MHA posted him as new CS of J&K—the most prestigious bureaucratic position in the UT.

"With the approval of the competent authority, Dr. Sajjan Singh Yadav, IAS (AGMUT:1995), is hereby transferred from Delhi to Jammu & Kashmir and posted as Chief



Secretary, Jammu & Kashmir with effect from November 1, 2025, or from the date of joining," reads the order, a copy of which is in possession of KNO.

Dr. Sajjan Singh Yadav will replace Atal Dulloo, a 1989-batch IAS officer, who is scheduled to retire on October 31.

The appointment came as a surprise, as | [More on P6](#)

Man found dead



KNO Correspondent

Samba, Oct 24: A man was found dead inside an office room at the SIDCO Industrial Complex in Samba district on Saturday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the deceased was working at the Phase III of the SIDCO Industrial Complex, Samba.

He was found unconscious by fellow workers, who later informed the police. He was subsequently identified as Kamal Kumar, | [More on P6](#)

Srinagar readies for Kashmir Marathon with 2,000 runners

CM to flag off full marathon at 6:30 am, half marathon at 7:45 am | Traffic restrictions announced; assistance@103

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 24: Banners, hoardings and posters have transformed Srinagar's streets ahead of the Kashmir International Marathon, with roads along the route set and barricading completed as around 2,000 runners, including 73 foreign athletes from 12 countries, prepare to hit the streets on Sunday.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah will flag off the full marathon at 6:30 am, followed by the half marathon at 7:45 am, Director Tourism Kashmir Syed Qamar Sajjad said on Saturday, adding that



preparations for the event had been completed.

"The preparations are

complete. Tomorrow morning at 6:30 am, the flag-off of the full marathon will be done by

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. After that, at 7:45 am, the half marathon will be flagged off," Director Sajjad told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

He said efforts had been made to repair potholes along the route, complete barricading and improve the presentation of the starting and flag-off points to ensure the smooth conduct of the international sporting event.

A total of 1,807 runners have registered online, including 1,221 local participants, 513 domestic runners and 73 foreign athletes from 12 countries. The department

expects total participation to cross 2,000, with on-the-spot registration also open for those who missed the online deadline.

As per details, 1,416 runners had opted for the 21-kilometre half marathon, while 391 would compete in the 42.195-kilometre full marathon. The registrations included 1,614 male and 193 female participants.

The routes have been designed to showcase Kashmir's natural beauty and cultural heritage, with runners passing through beautiful stretches around Dal Lake, Boulevard Drive, Nishat | [More on P6](#)

Scooter hits woman to death

KNO Correspondent

Baramulla, Oct 24: A 45-year-old woman died after being hit by a scooter in the Malpora area of Sheeri in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Saturday.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the woman was injured after being hit by a scooter and was shifted to PHC Sheeri, where doctors declared her brought dead.

She was identified as Gulshan Begum (45), wife of Mohammad Ramzan Lone, a resident of Malpora, Sheeri.

Meanwhile, police have taken cognisance of the incident and a probe has been initiated. (KNO)

DC Srinagar, Principal GMC inspect 15-bedded additional NICU Block at Lal Ded Hospital

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR OCTOBER 24:- Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, along with the Principal, Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, Dr Iffat, on Saturday visited Government Lal Ded Hospital and inspected the functioning of the newly built additional 15-bed Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) block for new born babies established by the District Administration at a cost of Rs 75 lakh using convergence of funds available at district level.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, and Principal GMC Srinagar reviewed the functioning of the newly established facility, which has been created to augment the hospital's existing capacity and address the growing demand for specialised neonatal healthcare services, catering not only to patients from Srinagar district but also to newborns from across the Kashmir Division.

The Officers assessed the operational status of the additional NICU beds and reviewed the facility's role in strengthening the hospital's capacity to provide specialised medical care to newborns requiring intensive monitoring, treatment and support. The additional beds are aimed at improving the availability of critical neonatal care services for patients from Srinagar and other Districts of the Kashmir Division.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that



the establishment of the additional 15-bed NICU block at a cost of Rs 75 lakh marks an important step towards strengthening neonatal healthcare infrastructure at Lal Ded Hospital, one of the major healthcare institutions catering to expectant mothers and newborns from across the Kashmir Valley.

The DC added that the facility has been created to augment the hospital's existing neonatal care capacity and facilitate the provision of specialised medical services to newborns requiring intensive care. He also emphasised the

importance of strengthening healthcare infrastructure to ensure better access to essential medical facilities.

The Deputy Commissioner further stated that the District Administration is also set to establish another 15-bedded NICU block at JLNH Hospital Rainawari soon, further expanding the availability of specialised neonatal healthcare facilities in Srinagar. He underlined that the proposed facility is expected to supplement the existing healthcare infrastructure and enhance the capacity to cater to newborns requiring specialised

medical attention.

Earlier, the Principal, GMC Srinagar also highlighted the importance of additional 15 NICU beds at Lal Ded Hospital. She appreciated the continued support extended by the District Administration towards strengthening healthcare infrastructure and improving the availability of specialised medical facilities for newborns. She also highlighted the assistance provided by the District Administration in completing various infrastructure upgradation projects and supporting other developmental initiatives at GMC Srinagar. She noted that these efforts are contributing towards strengthening the overall institutional infrastructure and improving facilities for both staff and students, besides the patient at tertiary care hospitals.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz ul Aziz, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed, Administrator GMC Srinagar, Masarat Hashim, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending Engineer R&B, Tatheer Manzoor, SDM West, Seerat Baji, SDM East, Zubair Ahmad, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar, Medical Superintendent Lal Ded Hospital, Dr Muzafar, Executive Engineer, Mechanical Hospital Division, Executive Engineer R&B, Khalid Mehmood, Tehsildar South, Sajad Rasool Shah, besides other senior Officers of District Administration and Health Department were present on the occasion.

DC Baramulla launches Poster for Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament 2027



KT News Desk

BARAMULLA, OCTOBER 24: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, S.F Hamid, Saturday launched the official poster for the District-Level Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament 2027, being organised by MY Bharat Baramulla on November 3, 2026, at Government Degree College (GDC), Baramulla.

The district-level competition will be held on the theme "One Nation, One Election," providing a platform for young participants to express their views, engage in constructive debate and develop a deeper understanding of democratic processes.

The competition, as per an official statement, will be conducted at District, State and National level. Selected participants will have the opportunity to advance to the national level, with the final stage offering them an opportunity to reach the Parliament of India in New Delhi.

During the poster launch, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised the importance of youth participation in democratic processes and encouraged young people to actively engage in discussions on issues of national importance.

The event was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, District Information Officer, District Youth Officer MYBharat and other officials.

MY Bharat Baramulla has invited eligible youth to participate in the district-level event and contribute their perspectives on the theme through informed discussion and debate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change name and in my driving license bearing No: JK 1620230001073 from MOHD ASIF WANI TO MOHAMMAD ASIF WANI (as per aadhar card). If anybody having any objection in this regard he/ she may file the same before the concerned authority within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection shall be entertained.

NAME : MOHAMMAD ASIF WANI
S/o . AB AHAD WANI
R/o KACHAN
GANDERBAL

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

PUBLIC WORKS (R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA

Email: rb-awantipora@jk.gov.in

NO: T-1/EEA/9401-06

Dated: 24/10/2026

Extension Notice

Subject: -

1. Completion of Lane by tiling from the house of Gulzar Ah Bhat to Farooq Ah Malla Awantipora.

Reference: -

1. This office e-NIT No. 115/EEA/RNB of 2026-27/6004-14 Dated 08-09-2026.

The critical dates for the above noted Works are hereby extended as under:

1	Bid Submission End Date	30-10-2026 up to 4:00 P.M
2	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	31-10-2026 up to 12:00 P.M

All other terms & Conditions shall remain same as per above mentioned NIT.

Sd/-
Technical officer

DIPK-7043/26
DATED: 24-10-2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Awantipora

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

PUBLIC WORKS (R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA

Email: rb-awantipora@jk.gov.in

NO: T-1/EEA/9396-9400

Dated: 24/10/2026

Extension Notice

Subject: -

1. Macadamization of IR Charsoo.
2. Macadamization of Wuyan-Meej- Pampore Road.

Reference: -

1. This office e-NIT No. 145/EEA/RNB of 2026-27/9135-45 Dated 17-10-2026.

The critical dates for the above noted Works are hereby extended as under:

1	Bid Submission End Date	28-10-2026 up to 12:00 P.M
2	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	28-10-2026 up to 03:00 P.M

All other terms & Conditions shall remain same as per above mentioned NIT.

Sd/-
Technical officer

DIPK-7045/26
DATED: 24-10-2026

Sd/- Executive Engineer
R&B Division Awantipora

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR(UT)

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR SHEEP BREEDING
FARM HARDUSHIVA SOPORE

Short Term Quotation

Short term quotations are invited from interested contractors/firms for the work /activity Development of Land by Way of Earth Filling Including

Transportation and other allied Services at Sheep Breeding Farm Hardushiva Sopore during the year 2026-27 on the following terms and conditions.

1. The quotations should reach this Office by or before 27.10.2026(Tuesday) and shall be opened on same day/date at 1:00PM

2. The Total allocation for the work /activity is fixed Rs.1.001ac.

3. The rates should be quoted including of all taxes.

4. This Office will not provide any equipment/material/ labour for the said work/activity: the selected quotationer has to carry all the required equipment/material along with at the site.

5. The payment shall be made only after completion of the work/activity duly certified by the committee to be constituted for the purpose.

6. The interested contractors /firms can visit the Farm on any working day from 10.00AM to 4.30PM for inspection of the site.

7. This Office reserves the right to accept or reject any quotation/contract without assigning any reason thereof.

8. Any other condition deemed necessary shall be communicated on the spot.

Sd/-
Assistant Director,
Sheep Breeding Farm,
Hardushiva

DIPK-7047/26
DATED: 24-10-2026

VC LCMA inspects Dal Lake Shoreline, Pokhribal

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 24: Ahead of the third edition of the Kashmir Marathon, scheduled for October 25, 2026, Vice Chairman (VC), JKLCMA, Khurshid Ahmad Shah, visited key stretches of the Dal Lake shoreline from Dal Gate to Hazratbal, covering Lalit Ghat, SKICC backwaters, Nishat Basin, Habak, etc. to review the progress of cleanliness and upkeep measures undertaken by the Authority.

The Vice Chairman was accompanied by officers and field staff of the Authority during the visit. During the inspection, the Vice Chairman, as per an official statement, reviewed the cleanliness measures undertaken along the shoreline and adjoining areas. He expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved and appreciated the efforts of the concerned officers and field staff in ensuring that the lake-front areas had been properly cleaned and maintained ahead of the prestigious sporting

event. He emphasized that Dal Lake, one of Srinagar's most prominent landmarks and a major tourist attraction, should reflect the city's natural beauty and environmental commitment, particularly during events of national and international significance such as the Kashmir Marathon. He stressed that maintaining the cleanliness of the shoreline and its adjoining areas was essential to providing a pleasant environment for marathon participants, visitors and tourists. The Vice Chairman directed the concerned teams to sustain the cleanliness achieved along the inspected stretch through regular monitoring and timely intervention to prevent the accumulation of waste and litter. He underscored the importance of continued coordination between the officers and field staff to ensure that the lake-front remains clean and well maintained.

Later, the Vice Chairman visited Pokhribal to review the ongoing cleanliness works and assess the progress achieved by the field teams.

