



Future-ready institutions must encourage continuous learning: LG Manoj Sinha

» Lays foundation stone for Jammu University's Kashmir research centre » Says emotional intelligence, tech capability complement each other in age of AI

Naveed Ul Haq Ganaie

Srinagar, Oct 28: Asserting that future-ready institutions must encourage continuous learning, and multidisciplinary collaboration, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday said that emotional intelligence and technological capability must go hand in hand in an era of rapid technological advancement and artificial intelligence.

Addressing a gathering after laying the foundation stone of the Kashmir Chapter of the Centre for Regional Studies, Culture, Dialects and Emotional Intelligence of the University of Jammu, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Future-ready institutions must encourage continuous learning, adaptability, ethical awareness and multidisciplinary collaboration."

The Lieutenant Governor said



that the main Centre at Jammu University's campus in Jammu and its Kashmir Chapter have the potential to emerge as a model institution for research, contributing to knowledge creation, cultural preservation and human-centred development while enhancing the global

standing of the universities of Jammu Kashmir.

The Lieutenant Governor said that the Centre represents a unique and forward-looking confluence of regional studies, culture, dialects and emotional intelligence.

Highlighting the rich

civilisational heritage of Jammu Kashmir, LG Sinha said that the initiative would strengthen cultural, historical and human connections while preserving the region's diverse intellectual and linguistic traditions.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that a | [More on P6](#)

Javid Dar is new finance minister of J&K

Surinder Choudhary retains R&B, Sakina Health

Sagar gets PDD, Altaf Rural Dev, Shamima Education

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 28: A day after the cabinet expansion, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday assigned charge of departments to ministers.

According to details, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Javid Ahmad Dar has been appointed as finance minister of J&K. Apart from retaining Agriculture Production & Cooperatives departments, Dar has been handed over Finance and Mining departments.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary has retained Roads & Buildings Department, Industries & Commerce department, Labour & Employment, Skill Development Department but the key Mining Department has been taken away from him.

Health Minister Sakina Masood continues to hold key portfolios of Health & Medical Education Department and Social



Welfare Department.

Veteran leader Ali Muhammad Sagar has made a powerful comeback. The senior NC leader has been allotted the Power Development Department (PDD) along with Revenue, Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, DMMR & Election Departments.

Shamima Firdous has bagged significant responsibility with departments like Jal Shakti, School Education and Higher Education.

Altaf Ahmad Wani (Kaloo) has secured key departments like Rural Development & Panchayati Raj and Forest, Ecology & Environment.

Javed Ahmad Rana has been | [More on P6](#)

Power deficit of over 600 MW looms for J&K, Ladakh

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Oct 28: Ahead of chilling winters, more than 600 Megawatts (MW) power deficit is looming over Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh in November 2026.

An official informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that during peak solar and non-solar hours, both the regions are likely to face a power deficiency of 623 MW in the month of November.

The official figures projecting the power supply position for November-2026 reveal that J&K and Ladakh may likely require 3813 MW against the total availability of 3190 MW during solar and non-solar hours.

In the meantime, a top official informed KNO that the Ministry of Power has allocated over 330 MW for J&K with effect from December-2026 to February-2027.

The official said, "We may face power deficiency challenges for the November month and we are sure as to whether we can manage the gaps through power exchange markets."

As already | [More on P6](#)

J&K to witness 'largely dry' weather till Nov 6

Brief spells of light rain, snowfall possible at isolated places in higher reaches: MeT

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Oct 28: Jammu and Kashmir is likely to witness generally dry weather conditions over the next several days, with no significant weather activity expected till November 6, the Meteorological Centre Srinagar said on Wednesday.

According to the forecast, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), scattered places may receive brief spells of light rain or light snowfall over higher reaches on October 29, while the weather is expected to remain generally dry on October 30 and 31.

The MeT Centre said the weather would remain partly

cloudy from November 1 to 3. From November 4 to 6, generally dry conditions are expected, with the possibility of brief spells of light rain or snowfall over higher reaches at isolated places.

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

Meanwhile, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 22.7 degrees Celsius on Wednesday, 1.9 degrees above the seasonal normal, while the minimum temperature settled at 3.7 degrees Celsius, 0.7 degrees above normal.