District Treasury Bandipora concludes 4-Day JKIFMS training programme

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 24: District Treasury Bandipora Saturday concluded a four-day training programme on the implementation of the JKIFMS e-Bill, e-Voucher, e-Receipt and e-Account framework at the Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat, Bandipora.

District Treasury Officer (DTO) Bandipora, Imtiyaz Ahmad, chaired the concluding session and emphasised the importance of effective implementation of digital financial systems to ensure transparency, accuracy and efficiency in government transactions.

The training, as per an official statement, held from October 21 to 24, witnessed participation from Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs), Dealing Assistants and accounts personnel from various departments.

Participants were provided practical guidance on e-Bill processing, three-tier authentication, e-signing mechanisms and other technical aspects of JKIFMS.

The DTO appreciated the cooperation of the District Administration and participating departments in ensuring the successful conduct of the programme.

National NQAS Assessment of AAM SC Kilhotran, AAM SC Paryote conducted in Doda

KT News Desk

DODA, OCTOBER 24: In a significant step towards strengthening the quality of primary healthcare services, the Physical National Assessment under the National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) was conducted at AAM Sub-Centre Kilhotran and AAM Sub-Centre Paryote in district Doda by external assessors from the National Health Systems Resource Centre (NHSRC), under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, GOI.

Upon their arrival at the respective health facilities, the external assessment teams were accorded a warm welcome by the facility staff. The staff expressed appreciation for the visit and extended full cooperation to the visiting assessors to ensure the smooth and successful conduct of the assessment process.

The two-member external

assessment team comprised Tarun Bhardawaj and Parvesh Sharma, who assessed the facilities against the prescribed NQAS parameters, focusing on various aspects of healthcare service delivery, patient safety, infection control, infrastructure, availability of essential medicines and equipment, maintenance of records and adherence to quality protocols.

The District Quality Assurance Unit (DQAU) Doda, accompanied the visiting assessment team throughout the assessment process and extended the necessary coordination and support to facilitate the smooth conduct of the exercise. The assessment reflects the sustained efforts of the Department of Health and Family Welfare Doda towards improving healthcare standards at the grassroots level and ensuring the delivery of safe, effective, patient-centred and quality healthcare services to the rural population.

Notice

I Gh Nabi Kana F/o Amreena Nabi R/o Court Road Badam Bagh Sopore Baramula Jammu & Kashmir 193201 do hereby declare that I have correction my daughters name from Ambreena Nabi to Amreena Nabi for all pur-poses. Including Aadhar card bearing Aadhar No 683787876816 Henceforth, She shall be known as Amreena Nabi

Notice

I Azan khurshid s/o Khurshid Ahmad Dar R/o Noor Bagh , Near Red door restaurant ,Green town by pass So-pore Baramula Jammu & Kashmir 193201 do hereby declare that I have correction my name from Mohammad Azan Dar to Azan Khurshid for all purposes. Including Aadhar card bearing Aadhar No 351350511248 Henceforth, I shall be known as Azan Khurshid

DC Shopian interacts with media persons

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 24: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh, Saturday interacted with media persons at the Mini-Secretariat, Shopian.

During the interaction, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the importance of constructive engagement between the district administration and the media in disseminating information about government schemes, developmental initiatives and public welfare programmes.

During the meeting, the President of the Media Association Shopian and other members, as per an official statement, put forth various demands, including the provision of a press club, besides other issues concerning the media fraternity.

The DC emphasised the need for close coordination between the district administration and the media fraternity to ensure the timely



dissemination of authentic information and effective highlighting of public issues.

He also underscored the importance of responsible journalism in highlighting public concerns, promoting transparency and accountability, and creating awareness about various government initiatives being implemented for the welfare of the people.

President of the Media

Association Shopian and other members appreciated the Deputy Commissioner's initiative of holding such interactive meetings, noting that these engagements help strengthen coordination between the district administration and the media fraternity and provide a platform to discuss issues of public interest.

They also shared their views and raised issues of public interest, which were discussed during the interaction.

The Deputy Commissioner assured continued cooperation and coordination with the media fraternity and reiterated the administration's commitment to strengthening engagement with media persons in the larger public interest.

Additional Deputy commissioner, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, DIO, Sajad Ahmad Shah, officials of Information Department Shopian and media persons in large numbers were present.

Tanvir Sadiq urges CS to submit regularisation report by Oct 31

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 24: National Conference (NC) chief spokesperson and Zadibal MLA Tanvir Sadiq on Saturday urged Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo to submit the pending report on daily wagers' regularisation by October 31 and send the file to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah before the dead-line.

"There is still time till the 31st. I request the Chief Secretary, who is the son of the soil, to send the regularisation file to the Chief Minister before the deadline so that the promise made to daily wagers can be fulfilled," Sadiq told reporters after reviewing developmental works in his Zadibal constituency.

The NC chief spokesperson said daily wagers and casual workers had approached him earlier in the day, adding that the Chief Secretary had been given six months to submit a report on their regularisation, but it was yet to be submitted.

"History will always see what you have done for your people. I think now is the time to submit that report before the 31st," he said, adding that those responsible for delaying the report would be answerable if the workers were forced to take to the streets.

During the interaction, Sadiq also reviewed developmental works and winter preparedness in Zadibal, stressing the need to complete pending projects before snowfall. He said Kashmir has a



working season of around six months and urged departments to take up pending works under the CAPEX budget, Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and other schemes on priority.

"I have requested every department to immediately talk to contractors and ensure that all works, whether under CAPEX, CDF or other schemes, are completed as soon as possible, before the snow starts," he said.

He added that roads, lanes, drains and interior areas needed improvement ahead of winter.

Sadiq said projects worth around Rs 100-150 crore were underway in the constituency and expressed satisfaction with

the progress of works in sectors including health, roads and other civic infrastructure.

On the possibility of cabinet expansion, he said the decision rested with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and the party leadership, adding that he was not in a position to comment on the matter.

"The Chief Minister has promised that he will do it and he will definitely do it," Sadiq said.

He also criticised the BJP, alleging that misleading claims were being made about development works in Srinagar and that some political leaders were taking credit for projects funded by the government—(KNO)

Put facts before people: Dar tells media



Waris Fayaz

Baramulla, Oct 24: Asking the media to present facts objectively while reporting on developments in the region, Agriculture Minister Javed Dar on Saturday said Jammu and Kashmir has faced numerous challenges since 2019, which needed to be highlighted through factual and balanced reporting.

Addressing National Conference (NC) workers' convention here in North Kashmir, Minister Dar referred to party President Dr Farooq Abdullah's remarks, saying the developments that had taken place in Jammu and Kashmir since 2019 were evident and should be presented before the public through factual reporting.

The Minister said the party convention was a response to those who claimed that the National Conference has "weakened and lost its political relevance."

"Those who say NC

stands weakened should open their eyes," Dar said, pointing to the presence of thousands of party workers at the convention.

He said the large gathering, along with the joining of new members, reflected the party's grassroots strength and the trust it continued to enjoy among sections of the public.

The Minister asserted that the National Conference re-mained a strong political force in Jammu and Kashmir, adding that the participation of party workers demonstrated its continued presence on the ground. On speculation surrounding a possible cabinet reshuffle and reactions from leaders who had been dropped, the Minister said the opposition relied on statements, while the National Conference believed in practical work.

He said the party's approach was evident to the people, adding that political statements alone could not be compared with work on the ground—(KNO)

Take effective action against OGWs, hybrid terrorists: IGP Kashmir

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 24: Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir Zone, Sujit Kumar, on Saturday directed officers to strengthen intelligence gathering and take effective action against Over-ground Workers (OGWs), hybrid terrorists and other elements inimical to peace and security.

In a statement, a police spokesman said the IGP Kashmir chaired a high-level meeting here in hybrid mode to review crime disposal, security preparedness and various policing measures across Kashmir Zone.

IGP Kumar stressed close monitoring of emerging security challenges and coordinated efforts to maintain peace and public order, the statement said.

The IGP Kashmir reviewed the progress of crime disposal and stressed the need for timely investigation and disposal of cases within the stipulated 60/90-day timelines under the relevant provisions of the new criminal laws (NCLs), it said, adding that IGP



Kumar also reviewed theft-related cases, recovery rates and measures to dismantle organised theft networks.

The meeting also focussed on winter preparedness, with particular emphasis on heating arrangements and the availability of essential facilities for police personnel deployed at police stations and other establishments, it said.

The IGP Kashmir stressed that adequate arrangements must be ensured for personnel performing duties under harsh winter conditions. He directed

officers to make police nakas more dynamic, effective and intelligence-driven while ensuring minimum inconvenience to the general public, the statement said, adding that Kashmir Police Chief also stressed on the need for strengthening inter-agency coordination and increased synergy on ground to enhance operational efficiency and address security concerns. Reviewing pending cases and cases stayed before courts, the IGP

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

JKAACL launches welfare scheme for artists, writers



Raja Syed Rather

Ganderbal, Oct 24: Secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL), Harvinder Kour on Saturday said the Academy has launched an 'Artists and Writers Welfare Scheme' to provide financial and other assistance to them.

Speaking at the fifth edition of Jashn-e-Manasbal, held at the Open Theatre in Manasbal, Kour said the scheme aims to support elderly, financially vulnerable and physically disabled artists and writers, besides families who have lost their breadwinners.

The event was organised by the Wular Manasbal Development Authority and Manasbal Dramatics in collaboration with JKAACL and the Department of Information

and Public Relations. Kour said the Academy has made provisions to assist deserving artists and writers, including support for their children's education.

"Artists and writers are ambassadors of our culture. We want to ensure that those facing financial difficulties do not feel neglected," she said.

She urged eligible artists and writers to approach the Academy and submit applications for assistance under the scheme.

Expressing concern over the declining participation of children in cultural programmes, Kour called upon organisers to actively involve the younger generation in such events.

"Our cultural heritage must be
Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Manasbal to emerge as adventure tourism hub: Dr Chisti



Raja Syed Rather

Ganderbal, Oct 24: Chief Executive Officer of Wular-Manasbal Development Authority (WMDA), Dr Ehsan-ul-Haq Chisti on Saturday said the authority is exploring adventure tourism activities, including rock climbing, paragliding, zip-lining and rope cycling, to transform Manasbal from a day-tourism destination into a major adventure tourism hub.

Speaking at the fifth edition of Jashn-e-Manasbal, held at the Open Theatre in Manasbal, Chisti said the authority is working to introduce new tourism activities while

prioritising the conservation and cleanliness of Manasbal Lake.

Chisti said a team of mountaineers recently visited the area to assess its potential for adventure tourism. "We are hopeful that rock climbing can be introduced on an experimental basis from the next tourism season. We are also exploring paragliding, zip-lining and rope cycling," he said.

Highlighting conservation measures, Chisti said the authority undertook dredging of Manasbal Lake last year after nearly 15 years and has brought around 6.5 lakh square metres of the surrounding area under solid waste collection

and disposal.

He said nearly 20 lakh gallons of water are drawn from the lake daily for drinking purposes, making its protection essential.

"Manasbal is not only a tourist destination but also an important source of drinking water and livelihood. Its conservation and preservation remain our top priorities," he said.

Chisti said several tourism assets that had remained closed or underutilised have been made functional through outsourcing arrangements.

He said the authority organised six to seven cultural events during the past year in collaboration with the Cultural Academy, besides performances involving the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala, and a translation workshop with Sahitya Akademi. The objective, he said, is to connect Manasbal's cultural heritage with tourism promotion.

Chisti said the initiatives are being undertaken under the vision of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and with the encouragement of his Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani.

He expressed hope that Manasbal would emerge as a prominent adventure tourism destination in Jammu and Kashmir and across the country.

The Jashn-e-Manasbal event was organised by the Wular-Manasbal Development Authority and Manasbal Dramatics in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages and the Department of Information and Public Relations—(KNO)

Polio threat persists despite India's virus-free status, experts warn

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Oct 24: Even as India continues to maintain its polio-free status, health experts have cautioned that the threat of the crippling disease persists due to the continued circulation of poliovirus in neighbouring countries, stressing the need for sustained vaccination coverage, effective surveillance and improved sanitation.

On the occasion of World Polio Day, observed annually on October 24, doctors said that maintaining high immunisation coverage among children remains crucial to preventing the reintroduction of the virus, which can cause irreversible paralysis and, in severe cases, death.

India was declared polio-free in 2014, marking a major milestone in its public health efforts. However, doctors said the country cannot afford to become complacent as the virus continues to circulate in some parts of the world, leaving the possibility of imported infections.

They said poliomyelitis, commonly known as polio, is a highly contagious viral disease that primarily affects children under five years of age. The virus can invade the nervous system and cause permanent paralysis within hours in severe cases.

"Polio is a highly infectious disease caused by the poliovirus. It spreads mainly through the faecal-oral route, particularly when a person consumes food or water contaminated with the faeces of an infected individual. The virus can spread rapidly in communities where sanitation and hygiene practices are inadequate," doctors said.

Dr Ab Rashid Bhat, a doctor at the Directorate of Health Services Kashmir (DHSK) that even a single confirmed case of polio can trigger serious public health concerns, making continuous surveillance and vaccination essential. He said the poliovirus multiplies in the intestine and is subsequently shed through faeces, potentially contaminating the surrounding environment and exposing others to infection.

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Paddy conversion to orchards accelerates

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Oct 24: High-density apple cultivation is rising across Kashmir, with more orchardists switching to modern, high-yielding varieties for better returns, higher productivity, and lower fertiliser and pesticide costs.

The growing popularity of this method continues to prompt farmers to remove old apple and almond trees and prepare additional land for high-density plantations. In some areas, farmers are also increasingly converting agricultural land traditionally used for paddy cultivation into apple orchards, reflecting a shift in farming practices driven by the prospect of higher earnings.

Fruit growers in Kashmir are showing greater interest in imported apple varieties that can accommodate more plants in a smaller area and begin producing commercially within a shorter period compared to conventional orchards. The

transition is being driven by the perceived economic advantages of high-density plantations, which allow growers to make more efficient use of available land while potentially reducing the cost of crop management.

The Jammu and Kashmir government introduced a scheme in 2016 to promote high-density apple cultivation, offering financial assistance to growers seeking to replace old and less productive orchards with modern plantations.

Under the scheme, eligible farmers are provided a 50 per cent subsidy for establishing high-density orchards, subject to departmental assessment and prescribed conditions.

The Horticulture Department also provides technical guidance regarding site selection, plantation layout, irrigation and other essential aspects of orchard management.

An official from the Horticulture Department said that the scheme was intended to help



growers modernise their orchards and improve productivity. "After assessing the site, its suitability and the availability of irrigation facilities, financial assistance is provided to eligible growers for establishing high-density plantations. The objective is to encourage scientific cultivation and help farmers obtain better returns from their land," the official said.

He said the estimated cost of establishing a high-density orchard on one kanal of land was around ₹1.60 lakh, of which the government provides ₹80,000 as subsidy, while the beneficiary contributes the remaining amount. High-density plantations require proper planning and regular maintenance, with irrigation being one of the most important components, he added.

According to horticulture officials, while traditional orchards generally accommodate

Continued on
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Seven Years Without Service Recruitment Rules

Repeated Assurances, Missed Deadlines And No Accountability In J&K's Health Department

Vishav Sharma

The prolonged non-finalization of Service Recruitment Rules (SRRs) for Non-Gazetted Employees working in the five New Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) of Rajouri, Doda, Kathua, Baramulla and Anantnag has become a serious question of administrative accountability, employee welfare and governance in Jammu and Kashmir. Since 2019, employees have been waiting for a clearly defined service structure, regular Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) proceedings and legitimate opportunities for career progression. Nearly seven years have passed, yet their professional future remains uncertain. The question is no longer simply when the rules will be finalized; it is who will be held accountable for this prolonged delay and the resulting loss of career opportunities.

Since 2019, six IAS officers have reportedly held charge as Secretary or the corresponding senior administrative head of the Health and Medical Education (H&ME) Department at different times. Despite successive changes in administrative leadership, the issue of finalizing the Service Recruitment Rules for Non-Gazetted Employees of the five New GMCs remains unresolved. Every officer entrusted with the responsibility of leading the department is expected to review pending matters, remove procedural obstacles and ensure timely decisions. A change in administrative leadership cannot become a permanent excuse for institutional inaction. The Government must explain what concrete steps were taken during these respective tenures and why this crucial matter has remained pending for so long.

What makes this delay even more concerning is that 30 September 2026 was publicly presented as the deadline for finalizing the Service Recruitment Rules. According to the statements and communications cited by the employees, the Information and Public Relations Department of the J&K Government announced this deadline through its official social media communication. The former Commissioner Secretary of the H&ME Department also reportedly conveyed the same deadline to Daily Excelsior. The Health Minister likewise assured that the rules would be finalized by 30 September, while Chief Minister Omar

Abdullah reportedly stated before the media that the rules were at the final stage and could be issued at any time.

These assurances naturally created expectations among thousands of affected employees that the long-pending matter would finally reach its conclusion. However, a publicly announced deadline is meaningful only when it is followed by an actual decision and publication of the rules. If the deadline was missed, the Government owes the employees a clear explanation. What remained pending despite the repeated assurances? Which procedural or administrative obstacles prevented publication? Who was responsible for ensuring compliance with the deadline? And why has no transparent account of the delay been presented to the affected workforce? When the Government itself communicates a deadline, accountability for its implementation must also be taken seriously.

The disparity in career progression between Gazetted and Non-Gazetted Employees has further intensified the grievances of the affected workforce. While Gazetted Employees have reportedly received three rounds of promotions or promotional advancements since 2019, Non-Gazetted Employees continue to face career stagnation amid the absence of finalized Service Recruitment Rules and a clearly established promotional framework. This situation raises serious questions about administrative priorities, fairness and equal opportunities within the same healthcare institutions. Why have the career prospects of one category progressed while another continues to struggle for the basic service framework necessary for promotion?

The consequences of this administrative delay are not confined to the absence of promotions. Career stagnation can affect

professional motivation, seniority-related progression, eligibility for higher positions and long-term financial benefits. Where promotions and higher pay levels have been delayed because of the absence of applicable rules, eligible employees may have legitimate grounds to seek examination of consequential benefits under the relevant service regulations. The administration must assess whether the prolonged delay has caused avoidable financial loss or the loss of promotional opportunities and determine what corrective measures are legally permissible. Employees should not be left to bear the consequences of administrative inaction without a transparent examination of their grievances.

The damage may also extend to aspiring candidates seeking permanent government employment. According to information available to the employees, the first recruitment undertaken through the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) for the five New GMCs took place in 2019, and no subsequent recruitment advertisement for these institutions' Non-Gazetted posts has been issued since then. If the absence of finalized rules has prevented the identification, structuring or advertisement of permanent vacancies, the Government must explain why this essential administrative requirement has not been completed in nearly seven years.

The issue also extends to GMC Handwara and GMC Udhampur, where the absence of the requisite Service Recruitment Rules is reportedly creating obstacles to advertising permanent posts for Non-Gazetted Employees. These developing medical institutions require properly structured staffing arrangements to function effectively. Delays in establishing recruitment rules can hinder workforce planning, delay the filling of sanctioned vacancies and deny

eligible candidates opportunities to compete for government employment. The H&ME Department must clarify the precise status of the rules for these institutions and establish a definite timeline for resolving the outstanding issues.

This raises an uncomfortable but unavoidable question: what has the H&ME Department been doing since 2019, despite six senior IAS officers reportedly holding charge during this period? How can such an essential matter remain unresolved while existing employees face career stagnation and aspiring candidates wait for permanent recruitment opportunities? The issue is not to prejudice the responsibility of any individual officer; it is to demand an evidence-based explanation of the administrative process, the decisions taken, the obstacles encountered and the reasons for the prolonged delay. The department must account for the time consumed and demonstrate what concrete action is being taken to bring this matter to a conclusion.

Accountability must be examined at every relevant level, including the officers who held charge of H&ME, the officials responsible for drafting and processing the rules, the departments involved in administrative and legal vetting, and the political and ministerial leadership responsible for oversight. The official file history must establish where delays occurred and whether any negligence or unjustified inaction warrants action under the applicable rules. Repeated changes in leadership, procedural explanations and missed deadlines must not be allowed to obscure institutional responsibility.

The Government of Jammu and Kashmir must now move beyond assurances and publish the Service Recruitment Rules without further avoidable delay. It must

provide a transparent explanation for missing the publicly announced 30 September 2026 deadline, clarify the status of the rules for all affected medical colleges, initiate due DPCs and promotional proceedings, and examine admissible consequential benefits for affected employees. A review of the entire process since 2019 is necessary to identify the bottlenecks, establish responsibility wherever warranted and prevent further delays.

As State President of the All India Registered Nurses Federation (AIRNF), Jammu and Kashmir UT Committee, I believe this issue is much bigger than the publication of a government document. It concerns the dignity and professional future of serving employees, the employment prospects of aspiring candidates and the administrative efficiency of Jammu and Kashmir's public healthcare system. Seven years represent a substantial portion of an employee's working life. Lost opportunities for timely career progression and recruitment cannot simply be dismissed as routine administrative delays.

AIRNF demands immediate publication of the Service Recruitment Rules, a transparent review of the seven-year delay, initiation of due promotional proceedings, examination of admissible consequential benefits and a clear timeline for permanent recruitment in the affected medical colleges. The Government must explain why its publicly communicated deadline was not met and establish accountability wherever the official record warrants it.

The question before the Government is straightforward: when the Information and Public Relations Department, the former Commissioner Secretary, the Health Minister and the Chief Minister have all reportedly indicated that the rules would be finalized by 30 September 2026 or were at the final stage, why are employees still waiting, and who will answer for seven years of delay?

The employees and job aspirants of Jammu and Kashmir deserve more than assurances. They deserve a decision, a deadline that is honoured, and accountability for administrative failure.

The writer is State President, All India Registered Nurses Federation (AIRNF), Jammu & Kashmir UT Committee

Agri-Voltaics: Powering India's Farms, Growing A Sustainable Future

Press Information Bureau

At the intersection of agriculture and renewable energy lies an innovative approach to making farmland more productive. Agri-voltaics combines crop cultivation with solar power generation on the same land, enabling farmers to diversify their incomes while contributing to India's clean energy transition. By bringing food production and solar electricity together, it offers a promising pathway towards efficient land use, greater farm resilience and sustainable rural prosperity.

Solar Power for Agri Farms and a Cleaner Future

Agriculture plays a vital role in India's economy, serving as a key source of livelihood for approximately 46.1 per cent of the population. The Gross Value Added (GVA) of the Agriculture and Allied Sector is estimated to reach Rs. 52.08 lakh crore in 2025-26. Sustaining this vital sector requires reliable and affordable energy for irrigation and other farming operations. Solar power can help meet these everyday needs while advancing India's clean energy transition.