Pahalgam recorded a maximum | [More on P6](#)

LG felicitates SSF personnel for role in drug-free J&K campaign

Hails exemplary security management

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 28: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday felicitated senior officers and personnel of the Special Security Force (SSF) for their outstanding professionalism and dedication in ensuring the successful conduct of the 100-day "Drug-Free Jammu Kashmir Campaign."

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor commended the SSF for adding a remarkable chapter to the administrative and security history of the Union Territory through their courage, vigilance and exceptional competence. He said the SSF has emerged as a symbol of



discipline, excellence, and commitment.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted the significance of the Drug-Free Jammu Kashmir Campaign, launched on April 11, 2026, as a transformative initiative aimed at mobilizing society against drug abuse.

It is pertinent to mention that the campaign was marked by an extensive Padyatra led

by the Lieutenant Governor across all 20 districts of the Union Territory, fostering direct engagement between the administration and citizens.

Praising the SSF's role in the initiative, the Lieutenant Governor noted that the Force ensured meticulous security planning, seamless coordination, and effective crowd management | [More on P6](#)

Two House Committees of J&K Assembly to get new heads

Move comes after chairpersons' induction as ministers

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Oct 28: Two House Committees of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly will get new chairpersons following the induction of their heads as ministers in the Omar Abdullah-led government.

Senior National Conference leaders Ali Muhammad Sagar and Mir Saifullah, who were heading the Committee on Government Assurances and the Committee on Public Undertakings respectively, have ceased to be members of the committees after being inducted into the Council of Ministers.

"Both these committees

will get new chairpersons," an official in the Legislative Assembly Secretariat told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Under the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, a member ceases to be a member of a committee upon his or her appointment as a minister.

Sagar and Saifullah, who were nominated as chairpersons of the two committees on May 12 for the financial year 2026-27, were sworn in as ministers on Tuesday.

Altaf Ahmad Wani (alias Kaloo) and Shamima Firdous, who were | [More on P6](#)

Two die after being buried under sand mound

Waris Fayaz

Baramulla, Oct 28: Two persons died after being buried under a mound of sand during extraction in the Rafiabab area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district during the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the duo was extracting sand in Dachanpara, Rafiabab, when the mound collapsed, trapping them underneath.

He said their bodies remained buried overnight and were recovered early | [More on P6](#)

Army bust hideout in Rajouri

Grenades, ammunition, other items recovered

Yogesh

Rajouri, Oct 28: Army busted a terrorist hideout in a remote forest area in Rajouri District on Wednesday and recovered a cache of grenades and ammunition.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the Rashtriya Rifles unearthed the hideout during a search and cordon operation in Doba Gali in the upper reaches of Kotranka sub-division.

"The recovered items from the hideout include four Under Barrel Grenade



Launcher (UBGL) rounds, three hand grenades, 237 rounds of AK assault

rifle, 101 belted ammunition rounds of General Purpose Machine Gun. | [More on P6](#)

Traffic restrictions on NH-44 for Secretariat Move

No up-movement of goods carriers from Jakheni towards Sgr on Oct 31, Nov 1

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 28: In view of the Move of Offices and to facilitate the smooth and hassle-free movement of the convoy of Secretariat employees from Srinagar to Jammu, restrictions have been imposed on the movement of goods carriers on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH-44).

No movement of up HMs/ MMVs (goods carriers) from Jakheni, Udhampur towards Srinagar shall be allowed on

October 31, 2026 (Saturday) and November 1, 2026 (Sunday).

Furthermore, no goods carriers (HMs/MMVs) shall be allowed to proceed from Jakheni (Udhampur) towards Ramban, Banihal, Srinagar, etc., or from Qazigund towards Banihal, Ramban, Udhampur, etc., after 0200 hours on October 31, 2026 (intervening night of October 30/31) and November 1, 2026 (intervening night of October 31/November 1).