India's vast agricultural land offers significant prospects to integrate solar energy with farming. According to Land Use Statistics for 2023-24, the country's reported area covers 306.96 million hectares, of which approximately 55 per cent is agricultural land. The net sown area stands at 138.99 million hectares, while the gross cropped area covers 217.88 million hectares. This extensive land base offers opportunities to generate solar electricity alongside agricultural production. Farmers can use solar power to operate irrigation pumps, reduce dependence on conventional electricity and potentially supplementary revenue by supplying surplus electricity to the grid. For instance, solar-powered irrigation pumps can provide daytime power for watering crops while reducing reliance on diesel-powered alternatives.

Agri-voltaics takes this integration further by bringing together crop cultivation and solar electricity generation on the same land. Solar panels installed above or between crop rows allow electricity generation alongside continued

farming. Depending on the crop, panel design and local conditions, partial shading may also help reduce soil moisture loss. This approach can improve land-use efficiency, diversify farm earnings and strengthening both food and energy security. Through research, field demonstrations and policy development, India is exploring ways to adapt agri-voltaics to diverse agricultural conditions. It offers a promising pathway to align farmers' livelihoods with India's wider renewable energy ambitions.

The 7th AGRIVOLTAICS WORLD CONFERENCE, being held in New Delhi on 21-23 October 2026 under the theme "Powering the Global South," serves as a global platform to advance the integration of solar energy and agriculture. Convening stakeholders from industry, research, policy and finance, the conference focuses on emerging opportunities in agri-voltaics to promote efficient land use, strengthen agricultural sustainability and support the transition towards a low-carbon economy. Read more about 7th Agri-Voltaics World Conference

Agri-voltaics: Bridging Agriculture and Renewable Energy

Agri-voltaics, also known as agrisolar or dual-use solar, maximises land-use efficiency, provides shade for crops and creates additional benefits for farmers.

Design and Functioning of Agri-voltaic Systems

An agri-voltaic system integrates agricultural infrastructure with solar installations, adapted to local farming conditions. The technology operates through various key elements:

Elevated Solar Structures: Instead of placing solar panels directly on the ground, they are mounted on structures high enough to let sunlight and rain reach the crops below. These elevated solar panels for agriculture also allow farmers to move their equipment underneath without any trouble.

Partial shading: The panels provide shade, which helps protect crops from extreme heat and reduces water evaporation from the soil. This creates a cooler, more stable environment for plants to grow, especially in hot or dry regions.

Dual Land Productivity: Agri-voltaics

optimises land use by integrating crop cultivation or livestock rearing with solar power generation, supplying electricity for farm activities and creating an additional revenue stream through surplus power sales to the grid.

Agri-voltaics Development in India

As of August 2025, India had 36 operational agri-voltaics projects with an installed capacity of 37.54 megawatts, alongside 10 pilot projects under development. These Projects span diverse agroclimatic regions and include elevated structures, interspace layouts and tracking systems, reflecting India's evolving approach to integrating solar power generation with agricultural production.

India's Agri-voltaic Potential

India holds significant potential for agri-voltaics. Estimates place the country's agri-voltaic potential between 3,000 GW and nearly 14,000 GW, highlighting the scale of opportunity at the intersection of agriculture and renewable energy. Agri-voltaic systems can also create profits diversification for farmers. In some cases, annual earnings could rise from around 60,000 per acre to over 1 lakh per acre.

Scope for Agri-voltaics Developments

Land Suitability: The GIS-based national screening identified 47.35 million hectares of "restricted cropland" suitable for AgriPV after applying environmental, agronomic, and technical filters, reflecting a conservative, climate-resilient land base.

Crop Compatibility: Fruits, vegetables, spices and medicinal plants offer promising options for cultivation alongside solar installations.

High-potential states include Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh, which collectively account for nearly 50 per cent of India's estimated AgriPV power generation potential, driven by favourable combination of cropland availability, solar resource, and agro-climatic conditions.

Moderate potential is observed in Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Telangana, Bihar, and West Bengal.

The southern, western, and central regions

exhibit the most favourable combination of solar irradiance, land availability, and horticultural intensity for large-scale deployment.

Government Initiatives in Agri-voltaics Development

The Government of India has undertaken a range of policy, research, technology development, and implementation measures to advance agri-voltaics adoption and expansion across the country.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM KUSUM): Launched in February 2019, the scheme encourages solar energy adoption in agriculture, reduces dependence on diesel and creates opportunities for farmers to diversify their earnings. It envisages central financial assistance of approximately 34,422 crore. It also enables decentralised solar power generation and solarisation of agricultural pumps, creating avenues of development for solar energy integration with farming. PM KUSUM Scheme

Centre of Excellence on Agri-voltaics: The National Institute of Solar Energy, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research's Indian Agricultural Research Institute, has established a CoE for agri-voltaics research, demonstration and capacity building. It has undertaken pilot projects, including a 100-kilowatt agri-voltaic system at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute.

India Agri-voltaics Alliance

The India Agri-voltaics Alliance (IAA), anchored by the National Solar Energy Federation of India (NSEFI), is a multi-stakeholder platform advancing the dual use of land for solar energy generation and agriculture. Launched in 2023, the Alliance has grown to over 40 members and works with government ministries and industry stakeholders to advance agri-voltaics through policy advocacy, research and on-the-ground implementation. It develops knowledge resources, promotes pilot projects and supports scalable business models to improve land productivity, diversify farmer incomes and strengthen rural energy access.

State-specific Initiatives

Several states are facilitating solar energy in agriculture through region-specific schemes.

Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Vahini Yojana 2.0, Maharashtra: The scheme drives solar power generation through 16,000 megawatts of solar projects across approximately 35,000 acres of government and private land to support electricity supply to agricultural consumers.

Kisan Suryoday Yojana, Gujarat: Expands solar energy utilisation to meet farmers' electricity needs by providing daytime power supply for agricultural activities, with a planned supply window of up to 16 hours daily, from 5:00 AM to 9:00 PM, through the phased commissioning of solar and other non-conventional energy generation plants.

Surya Raitsha Scheme, Karnataka: The scheme advances solar-powered irrigation pumps and allows farmers to earn from surplus electricity. Solar pumps can help farmers access energy for watering their crops while reducing dependence on diesel-powered pumps.

The Government of India, alongside state governments, is advancing the use of solar energy in agriculture through policy measures and targeted programmes. These efforts are shaping India's agri-voltaics landscape by creating opportunities for the co-location of solar power generation and agricultural production.

Powering Prosperity Through the Convergence of Farms and Clean Energy

Agri-voltaics offers India an opportunity to strengthen agricultural livelihoods while advancing environmental sustainability. By combining food production with renewable energy generation, it can offer scope for more efficient land use, conserve water under suitable conditions and create greater financial resilience. The Government of India's initiatives, including PM-KUSUM and proposed measures to expand agri-voltaics, reflect efforts to connect rural development with clean energy goals. As implementation grows, locally suitable designs, scientific research and farmer participation will be essential to balance agricultural productivity with energy needs. This approach can contribute to a more resilient and sustainable future for India. Greater financial resilience

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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Govt committed to strengthen road connectivity across rural, remote areas of J&K: Speaker A R Rather

Inaugurates 5 km Kutbal-Yousmarg road, villages

■ KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, OCTOBER 24: In a major boost to connectivity and tourism in the area, Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, who is also MLA Charar-i-Sharief, Saturday inaugurated the much-awaited 5 kilometre Kutbal-Yousmarg road, turning a long-cherished dream of residents of dozens of villages into reality.

The newly inaugurated road, as per an official statement, is expected to significantly improve connectivity between the villages and the popular tourist destination of Yousmarg. Besides facilitating the movement of local residents, the road is likely to give fresh impetus to tourism-related activities and create new em-



ployment and livelihood opportunities for local youth.

Speaking on the occasion, Abdul Rahim Rather reiterated the government's commitment to strengthen the road connectivity across rural and

remote areas of Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasized that improved road infrastructure is vital for ensuring equitable development, facilitating access to essential services and unlocking the tourism and

economic potential of under-served areas.

He directed the concerned authorities to maintain a focused approach towards addressing the connectivity-related issues and ensuring timely completion of road projects while adhering to prescribed quality standards. He stressed that development initiatives must translate into tangible benefits for the people, particularly those residing in far-flung and rural areas.

Expressing gratitude to the Speaker, the residents said the project had been a long-pending demand of dozens of villages which has come to reality. They said improved connectivity with Yousmarg would open new avenues for tourism, trade and employment in the region.

DC Kathua reviews Diwali arrangements, stresses vigilance, preparedness

■ KT NEWS DESK

KATHUA, OCTOBER 24: Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rajesh Sharma, Saturday chaired a meeting at the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex to review arrangements for the safe and smooth celebration of Diwali across the district.

It was informed during the meeting that a multi-departmental committee would be constituted to conduct market inspections, check the rates and quality of food items and prevent food adulteration. The DC also directed the Fire and Emergency Services Department to conduct a comprehensive fire safety audit of firecracker vendors to ensure strict compliance with prescribed safety norms and rule out any lapses.

The DC stressed the need for close coordination among departments to ensure public safety, particularly in crowded markets and other vulnerable locations. He directed the Fire and Emergency Services Department to keep men and machinery in a state of readiness to respond promptly to emergencies



and ensure adequate fire safety measures at public places.

The Chief Medical Officer was directed to ensure the availability of medical staff and emergency healthcare services during the festive period. The Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDCL) was asked to ensure uninterrupted power supply and take necessary precautions to prevent electrical hazards.

Reviewing security arrangements and traffic management, the DC directed the concerned officers to ensure effective crowd management, smooth vehicular

movement and adequate safety measures in both urban and rural areas. The concerned departments were also directed to ensure the availability of essential commodities during the festive season.

Emphasising public awareness, the DC called for sensitising people about fire prevention, safe celebration practices and timely reporting of emergencies. He directed all concerned departments to remain vigilant and work in close coordination to ensure safe and peaceful Diwali celebrations across the district.

DC Kishtwar flags off exposure visit for Children with Special Needs

■ KT NEWS DESK

KISHTWAR, OCTOBER 24: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma Saturday flagged off a contingent of 40 Children with Special Needs (CWSN) of district Kishtwar from the Mini Secretariat, New DC Office Complex for a one-day exposure visit and sports event to Gulabgarh, Sub-Division Paddar. The programme, as per an official statement, has been organised by the School Education Department Kishtwar under the supervision of Chief Education Officer Sanjay Dogra, under the Inclusive Education component of Samagra Shiksha J&K district Kishtwar.

The initiative aims to provide children with special needs opportunities for participation, recreation, social interaction and holistic development. The contingent, comprising 40 students accompanied by their parents, is being led by District Nodal Officer (DNO) Sanjay Parihar. During the event at Gulabgarh, students will participate in various sporting activities and competitions, including Cricket, Carrom, Chess and Badminton. The initiative reflects the commitment of the School Education Department Kishtwar towards promoting inclusive education and ensuring equal opportunities for children with special needs to participate in educational, recreational and extracurricular activities. The exposure visit is also expected to foster confidence, teamwork, sportsmanship and social inclusion among the participating students.

DC Rajouri reviews RDD Sector, directs expediting of tendering



■ KT NEWS DESK

RAJOURI, OCTOBER 24: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Dr. Devansh Yadav, Saturday reviewed the Rural Development Department (RDD) sector and directed the concerned officers to expedite tendering and execution of developmental works under the District CAPEX Budget, UT CAPEX and VB-G RAM G. Emphasising the need for visible and tangible outcomes at the grassroots level, the DC stressed the creation of durable community assets, including sports stadiums, playgrounds, bowalis and other infrastructure aimed at improving rural amenities and providing better facilities to the public.