However, | [More on P6](#)

Govt approves Industrial Estate at Barsoo

Will create jobs in J&K: CM



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 28: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has accorded Administrative Approval for the development of a new Industrial Estate at Barsoo in Ganderbal district at an estimated cost of Rs 17.24 crore.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said the project marks a significant step towards strengthening industrial infrastructure and creating new employment opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The proposed Industrial Estate, equipped with modern infrastructure and essential facilities, is expected to provide fresh opportunities for entrepreneurs, attract industrial investment, generate employment for local youth and contribute to sustainable industrial growth and economic development across Jammu and Kashmir. | [More on P6](#)

Dumper hits, kills 6-yr-old boy in Kulgam

KNO Correspondent

Kulgam, Oct 28: A six-year-old boy was killed after being hit by a dumper in the Berigam area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Wednesday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the boy was hit by a dumper in Berigam area of Kulgam. He said the child sustained serious injuries and was shifted to District Hospital Kulgam, where doctors declared him brought dead. He was later identified as Zeyan Zakir Dar (06), son of Zakir Dar and a resident of Berigam Devsar. Meanwhile, police have taken cognisance of the incident and initiated an investigation. (KNO)

BDO found dead at home in Ramban



KNO Correspondent

Ramban, Oct 28: A Block Development Officer (BDO) was found dead at his residence in the Sangaldan area of Ramban district on Wednesday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the

officer was found unconscious at his residence in Sangaldan. He said police reached the spot soon after receiving information and shifted the officer to a hospital for medico-legal formalities.

Meanwhile, necessary proceedings have been initiated, while the cause of death is being investigated. (KNO)

4,000 cyclists register for 'Pedal Through Paradise': DIG Maqsood-ul-Zaman

Race today; cash prizes worth Rs 6 lakh for winners; Traffic Police announce diversions

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 28: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Armed Police Maqsood-ul-Zaman on Wednesday said that around 4,000 cyclists have registered for the J&K Police Cycle Race-2026, 'Pedal Through Paradise', slated to be held in Srinagar on Thursday.

In a video message accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the DIG invited more cycling enthusiasts to participate in the race,



saying the event aims to encourage young people to adopt a healthy lifestyle. "Organisers

are also offering on-the-spot registration," he added.

"We want our youth to be healthy and health-conscious. This is part of the Fit India initiative," the DIG said.

He said the race would feature two routes—from Lalit Ghat towards Harwan Garden via Shalimar and from Lalit Ghat towards Nagbal Chowk via Foreshore Road.

"We have kept around Rs 6 lakh as prize money, finisher medals and refreshments. On-the-spot | [More on P6](#)

DC Pulwama
reviews district
security scenario

Emphasises preventive
measures, inter-agency
coordination

KT News Desk

PULWAMA, OCTOBER 28: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha, Wednesday chaired a meeting at the District Administrative Complex, Pulwama, to review the security situation in the district, assess security trends over the past years and deliberate on future aspects relating to peace and public order.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by the Senior Superintendent of Police, (SSP) Pulwama, Sahil Sarangal; SSP Awantipora, Irshad Hussain Rather; Additional Deputy Commissioners of Pulwama, Tral and Awantipora, Officers of the Air Force Station Awantipora, Commanding Officers of Army, CRPF and other CAPFs deployed in the district.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the prevailing security scenario, the effectiveness of preventive measures, operational preparedness and coordination among the agencies concerned. The participants also deliberated on measures required to enhance deterrence, strengthen preventive mechanisms and improve operational preparedness to address security challenges. Furthermore, during the meeting, various coordination issues and matters requiring facilitation were also discussed, with the Deputy Commissioner directing that these be prioritised for timely resolution.

Run for Unity

Arrangements for October
31 reviewed in Anantnag

Officers directed to ensure elaborate arrangements



KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, OCTOBER 28: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag,

Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, Wednesday, chaired a review meeting of district officers at the Conference Hall of Dak Bungalow, Khanabal, to review arrangements for the smooth and successful conduct of the 'Run for Unity', scheduled to be held on October 31.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was convened to ensure effective coordination among various departments and put in place all necessary arrangements well in advance for the event, which is organised to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai

Patel and promote the ideals of national unity, integrity and patriotism.

Addressing the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasised that, being an event of national importance, the 'Run for Unity' must be accorded the highest priority. He directed all concerned officers to work in close coordination and ensure that all requisite arrangements are completed within the stipulated timeframe for the smooth conduct of the programme.

The DC stressed the importance of inter-departmental coordination and directed each department to discharge its assigned responsibilities efficiently. He called for a coordinated approach among all stakeholders to ensure the

seamless execution of the event and urged people from all sections of society to participate enthusiastically.

Dr Bilal observed that events such as the 'Run for Unity' play a significant role in fostering patriotism, strengthening national integration and promoting the values of unity and brotherhood among participants and the general public. He added that such initiatives provide an important platform to reaffirm the collective commitment to the unity, integrity and sovereignty of the nation.

During the meeting, responsibilities for various activities and arrangements related to the programme were assigned to the concerned departments. The officers were directed to maintain close liaison with one another and ensure the timely completion of all preparatory measures. The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Superintendent of Police, Superintending Engineer, Public Works Department, Sub-Divisional Magistrates, Assistant Commissioner Development, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Chief Education Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, Divisional Forest Officer, District Youth Services and Sports Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, Assistant Director CAPD, Executive Engineers of the Irrigation and Flood Control Department and PMGSY, Tehsildars, Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Council, District Information Officer, Deputy Director, Forest Protection Force, besides other concerned officers.

CEO SSCL reviews E-Bus
operations at Pantha Chowk



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 28: Chief Executive Officer, Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), Dr. Basharat Qayoom, on Wednesday reviewed the functioning of Srinagar's electric bus services and inspected the E-Bus depot at Pantha Chowk, directing offi-

cials and service providers to improve fleet utilisation, maintenance, operational monitoring and passenger convenience.

The CEO, a was accompanied by the Additional CEO SSCL, General Manager, Public Transport Operations; Manager, Operations and Enforcement (E-Bus); Statistical Officer; and representatives of Tata and Chalo Mobility.

During the review, Dr. Basharat took stock of the deployment and operational performance of the electric bus fleet. He stressed the need for effective monitoring of bus schedules, route-wise deployment and service frequency to ensure punctuality and minimise inconvenience to commuters.

The CEO directed the concerned SSCL officials to closely monitor daily operations, review the performance of individual routes and ensure prompt resolution of operational issues in coordination with the service providers.

Emphasising the responsibility of the operating agency, the CEO stressed the need for regular preventive maintenance, timely repairs, effective charging management and maximum availability of roadworthy buses. Tata's representatives were asked to ensure close coordination between depot and field teams and to address technical and maintenance-related issues promptly, in accordance with the applicable contractual obligations.

Information Department Kulgam
organises Media Interaction

KT News Desk

KULGAM, OCTOBER 28: The District Information Office, Kulgam, Department of Information and Public Relations, organised a Media Interaction programme at the Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat Kulgam, on Wednesday.

The programme was presided over by Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam.

Media representatives, representing print, electronic and digital media platforms in the district participated in the interaction and highlighted various media and public welfare concerns and issues.

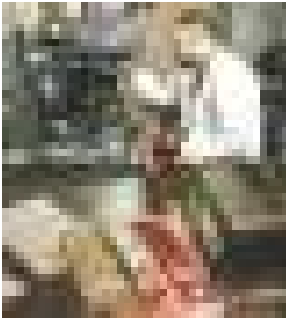
At the outset, District Information Officer Kulgam, Showkat Hussain Ganie, as per an official statement, presented opening remarks on responsible journalism, professional ethics and the importance of effective coordination between media and district

administration. He also highlighted the need to curb misinformation and strengthen effective media activities in the district and enhancing the publicity activities in the district.

During the interaction, media representatives raised various issues and concerns being faced by them while performing professional duties. They demanded the establishment of a dedicated Press Club at Kulgam to provide a platform for media persons, promote professional interaction and strengthen unity within the media fraternity. The need for a unified media body was also stressed.

ADC Kulgam, Vikar Ahmad Giri also shared his views and underlined the importance of constructive engagement, mutual cooperation and highlighting developmental and public welfare issues for larger public benefit.