The DC directed the concerned officers to expedite the tendering process for material components under VB-G RAM G and ensure that procedural formalities are completed without further delay to facilitate timely commencement and execution of approved works as work-

ing season was being reduced and some areas of district were snow bound.

Reviewing works under the District CAPEX Budget and UT CAPEX, he stressed the need for close monitoring of tendering, allotment and execution, utilisation of available funds as per time lines of the Finance Department. He directed the officers to ensure that developmental works are taken up in accordance with approved plans and completed within stipulated timeframe without compromising quality of work.

The DC called for coordinated efforts among the concerned officers and field functionaries to accelerate rural development and ensure that government-funded projects translate into visible improvements in the lives of people.

The Chief Planning Officer, Maqsood Ahmed Assistant Commissioner Development, Sheraz Chowhan; all Block Development Officers (BDOs), Assistant Executive Engineers (AEs) and other concerned officers attended the meeting.

DLSA Kulgam organises mega legal awareness programme on POCSO Act 2012

Justice Sanjeev Kumar stresses child protection, privacy, timely justice under POCSO Act

■ KT NEWS DESK

KULGAM, OCTOBER 24: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Kulgam, under the aegis of the Jammu and Kashmir Legal Services Authority, organised a Mega Legal Awareness Programme on the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, at the Auditorium Hall of Government Degree College, Kulgam.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Judge, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, and Executive Chairman, Jammu & Kashmir Legal Services Authority, presided over the programme as the Chief Guest. The programme, as per an official statement, commenced with the registration of participants and the arrival of dignitaries, followed by a Guard of Honour and the rendition of the National Song and the National Anthem.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, in his address, emphasised the need to strengthen child protection mechanisms and ensure the effective implementation of the POCSO Act, 2012.

Stressing the importance of safeguarding the privacy, dignity and emotional well-being of child victims, he called for their concerns to be handled with utmost sensitivity at every stage. He also encouraged girls to come forward and raise their voices against abuse without fear or hesitation, underscoring the responsibility of the legal system and concerned institutions to ensure justice.

Furthermore, he highlighted the need to create awareness about the provisions of the



Act in educational institutions and among officers and departments dealing with such cases and called for prompt action, better coordination among stakeholders and a child-friendly approach to ensure effective protection of children and timely delivery of justice.

Addressing the gathering, Aijaz Ahmed Khan, Principal District and Sessions Judge (Chairman, District Legal Services Authority), Kulgam, provided a detailed overview of the POCSO Act, 2012, highlighting its key provisions and the importance of ensuring effective legal protection for children and also underscored the collective responsibility of all stakeholders to stand by victims and extend the necessary assistance throughout the process.

This was followed by an address by Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam who emphasised the importance of quality education, proper guidance and adequate exposure in ensuring the safety and overall development of children. He stressed that the provisions of the POCSO Act, 2012, must be implement-

ed more effectively on the ground. Further emphasising a victim-centric approach, he called for ensuring that victims are not subjected to pressure or intimidation and receive appropriate support during difficult circumstances.

The technical sessions featured presentations by experts from different fields. Dr. Nadiya Muzaffar, Assistant Professor Sociology at Government Degree College Kulgam, spoke about child-friendly procedures and the rights of child victims under the Act. Subsequently, Mohd. Ayoub Rather, Dy. SP DAR and Nodal Officer of the Special Juvenile Police Unit, Kulgam, elaborated on the specific roles and responsibilities of the police and special courts in dealing with cases involving offences against children.

Adil Mushtaq Laway, Legal-cum-Probationary Officer at the District Child Protection Unit, Kulgam, highlighted the importance of mandatory reporting of sexual offences against children and the role of child protection mechanisms in safeguarding their rights.

DC Kishtwar flags off exposure visit for Children with Special Needs

■ KT NEWS DESK

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social interaction and holistic development.

The contingent, comprising 40 students accompanied by their parents, is being led by District Nodal Officer (DNO) Sanjay Parihar. During the event at Gulabgarh, students will participate in various sporting activities and competitions, including Cricket, Carrom, Chess and Badminton.

The initiative reflects the commitment of the School Education Department Kishtwar towards promoting inclusive education and ensuring equal opportunities for children with special needs to participate in educational, recreational and extracurricular activities.

The exposure visit is also expected to foster confidence, teamwork, sportsmanship and social inclusion among the participating students.

Div Com Jammu reviews developmental scenario of Ramban

Directs timely completion of projects

■ KT NEWS DESK

RAMBAN, OCTOBER 24: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Vikas Kundal, Saturday undertook his maiden visit to District Ramban and reviewed the overall developmental scenario, progress of ongoing infrastructure projects and implementation of various government schemes across key sectors.

He chaired a comprehensive review meeting with district officers and directed all concerned departments and executing agencies to expedite developmental works, adhere to prescribed timelines and maintain the highest standards of quality and accountability.

Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan, Additional SP Mujeeb-ur-Rehman, POICDS, ACR, SDMs, ACD, CPO and other district and sectoral officers attended the meeting.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner, as per an official



statement, presented a detailed overview of the district's developmental progress through a PowerPoint presentation, highlighting physical and financial achievements, the status of major infrastructure projects, implementation of welfare schemes and issues requiring inter-departmental coordination.

The Divisional Commissioner reviewed the progress of the

Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to accelerate the pace of work and complete all ongoing works within the stipulated timelines.

He also undertook a comprehensive review of the functioning and progress of various departments, including Public Works (Roads and Buildings), PMGSY, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Jal Shakti, Power Development, Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, Industries and Commerce, Labour and other concerned sectors.

Reviewing the District Capex Plan for 2026-27, the Divisional Commissioner directed all departments to achieve 100 per cent of their physical and financial targets within the stipulated period. He assessed the bottlenecks affecting implementation and issued necessary directions for their prompt

resolution, stressing improved inter-departmental coordination, accountability, efficient utilisation of resources and regular monitoring of progress.

He also reviewed road connectivity projects being executed under the PWD and PMGSY schemes, aimed at strengthening the road network and connecting unconnected habitations. The concerned officers were directed to expedite execution, resolve pending issues related to clearances and other impediments, and ensure the timely completion of public infrastructure projects.

During the visit, the Divisional Commissioner inspected key ongoing developmental projects, including the Multi-Storey Bus Stand Ramban, being constructed at an estimated cost of 22.43 crore. He took stock of the progress of construction and stressed the importance of completing the project within the prescribed timeline while maintaining quality standards.

Amit Shah reviews Delhi Police's preparedness for protests, law & order

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 24: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday reviewed Delhi Police's preparedness to handle large gatherings and other law-and-order readiness, meeting top officers and Chief Minister Rekha Gupta.

The meeting came on the heels of a series of protests rocking the national capital -- first against ex-education minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the NEET fiasco, then for the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, who battles allegations of presiding over a fudged Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and deletion of lakhs of voters.

The meeting focused on devising a strategy to manage protests without escalation, strengthening intelligence gathering and improving police-public engagement, police sources said.

Shah reached the Delhi Police headquarters on Jai Singh Road around 3 pm and was joined by Gupta, Police Commissioner Anurag Kumar, special and joint commissioners, deputy commissioners of police, and senior officers from the Special Cell and Crime Branch.

The meeting lasted over three hours, sources said.

In a post on X, the home minister's office said, "Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri @AmitShah today chaired a security review meeting at the Delhi Police Headquarters. Delhi CM Smt. @gupta_rekha and senior officials were present at the meeting."

Sources said the review examined the sequence of events during protests in Delhi over the past five months, the police response, and the measures needed to prevent a repeat of violence, damage to public



property, and attempts to breach security barricades.

Several groups of protesters have been on a warpath against the Centre for the CEC's resignation over alleged irregularities in the SIR.

INDIA bloc has announced a rally at Ramlila Maidan on November 1.

The Delhi Police has also been under scrutiny over allegations of using excessive force during the Cockroach Janata Party's (CJP) 'Sansad Chalo' march in July and its October 10 demonstration at Jantar Mantar.

The meeting reviewed the force's handling of these protests, including incidents involving alleged assaults on police personnel and attempts to breach barricades, sources said.

Officers discussed measures to strengthen crowd management, improve coordination among units and ensure that demonstrations do not escalate into law-and-order problems.

Improving the police's ability to manage large assemblies while maintaining public order was a key thrust of the deliberations, sources said.

The review also examined how the Delhi Police's operational priorities could be aligned with the government's "zero tolerance" for organised crime and its emphasis on public safety.

Sources said the deliberations also come against the backdrop of violent protests in several European capitals, including

Paris.

Protests and subsequent police restrictions hitting business were discussed in the meeting.

Traders have flagged the impact of repeated demonstrations and related traffic curbs on business activity, prompting discussions on ways to address their grievances while maintaining security, sources said.

Shah also reviewed measures to strengthen women's safety, including preventive policing in vulnerable areas and expediting investigations into crimes against women.

Drug trafficking and the networks involved in supplying narcotics in the capital were another focus of the meeting.

Officers briefed the home minister on enforcement action and efforts to identify and dismantle supply chains, sources said.

The meeting also discussed criminal syndicates being operated from abroad through handlers in Delhi and the National Capital Region, the role of shooters and arms suppliers in extortion cases, and targeted shootings, they said.

The home minister reviewed the use of artificial intelligence to ease traffic congestion and measures to remove encroachments at key locations in the city.

The Delhi Police presented a detailed rundown of its performance over the past five years, covering cases registered, arrests, investigations and enforcement measures across key areas, sources said.

According to sources, Shah's interaction with senior officers was also seen as an attempt to boost their morale as the city force faces scrutiny for its actions during protests.

Shah last visited the Delhi Police headquarters on August 30, 2022.

To bring down Netanyahu, Arab-Israeli parties ready for opposition alliance

AFP

Nazareth, Oct 24: They will not govern Israel, but Arab-majority lists could be the kingmakers in Israel's close-fought elections next week, guided by a voter base fed up with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

In interviews with AFP, the heads of the two predominantly Arab lists put forward a shared objective ahead of the October 27 vote: bring down what they say is a racist government.

Arab Israelis, also known as Palestinian citizens of Israel, account for about 21 percent of the country's population.

They are descendants of Palestinians who remained within Israel's borders after the state's creation in 1948, and have long complained of discrimination from Israel's Jewish majority.

As Israel's rightward shift severely tests the Arab minority's sense of belonging in society, many will head to the ballot box aiming to steer the country away from the far-right.

In Tuesday's vote, they will be represented by two lists.

Raam, a Hebrew acronym for United Arab List, is a moderate Islamist party headed by Mansour Abbas. In 2021, he agreed to join a short-lived coalition of Netanyahu's opponents, making Raam the first Arab party to join an Israeli government.

The far-left Joint List, led by Yousef Jabareen, brings together three parties with a mixture of communist and Palestinian nationalist leanings.

Abbas and Jabareen told AFP they were ready -- under certain conditions -- to cooperate with the opposition, particularly the bloc of Netanyahu's main rival Gadi Eisenkot, which



is polling neck and neck with the premier's.

Depending on the number of seats won, they could help Eisenkot secure a majority in Israel's 120-member parliament and possibly participate in the next government.

"We want to be influential partners, so that we can bring decisions to the next government's table and... resolve the major problems and challenges facing Arab society," Abbas told AFP in the Arab city of Nazareth in northern Israel.

'Arab-Jewish partnership'

The 52-year-old former dentist said he entered politics to combat the violent crime wave plaguing Arab-Israeli society -- a scourge which many in the community say is fueled by police inaction.

This year, Abbas included on the Raam list its first-ever Jewish candidate, Yoav Segalovitz, a former senior Israeli police official who won popularity within Arab communities for his work combating crime.

The move "represents a positive commitment to

Arab-Jewish partnership," Abbas said, adding that Segalovitz has "considerable professional expertise" fighting crime -- which has claimed the lives of more than 170 Arab-Israelis in 2026, according to the Abraham Initiatives coexistence organization.

Abbas said he was not a true kingmaker, because there was no chance he would sit in a coalition with Netanyahu. The only option, he said, was to partner with Eisenkot's bloc.

"God willing, we will achieve our desired goal of eight seats," Abbas told AFP, a result which according to polls could allow the opposition to secure a majority.

Demands Jabareen, a 54-year-old university professor specializing in human rights, said his Joint List could provide a "safety net" for an alternative government to Netanyahu's.

The Joint List, he said, was prepared to "cooperate with opposition parties."

But "I do not see, in the near future, a government that we could actually be part of. The

current government continues to pursue the war on Gaza, settler terrorism in the West Bank, racist policies and legislation targeting Arab citizens," he added.

Jabareen said support for opposition parties depended on how they responded to the Joint List's platform and policy proposals.

"We are not in anyone's pocket, and we are not giving anyone a blank check. We have demands," he told AFP after a campaign rally in Nazareth.

Beyond political calculations, Arab-Israelis interviewed by AFP shared a common weariness with the current government.

"Never before has a government treated Arabs with such harshness. The government has viewed Arabs with hostility, nothing less than that," said a 68-year-old former high school director who asked to remain anonymous for fear of reprisals.

"I hope for change," said Hanaa Zraiq Sayegh, a 40-year-old dance school owner, but she said she felt attitudes toward Arab society in Israel were "going backwards."

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

CM Omar asks party

his return to Srinagar after a period of illness. He added that several issues were discussed during the meeting and that he sought the LG's opinion on them.

EXPLORING SOLUTIONS TO FACILITATE RETURN OF UMRAH PILGRIMS

On Umrah pilgrims stranded in Saudi Arabia, the Chief Minister said the government is taking up the matter with the Ministry of External Affairs to facilitate their return.

He said pilgrims from several states are stranded due to flight cancellations and a sharp increase in airfares. "The problem is not that flights are unavailable, but that ticket prices have increased significantly. Those who had booked budget airline tickets are finding it difficult to purchase fresh tickets," he said.

The Chief Minister said the government would explore possible solutions with the Ministry of External Affairs and was prepared to provide financial assistance from its own budget, if necessary.

"If the Ministry of External Affairs does not have the budget to bring our stranded people back or assist with their tickets, we will allocate some money from our own budget to facilitate their return," he said.

NEED TO EXAMINE BUSINESS RULES

Responding to a question regarding powers given to the Lieutenant Governor for regulating dentistry, CM Omar said the business rules would need to be examined to determine whether the matter fell under the jurisdiction of the Centre or the elected government.

He suggested that the issue be taken up with Minister Sakina Itoo upon her return.

CHINA BORDER ISSUES CONCERNS GOI

On China border-related issues, he said the matter concerned the Government of India and the Ladakh administration. "Earlier, the border with China touched our erstwhile state. However, after Ladakh's separation, this is no longer under my jurisdiction. The question should be addressed to the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh or the Central Government," he said. (KNO)

Police bust clandestine

meetings and alleged financial transactions to propagate separatist ideology and anti-national agenda.

A case has been registered under Sections 10 and 13 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) at Bandipora police station under FIR No. 168/2026, he said.

The arrested persons have been identified as Mubeena Banoo of Dachigam in Bandipora; Waheed Ahmad Bhat, of Handwara in Kupwara district; Kushboo Jan, Mehak Jan and Aliya Jan, all residents of Check Panzigam in Bandipora; and Irfan Ahmed Reshi alias Rayees, of Ananwan in Handwara, the spokesman said.

The alleged network was operating under the directions of a Pakistan-based handler and

involved prison-based contacts and meetings aimed at propagating separatist ideology, he said, adding that further investigations are underway. (KNO)

World recognizing

the spirit of Ghazipur, Purvanchal, and India, while carrying a universal vision rooted in humanity and cultural harmony.

The Lieutenant Governor said that Dr. Rahi Masoom Raza, through works such as Aadha Gaon, Topi Shukla, and Katra Bi Arzoo, as well as his contribution to the screenplay of Mahabharat, conveyed the message that India's culture, heritage, and future belong to every citizen.

Highlighting the relevance of Rahi Masoom Raza's message and vision in present time, the Lieutenant Governor stated that the country's unity is anchored in constitutional ideals and in shared traditions, brotherhood, aspirations, and everyday experiences.

He called upon citizens to strengthen social trust through dialogue, cooperation, and compassion, and to view India's diversity as a source of collective strength.

The Lieutenant Governor said that Dr. Rahi Masoom Raza's birth centenary celebration is an opportunity to give a new direction to the future. "It should be our resolve to make our diversity our strength, and by choosing dialogue, cooperation, and compassion, we will further strengthen social trust," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor urged the youth to remain connected to their roots while pursuing ambitious goals. He said the younger generation should carry the values of their heritage wherever they go and transform opportunities into new possibilities through innovation, hard work, and dedication.

"Under the leadership of PM Modi, India is witnessing unprecedented development. Significant progress had been achieved in infrastructure, digital connectivity, financial inclusion, women's empowerment, housing, sanitation, and access to essential services. The massive efforts for inclusive development have enhanced the dignity and opportunities available to ordinary citizens," he said. (KNO)

J&K Govt coordinating

families that the Government stands firmly with them and will continue to extend all possible support to facilitate their return home at the earliest.

We are not enemies

helmsmen to change their approach and address the concerns of the people.

Referring to the Centre's promise of restoring statehood, he said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah had assured the people that statehood would be restored after delimitation and the Assembly elections, but the promise remained unfulfilled. "We are going through tough times and are walking on the double edged sword," he said.

Dr Farooq said political divisions in Kashmir have weakened collective efforts. "My earnest appeal to people is to rise above party

affiliations, religion and sectarian differences. J&K people need to stand on their own feet," he added.

The NC president blamed the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) for the developments that led to the abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35A. "The PDP joined hands with the BJP to form a government and the move changed the entire scenario in J&K," he said, "People need to remember the PDP's role in the political developments preceding the 2019 constitutional changes."

Describing the abrogation of Article 370 and the removal of Jammu and Kashmir's special constitutional status as "unconstitutional," he said the National Conference would continue its struggle for restoration. "We have to hold a single rope," he said.

URGES YOUTH TO LEARN J&K'S HISTORY

Dr Farooq expressed concern over what he described as a lack of historical awareness among the younger generation, saying many young people remain preoccupied with mobile phones and entertainment without understanding the region's past.

Revisiting the events of 1947, he said Jammu and Kashmir had opted for India despite its Muslim-majority population and urged young people to learn about the circumstances surrounding accession and the fighting in Baramulla.

He said the younger generation needed to understand the different phases through which Jammu and Kashmir had passed to appreciate the importance of its political rights. (KNO)

Dr. Sajjan Singh Yadav

it was widely assumed that the incumbent Chief Secretary would receive an extension or that one of the officers from the J&K segment of the AGMUT cadre would be chosen for the position.

Born on January 5, 1969, the IAS officer holds a Master of Public Administration in Economics from Harvard University, another MPA in Public Policy from the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs, and an MBA in Finance from the University of Delhi.

He cracked the IAS examination at the age of 25.

He began his career as Assistant Commissioner in Mizoram, serving from September 22, 1997, to July 1, 1998. He later worked as Deputy Commissioner in Arunachal Pradesh and as Deputy Commissioner of South Delhi district between 1998 and 2002.

From 2004 to 2007, Dr. Yadav served as Special Secretary to the Chief Minister of Delhi. During his central deputation, he held positions in several Union ministries, including Finance, Women & Child Development, and Health & Family Welfare. At the Ministry of Finance, he served as Joint Secretary, Additional Secretary, and Special Secretary.

The 1995-batch AGMUT cadre officer was currently serving as additional secretary and chief executive officer of Delhi Jal Board.

During his career spanned over three decades, he has also served as Advisor to the Administrator of Daman and Diu & Advisor to Dadra and Nagar Haveli Administration.

Apart from his administrative career, Dr. Yadav is also a published author and policy researcher.

His book, India's Vaccine Growth Story from Cowpox to Vaccine, traces the evolution of India's vaccine ecosystem and highlights the country's historical contributions to immunization and public health.

The work gained attention during the COVID-19 period for its research-driven analysis of India's vaccine journey.

He also authored Scaling Mount UPSC: 7 IAS Officers' Journeys, a motivational book that chronicles the journeys of civil servants who overcame challenges to clear the UPSC Civil Services Examination. (KNO)

Fresh snowfall

1.6 degrees Celsius, 0.4 degrees below normal.

Qazigund recorded a minimum of 7.2 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara and Kukernag registered minimum temperatures of 4.6 and 7 degrees Celsius, respectively.

In Jammu division, Jammu city recorded a maximum temperature of 29.7 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 15.5 degrees Celsius.

The Meteorological Centre has advised farmers to continue harvesting and other agricultural operations.

The weather department has forecast generally dry conditions from October 26 to 31, with cloudy weather likely towards the end of the month. (KNO)

Srinagar readies

Garden and other prominent locations in Srinagar.

The Director said the Tourism Department is seeking to establish the marathon as an annual event and strengthen Kashmir's profile as a destination for national and international sporting events.

"Participation of foreign athletes would help present Kashmir to a wider international audience," he said, adding that the event would also provide opportunities for local businesses to showcase their products and enable young athletes from Jammu and Kashmir to participate alongside international runners.

"The local stalls here showcase all their products, whether handmade or agricultural products. Our local youth get a chance to participate with international athletes," he said. The Director said such events could boost the local economy and tourism sector.

Earlier, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had told the department had introduced a separate prize category for Jammu and Kashmir to encourage local participation and provide runners from the region with greater opportunities to showcase their talent. At the Marathon Expo, inaugurated by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, 20 stalls showcasing local handicrafts, handlooms, agricultural produce and other products were set up.

Traffic restrictions, diversions Srinagar Traffic Police has also announced extensive traffic restrictions and diversions for Sunday to facilitate the marathon and regulate vehicular movement along the route.

Residency Road, from Radio Kashmir

Crossing to Polo View, will remain closed to traffic from 5 am to 5 pm. The stretch of M.A. Road from Budshah Chowk towards Dalgate and Badyari, up to Nehru Park, will face restrictions from 5 am to 9 am.

Residency Road, from Court Road--Clock Tower to Biscoe School Crossing, will remain closed from 5 am to 8:30 am. Restrictions will also apply to routes towards Rajbagh and Presentation Convent School from Jawahar Nagar and Lal Mandi between 5 am and 8:30 am.

No traffic will be allowed from Nehru Park towards Kralangri, Nishat, Habbak Crossing and Kashmir University, up to Sir Syed Gate, from 5 am until the marathon concludes. Traffic from Hotel Lalit towards Gupkar Road and Ram Munshi Bagh, as well as from Sonwar towards Ram Munshi Bagh, will also remain restricted during the event.

Heavy motor vehicles will not be allowed on R.R. Road, Gupkar Road, Boulevard Road and Foreshore Road from 8 pm on Saturday.

Traffic cut-off points will include Lal Mandi, Jahangir Chowk, Mamta Crossing and Ikhwani Chowk from 5 am to 8:30 am. Nishat, Kralangri, Unani Hospital, Pantha Chowk, Harwan and Grills Junction at Hazratbal will remain restricted from 5 am until the marathon concludes.