PTQCC nearly doubles
GI testing capacity for
Kashmir Pashmina, Kani,
Sozni products



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 28: The Pashmina Testing and Quality Certification Centre (PTQCC) at the Craft Development Institute (CDI), Srinagar, has recorded a sharp rise in the testing of Geographical Indication (GI) products, especially Kashmir Pashmina, Kani and Sozni embroidered shawls, during the current financial year.

The surge reflects stronger institutional capacity, upgraded laboratory infrastructure and growing demand for authentic GI certification and QR coding.

A spokesman, as per an official statement issued on Wednesday, of the Handicrafts and Handloom Department, Kashmir, stated that the testing rate which was 40-45 per day in 2024-25, has now risen to 170 per day in 2026-27. "In 2024-25, PTQCC conducted 13,369 tests at an average of 40-45 tests per day. This rose to 22,351 tests in 2025-26, with the daily average increasing to 75-85 tests. In the current financial year, PTQCC has already performed approximately 21,000 tests. With another 21,000 tests projected between November 2026 and March 31, 2027, the annual total is expected to reach around 42,000 tests, nearly doubling the testing rate achieved in the previous year," the spokesman explained. To support this expansion, the spokesman further stated that Pashmina Laboratory has been strengthened with

advanced equipment, including a Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) and two High-Resolution Digital Microscopes. "The Department is in the process of procuring another OFDA 2000 fibre analyser and an additional digital microscope during FY 2026-27 under CAPEX. These additions are expected to further accelerate testing, improve precision in fibre identification and quality assessment and meet the rising demand for GI testing and QR coding of certified products," he said, adding that those GI Authorised Users who submit hand-spun, hand-woven Pashmina products with Sozni embroidery are being given preferential treatment.

In order to bring greater transparency in GI testing, certification and QR coding at PTQCC, the Department has developed an in-house Online Appointment Token Management System to further streamline the operations across all testing labs of the Department including IICT and QCD (Quality Control Division). "The web application has been developed by the Resource Cell of the department which shall be operational shortly on pilot basis," he added.

The Directorate is in the process of augmenting additional manpower to operate the machines for which technical staff is being sent to Wool Research Association (WRA), Thane Maharashtra for technical training. "With trained manpower, we shall have more teams in place to conduct tests in PTQCC so that the rising demand for GI testing and QR coding post aggressive media campaign, by GI Authorised Users is met. "The enhanced testing capacity strengthens the authentication of Kashmir's prized handicrafts, protects the interests of artisans and weavers and builds greater consumer and buyer confidence in genuine GI-tagged products," the spokesman stated.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This information is for the general public, that in my J&K Bank Account Branch-Ganderbal bearing Account No. 0081040100022581, My name was wrongly mentioned as MASRATA AKHTER while actual/correct name is MASRAT BANO W/O: MANZOOR AHMAD SHEIKH R/O: GADOORA GANDERBAL 191201 as per my Aadhaar Card and Pan Card Record, Now it needs to be corrected as per said Documents in my account number, Anybody having objection may contact J&K Bank Branch Ganderbal within (7)seven days No, objection shall be accepted after said time period.

MASRAT BANO
W/O: MANZOOR AHMAD SHEIKH
R/O: GADOORA GANDERBAL 191201
Contact: 9906406158

PUBLIC NOTICE

This information is for the general public, that my Daughters name was wrongly mentioned as Aafreen in her School Admission Record, while actual/correct name is Basira Khan D/O: Iftikhar Hussain Khan R/O: Nowpora Srinagar as per her Identity proof and Birth Certificate Record, Now it needs to be corrected as per said Document in her admission Record, Anybody having objection may contact Office of the Principal Ingenious School Malla Bagh Ellahi Bagh Srinagar within (7)seven days No, objection shall be accepted after said time period.