Motorists travelling from Harwan, Shalimar, Nishat and Brein have been advised to use the Burzahama--Chandpora--Tailbal--Zakura--Habbak--Naseembagh route in both directions. Those travelling from Ganderbal and Nagbal towards Lal Chowk should use the 90 Feet Saura Road, while commuters travelling from Rambagh towards Rajbagh have been advised to take Jawahar Nagar Bund Road.

People travelling from Rainawari and Saidakadal towards Hazratbal have been advised to use Lal Bazar Road via Grills Cut towards Kanitar.

Parking arrangements, public advisory Designated parking facilities for marathon participants include SP College Ground, SDA Parking opposite Pick 'N' Choose, Multilevel Parking at Press Colony, Presentation Convent School, Gindun Park Rajbagh, Institute of Hotel Management Rajbagh, Directorate of Horticulture Rajbagh, Football Ground TRC, Floriculture Park on R.R. Road and Cricket Ground TRC opposite J&K Bank headquarters.

Traffic Police has advised commuters to plan their journeys in advance and avoid unnecessary travel on Gupkar Road, M.A. Road, Residency Road, Boulevard Road, Badyari, Dalgate, Nishat Foreshore Road, Habbak Crossing and areas near Sir Syed Gate of Kashmir University during the restrictions.

Students appearing for examinations have been advised to carry valid admit cards to facilitate movement through restricted routes. Ambulances, fire tenders and other emergency vehicles will be prioritised. The Srinagar Traffic Police helpline is 103. (KNO)

Man found dead

a resident of Jalandhar, Punjab. Meanwhile, police have taken cognizance of the incident and medico-legal formalities are underway. (KNO)

PM Modi to visit Varanasi, Bhubaneswar today

■ To witness Air Force Day display, open RBI data centre

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 24: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will go to Uttar Pradesh and Odisha on Sunday during which he will witness the Air Force Day aerial display in Varanasi and inaugurate an RBI data centre and cyber security training institute in Bhubaneswar.

In Varanasi, the prime minister will also inaugurate Arvind Limited's new garment manufacturing facility which marks an important step towards strengthening India's textile and apparel manufacturing ecosystem and promoting industrial growth in the region, an official statement said.

Focusing on modern manufacturing practices, the facility will create meaningful employment opportunities, particularly for women, and contribute to the region's economic progress, it said.

The inauguration also highlights Uttar Pradesh's growing role as a destination for industrial investment and manufacturing-led growth, it added.

With a global customer base, it is a testament to how products manufactured in Varanasi will reach across the world, the statement said.

Being a predominantly women-led initiative, it is a powerful symbol of women-led development, it added.

Modi will also witness the Air Force Day Aerial Display-2026 at Namo Ghat in Varanasi and the programme will commemorate



‘Modi, Putin direct officials to expand cooperation, target USD 100 bn trade by 2030’

PTI

Moscow, Oct 24: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin have directed their governments to further expand bilateral cooperation, as India and Russia aim to increase bilateral trade to USD 100 billion by 2030, Ambassador Vinay Kumar has said.

In an interview with Russian news agency TASS published on Saturday, Indian envoy Kumar said the two leaders discussed the full range of bilateral relations on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in New Delhi on September 12-13. "One of the concrete results of the cooperation was the joint participation of the leaders of our countries in the BRICS business

summit, as well as a visit to the Innoprom-India exhibition — the first Russian industrial exhibition held in New Delhi," the Indian envoy told TASS.

He said the leaders had directed relevant ministries and agencies to further develop cooperation, including in trade and commerce.

Kumar said India and Russia continued to work towards increasing bilateral trade to USD 100 billion and two-way investment to USD 50 billion by 2030.

On labour cooperation, Kumar said India aimed to supply Russia with the required number of skilled workers in line with its needs.

Indians account for around 25 to 30 per cent of Russia's quota for foreign workers, he said.

the 94th anniversary of the Indian Air Force. It will be held under the theme "Wings over Ganges".

The aerial display will feature aircraft including the Tejas, Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) Prachand, SU-30MKI and Rafale, along with transport aircraft.

Aircraft from the Indian Navy and the Indian Army will also participate, showcasing jointness in operations.

The IAF's premier display teams, including the Surya Kiran Aerobatic Team and the Sarang Helicopter Display Team, will also participate in the event.

In Bhubaneswar, the prime minister will inaugurate the Reserve Bank of India's newly established Data Centre and Cybersecurity Training Institute, marking a significant milestone in strengthening the technological foundations of India's financial system, the statement said.

They have been designed to meet the bank's computing requirements and to provide a secure, resilient, scalable and future-ready computing ecosystem for the bank and the broader financial sector. Four state-of-the-art data centres will host mission-critical payment and settlement systems, along with other flagship initiatives, the statement said.

The facility has been certified to Uptime Institute Tier IV standard - the global benchmark for data centre infrastructure - placing it in the highest tier of operational resilience.

Courts cannot be unmindful when precious water bodies remain unprotected: SC



PTI

New Delhi, Oct 24: The Supreme Court has said that courts cannot be unmindful when precious water bodies remain unprotected, while directing all states and authorities to undertake physical ground-truthing and demarcation of wetlands.

A bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and Vipul M Pancholi said the water bodies, being a source of drinking water, are precious and would fall within the four corners of the right to life, as guaranteed under the Constitution.

"This Court cannot remain a mere spectator or be unmindful of the consequences flowing from water bodies remaining unprotected," the bench said.

In order to achieve this objective, the court reiterated its directions to states and Wetland Authorities to undertake physical ground-truthing of water bodies, if not already done, and file a compliance affidavit detailing the mode and method adopted

for the exercise.

The court initially said the affidavits should be filed within an outer limit of four weeks.

"Shekhar Naphade, senior counsel has vociferously contended that undertaking the exercise of ground truthing by the officials would be time-consuming exercise and has prayed for reasonable time of six to nine months being granted," it said.

The bench said it was conscious of the extensive physical work involved and the need for coordination between departments.

"Yet, being alive to the situation, we deem it proper to grant four months' time to complete the said exercise," the bench said. The top court said even after nine years from the date of publication of the Rules, ground truthing and demarcation have not been completed or concluded.

The top court was hearing a PIL by bird enthusiast Anand Arya, advocate M K Balakrishnan and NGO Vanashakti.

Bihar govt introduces performance assessment index for banks

PTI

Patna, Oct 24: The Bihar government has for the first time introduced a 100-point performance assessment index to rank banks operating in the state, a senior official said on Saturday. IDFC FIRST Bank currently tops the list with 74 points, Development Commissioner Mi-hir Kumar Singh said.

"Banks have been classified into three zones based on their score. The Green Zone, indicating excellent performance, includes 11 banks scoring 50 or above, while seven banks fall in the Yellow Zone and several others in the Red Zone. The Red Zone includes leading public sector banks," a statement issued by the state's Finance Department said.

Bihar has set an annual credit plan target of Rs 4.95 lakh crore for the 2026-27 fiscal. As of



September 30, banks disbursed Rs 1.89 lakh crore, achieving 38.25 per cent of the target, officials said.

The figure was Rs 46,228.29 crore higher than that of the corresponding period last year.

"The Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector recorded 52.68 per cent achievement, with credit disbursement of Rs 84,091.21 crore against

a target of Rs 1.59 lakh crore. Agriculture credit disbursement stood at Rs 43,967.17 crore, or 28 per cent of the target," the release said. At a high-level review meeting here, Singh directed banks to work in mission mode to achieve their annual credit plan targets, stressing that deposits mobilised in Bihar must be reinvested in the state's development.

Chased by barking dog, girl trips over pot of boiling milk; dies of burns

PTI

Beed, Oct 24: A three-year-old girl died of severe burns after a pot of boiling milk spilled on her while she was trying to escape a barking dog in Maharashtra's Beed district, police said on Saturday.

The tragic incident occurred when Durga Pradeep Budhnaar was playing outside her home at Nandur Haveli on Thursday, a local policeman said.

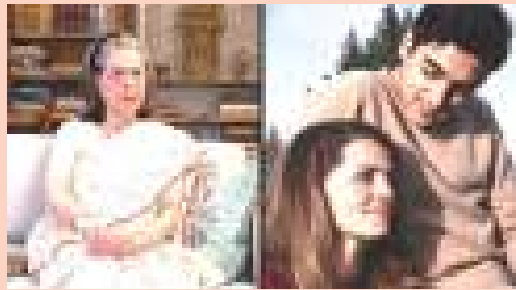
A stray dog suddenly charged towards her, barking aggressively. The girl panicked and

sprinted towards her home to escape. In her rush, she tripped over a large vessel of boiling milk placed over an earthen chulha in the courtyard, said the official.

The boiling milk fell all over the kid, causing extensive burn injuries. Her parents rushed her to a private hospital. As her condition deteriorated, she was shifted to the Beed District Civil Hospital, but the girl succumbed to her injuries during treatment.

The tragedy came just days after the family celebrated her third birthday on Dussehra, the official added.

Rajiv was very good-looking, gentle person: Sonia Gandhi shares early memories with him on X debut



PTI

New Delhi, Oct 24: Congress leader Sonia Gandhi on Saturday described Rajiv Gandhi as a very good-looking and gentle person and shared her memories of their life together as she made her debut on social media platform X.

She put out a video regarding her upcoming book -- "Belonging - a journey of love" -- in which she shares her journey from her younger days till now. The book will be launched on November 10.

Gandhi also shared a nearly two-minute-long video on X as well as on Instagram, in which she recalled how she met her husband Rajiv Gandhi in Cambridge and showed their pictures and that of the restaurant where they first met.

"In a small Greek restaurant in Cambridge my journey of love began. Rajiv and I created a world filled with love, laughter and memories. On 10th November, I share that world with you," she said in her first post on X.

Going through photographs in the video, the Congress parliamentary party chairperson described Rajiv Gandhi as a very good-looking and gentle person.

Asked about what it was like falling in love with Rajiv Gandhi, she said, "Food in England in those days was awful. In those days, you didn't

have so many restaurants, you know, like you have today."

"And so, I was constantly looking for a place where I could find some food which was closer to my kind of food -- Italian food in that case.

"And then, we discovered this place (Varsity Restaurant). It was a Greek restaurant where many European students, but also Indian students, used to go for their meals. And that is where I met Rajiv in that very restaurant," the former Congress chief said.

"When I first met him, I felt almost immediately that, you know, he was someone I would really love to be with. And, of course, I learned that it was the same for him," Gandhi recalled in the video.

She said that a common friend had introduced her to the former prime minister.

"Then, you know, we became friends. Then going to parties with friends or going to see sights or we went to a Valentine's party where there were lots of students.

"He was a very gentle-looking person. Of course, he was very good-looking, but that gentleness came through. So that was something which really touched me and struck me. So that of course, I'll never forget when I first met him," she said.

Enhancement of MPs' dev fund key topic selected by Parl panel for study



PTI

New Delhi, Oct 24: A parliamentary committee has selected six subjects for detailed examination, including enhancement of the MP Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) allocation, timely execution of development works and technological hurdles in fund disbursement.

The feasibility of convergence between MPLADS and the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) scheme under the VB-G RAM G Act, 2025, is another key subject selected for examination.

According to a Lok Sabha bulletin issued on Friday, the committee on MPLADS selected these subjects for 2026-27 at its meeting held on October 5.

The committee will examine the guidelines governing the release of MPLADS funds and assess the need to enhance the allocation under the scheme.

Headed by Congress Lok Sabha member K Suresh, the panel will also focus on timely monitoring and execution of works undertaken through MPLADS. It will review the functioning of facilitation centres and examine technological hurdles affecting fund disbursement through the E-SAKSHI portal.

The selected subjects cover funding, implementation, monitoring and technological challenges associated with the scheme.

Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members have been pressing for an increase in the allocation. The annual allocation of Rs 5 crore per MP per year has remained unchanged since 2011-12, with demands ranging from Rs 18 crore to Rs 20 crore per MP annually.

However, the government is yet to take a considered view on the matter.

Congress never followed Constitution, ruled country as per its wishes: Nabin

PTI

Ranchi, Oct 24: BJP chief Nitin Nabin on Saturday attacked the Congress, alleging that the party never followed the Constitution and ruled the country as per its wishes.

Nabin, who is on a three-day visit to Jharkhand, addressed party workers and leaders at the inaugural session of the BJP's state executive committee meeting here.

"Today, in the country, there is an attempt to challenge constitutional

institutions and democracy. Those who swear by the Constitution have shredded it to pieces.

"From imposing Emergency to President's Rule in many states, Congress never followed the Constitution and ruled the country as per its wishes. Today, those who tried to finish off democracy are lecturing us about it," he added.

Nabin accused the Congress of trying to create anarchy in the country.

"For this, they are getting support not only from within the country

but also from foreign powers. Rahul Gandhi now questions the country's constitutional institutions, but he never questioned them when the Congress was in power," he added.

This was the first time that the party chief addressed the state executive meeting after the central leadership recently revamped the state BJP unit by appointing new office-bearers and organisational in-charges.

Before addressing the executive meeting, he held a meeting with all district presidents and in-charges.



Quick Read

Israel imposes West Bank city closures following attacks

AP

Dubai, Oct 24 : Israel imposed widespread closures and displaced residents in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron a day after attacks by Palestinian gunmen that killed two soldiers.

Meanwhile, the death toll rose from Friday's attack on a church in Jordan. An Iranian military commander said his country will not allow US warships to enter the Persian Gulf. The comment followed increased attacks on commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz, raising fears of a return to all-out war.

Here is the latest news from the Middle East on Saturday. Read our full coverage here.

Death toll from church attack in Jordan rises to 9
A ninth person has died after gunmen opened fire during a funeral at a church in Jordan, state television reported. More than two dozen people were receiving treatment in hospitals.

Gunmen on Friday opened fire at a Greek Orthodox church in Karak, south of Jordan's capital, Amman. Footage broadcast on state television showed a crowd fleeing in panic. Karak is home to a minority Christian population.

Airstrikes kill 10 people in Yemen, including a child

Two strikes killed 10 people, including a woman and child, in the Yemeni capital of Sanaa, according to the Health Ministry run by Iran-backed Houthi rebels. A strike on a cement factory killed seven, and a strike on a home killed three.

The Houthi media centre also said a wave of strikes hit the coastal city of Mokha in Taiz province, which the Houthis captured in September. The centre didn't provide details on what was struck, and The Associated Press couldn't independently verify the claims.

The Houthis blamed neighbouring Saudi Arabia as fighting has escalated. Saudi Arabia did not respond to a request for comment.

The Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis said it intercepted three ballistic missiles fired by the Houthis toward the Saudi capital, Riyadh, and Taif and Yanbu cities. It also said it destroyed a drone over the country's eastern region.

Sufi Volleyball Club Dhadhki clinches 38th Doda district volleyball championship

KT News Desk

Bhaderwah, Oct 24: Sufi Volleyball Club Dhadhki emerged victorious in the 38th Doda District Volleyball Championship, defeating Seven Brothers Volleyball Club Bhatyas by 2-1 sets in a thrilling final match.

The two-day championship was organised by the Volleyball Association of Jammu and Kashmir under the aegis of the J&K Sports Council, in collaboration with the J&K Excise Department at Government Degree College Bhaderwah.

A total of 10 men's volleyball teams from across Doda participated in the tournament, showcasing their sporting talent, teamwork and competitive spirit.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Sunil Kumar Bhutyal was the chief guest while SDPO Navid Qazi attended as the guest of honour.

The Chief Guest urged the youth to actively participate in sports, maintain physical fitness and stay away from drug abuse. He highlighted the devastating consequences of substance abuse, particularly among young people and emphasised the importance of sports in promoting a healthy lifestyle, discipline and positive engagement among youth. He also appreciated the Excise Department for extending its support to the organisers in spreading awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

The Guest of Honour appreciated the organisers for channelising the energy and enthusiasm of young people towards constructive activities through sports events, particularly in far-flung areas of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Omar Abdullah attends prize distribution ceremony of Labaika Invitational Golf Cup 2026



KT News Desk

Srinagar, October 24: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today attended the prize distribution ceremony of the Labaika Invitational Golf Cup 2026 at the Royal Springs Golf Course (RSGC), Srinagar.

The day-long tournament witnessed enthusiastic participation from over 100 golfers, including professionals, women and junior golfers from Jammu and Kashmir. Besides professional golfers from other parts of the country, bringing together golf enthusiasts in a celebration of sportsmanship and camaraderie amid Kashmir's scenic surroundings.

The main aim of the day-long tournament focused on local golfers and emerging talent and provide emerging players with opportunities to showcase their abilities.

The Chief Minister highlighted the growing interest among golf enthusiasts from locals and other parts of North India in visiting Srinagar for weekend golfing, noting that such sporting events contribute to the local tourism economy.

He also underscored the importance of encouraging local

golfers and nurturing young talent, observing that initiatives of this kind can help popularise the sport and provide emerging players with opportunities to showcase their abilities.

The championship was organised by Labaika Haj & Umrah Services.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) Gurwinder Singh Oberoi, MLA Zaidal Tanvir Sadiq, Director Tourism Kashmir Syed Qamar Sajjad, Secretary RSGC Haris Ahmed Handoo, and golfers, among others, were present on the occasion.

Kim Jong Un visits China to inaugurate new cross-border bridge



AP

Seoul, Oct 24: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited China on Saturday, inaugurating a new bridge that connects the two countries and saying he hoped to expand cooperation with his powerful neighbour.

Kim's visit to China is his latest move in an increasingly assertive foreign policy as he seeks to align Pyongyang with Beijing and Moscow in a united front against the United States under what he portrays as a "new Cold War." It's his first visit in a year.

Kim arrived in the Chinese border city of Dandong Saturday after crossing the newly opened bridge, according to South Korea's Unification Ministry, which

handles affairs related to North Korea and China's official Xinhua News Agency. Both sides promised to strengthen cooperation. He met with Wang Huning, a member of the Standing Committee of China's Communist Party. The two toured a car factory and promised to strengthen the bilateral relationship.

Kim said that his country "stands ready to work with China to carry forward their historical friendship and expand practical cooperation, thereby delivering tangible benefits to the peoples of both countries," according to Xinhua. Wang then accompanied Kim to the bridge to send him off, according to Xinhua.

Choose books, bats, balls, stay away from drugs: SSP Srinagar to youth

Gojwari Cricket Club wins T20 cricket tournament under Civic Action Programme



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 24 : Urging youth to channel their energy towards positive activities, SSP Srinagar Dr G. V. Sundee Chakravarthy on Saturday said the aim of organising sports events under the Civic Ac-

tion Programme is to engage young people constructively and keep them away from drugs and other social evils.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the concluding ceremony of a T20 cricket tournament in downtown Srinagar, the SSP Srinagar said

the tournament was organised by Srinagar Police as part of its Civic Action Programme.

"Keep books, bats and balls in your hands and stay away from drugs. The purpose of organising such tournaments is to channelise the energy of youth in a positive direction," he said.

Congratulating all participating teams, Chakravarthy said, "Whoever has participated in this tournament, whether winners or runners-up, I congratulate everyone from the bottom of my heart."

The tournament, which began on October 17 at MPML Higher Secondary School Playground, Shamswari, witnessed participation from eight teams representing different areas of Srinagar district.

In the final, Gojwari Cricket Club defeated Krashbal Cricket Club to clinch the title.

The SSP also distributed trophies, medals, mementoes and cash prizes among the winners, runners-up and outstanding performers. He also appreciated the players and local community for their support, saying such initiatives help promote sports and strengthen police-public relations—(KNO)

Srinagar Police concludes T20 cricket tournament under Civic Action Programme

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 24: Srinagar Police successfully concluded the T20 Cricket Tournament organised under the Civic Action Programme (CAP) 2025-26 at MPML Higher Secondary School Playground, Shamswari, Srinagar. The tournament, which commenced on October 17, witnessed enthusiastic participation from eight teams representing different areas of District Srinagar.

The closing ceremony was presided over by Dr. G. V. Sundee Chakravarthy, IPS, SSP Srinagar, in the presence of Senior police officers, participating teams and members of the local community.

The tournament was organised as part of Srinagar Police's continued efforts to promote sports, encourage positive youth engagement and strengthen police-public relations through community-oriented initiatives.

In an exciting final, **Gojwari Cricket Club emerged victorious, defeating Krashbal Cricket Club** to clinch the championship title. Both teams demonstrated commendable skill, discipline, teamwork and sportsmanship throughout the tournament.

On the occasion, SSP Srinagar distributed trophies, medals, mementoes and cash prizes** among the winners, runners-up and outstanding performers. The winning team was awarded the championship trophy along with a cash prize, while the runners-up received a trophy. The Man of the Series was also felicitated with a trophy and cash prize for his outstanding performance.

Addressing the gathering, SSP Srinagar congratulated the winning team and appreciated all participating players for their enthusiasm, discipline and sporting spirit. He emphasised that sports play a crucial role in shaping the character of young people by instilling discipline, teamwork, leadership and a sense of responsibility.

He further encouraged youth to channel their energy and potential towards sports, education and other constructive pursuits, while **staying away from drugs and other social evils. He reiterated that Srinagar Police remains committed to providing meaningful platforms for young talent and fostering a culture of healthy competition.

Abdul Hadi clinches gold as 202 bouts held on Day 3 of 70th NSG Taekwondo Championship in Ganderbal

KT News Desk

Ganderbal, Oct 24: The third day of the 70th National School Games Taekwondo Championship witnessed intense competition at Ganderbal, with 202 fights held across six weight categories, involving 196 players. The championship is being hosted by the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS), Jammu & Kashmir, under the aegis of the School Games Federation of India (SGFI).

The day's competitions included 32 fights in the Boys' -38 kg category, 36 in Boys' -55 kg, 34 in Boys' -68 kg, 31 in Boys' -73 kg, 35 in Girls' -42 kg and 34 in Girls' -49 kg.

In the Boys' -38 kg category, Ayushman of Uttar Pradesh defeated Nitash of Tamil Nadu to clinch the gold medal. In the Boys'



-73 kg final, Jammu & Kashmir's Abdul Hadi delivered an impressive performance to defeat Asif

Iqbal of Kerala, securing gold for the host team.

In the Girls' -59 kg category,

Aaniya of Haryana defeated Kerala's Naga, representing CBSE, in the final to claim gold. Samantani Dey of West Bengal secured gold in the Girls' +68 kg category.

In the Boys' -55 kg final, Tejas Yadav of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) defeated Jammu & Kashmir's Dhruv Mehra to win the gold medal.

Jammu & Kashmir added one gold and one silver medal on the third day, further strengthening its presence in the championship.

The championship is being conducted under the leadership and supervision of Director General, Youth Services and Sports, J&K, Ms. Anuradha Gupta, IAS. The Directorate has made comprehensive arrangements to ensure the smooth and successful conduct of the national-level sporting event.