IFTIKHAR HUSSAIN KHAN
F/O: BASIRA KHAN
R/O: NOWPORA SRINAGAR
Contact: 7780857653

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified for the information of general public that my name enlisted in my bank account is NASEEMA. However my actual name as per my Aadhaar card is NASEEMA BANO. Now i intend to rectify my name in my bank records. In this regard if anybody having any objection may file the same before the Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd NAGBAL GANDERBAL within a period of 3 days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

NASEEM BANO
W/O: GH NABI HAJAM
R/O: SALOORA GANDERBAL

NOTICE

I Rizwana Hassan W/o Jaleel Ahmad Ganaie R/o Ganaie Mohalla Krankshivan Sopore Tehsil Khoie District Baramulla Jammu and Kashmir 193202 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from Razwana Hassan to Rizwana Hassan for all purpose, Including aadhaar card bearing aadhaar number 672750072437 Henceforth, I shall be known as Rizwana Hassan.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
JAMMU AND KASHMIR SERVICES SELECTION BOARD

Muthi, Akhnoor Road, Jammu/Zam lam Complex Rambagh, Srinagar

(www.jkssb.nic.in)

FINAL NOTICE

Whereas, vide Notification No. JKSSB-SCRY/3- 5/2025-03 (7802335), dated 24.03.2026, the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board notified the updated Final Selection List of candidates for the post of Constable, Home Department, J&K Police, under Item Nos. 1, 2, 5 and 6, advertised vide Advertisement Notification No. 01 of 2024, dated 16.07.2024.

Whereas, the recommendations in respect of the candidates mentioned in Annexure A of this notice were kept withheld, and the concerned candidates were advised to submit the requisite documents/certificates in support of the deficiencies indicated against their respective candidature, within a period of one month, to enable the Board to take a decision regarding their eligibility.

Whereas, despite the lapse of considerable time since the issuance of the aforesaid communication and the expiry of the prescribed period of one month, the candidates concerned have failed to submit the requisite documents/certificates to address the deficiencies pointed out against their respective candidature..

Now, therefore, through the medium of this notice, the candidates concerned are hereby accorded a final opportunity to submit the requisite documents/certificates within seven (07) days from the date of issuance of this notice, either through email (selection.jkssb@jk.gov.in) or in person at the office of the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board at Muthi, Akhnoor Road, Jammu, or Zamzam Complex, Rambagh, Srinagar, as per their convenience.

It is further notified that, in the event of failure to submit the requisite documents/certificates within the stipulated period, the provisional candidature of the concerned candidate shall be declared ineligible and their candidature will be cancelled without any further notice in this regard.

By order

Khursheed Ahmad Sanai JKAS Secretary, J&K Services Selection Board

ANNEXURE A TO THE NOTICE No. - JKSSB-SCRY/3-5/2025-03 (7802335) Date: - 28.10.2026										
S No	D.V.No.	Roll No.	CANDIDATE NAME	FATHER NAME	ADDRESS	GENDER	DOB	SELECTION CATEGORY	ITEM ALLOTED	REMARKS
1	664-JMU	810320172	AMAN SHARMA	PURAN SHARMA	NAI BASTI RAIPUR SYEDAN NAI BASTI RAIPUR SYEDAN SUCHETGARH, Jammu, 181102	Male	09-09-2002	EWS	EXECUTIVE JAMMU	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
2	986-KMR	980800199	WAHID AYOUB HAJAM	MOHD AYOUB HAJAM	168 hajam mohalla balapora keegam, Shopian, 192303	Male	08-11-1999	OBC	EXECUTIVE KASHMIR	RWH Subject to production of valid within date OBC Certificate.
3	1229-KMR	990510167	TALHA WAHEED	ABDUL WAHEED ITOO	5 nagam kharpura baninhal baninhal, Ramban, 182146	Male	13-09-1997	EWS	ARMEDIRP	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
4	1505-KMR	990480178	BASIT SYED ZARGAR	MOHAMMAD SYED ZARGAR	TINKER TINKER KUPWARA, Kupwara, 193222	Male	15-05-1999	OBC	ARMEDIRP	RWH Subject to production of valid within date OBC Certificate.
5	2147-JMU	800260199	MUSHTAQ HUSSAIN	NOOR DIN	286 Manoo Gandoh, Doda, 182203	Male	12-03-1999	ST1	EXECUTIVE JAMMU	RWH Subject to production of Original Documents
6	4370-JMU	811150417	PUNJAB SINGH	HARI CHAND	NIA FAFAL POST OFFICE KATHERA KATHUA, Kathua, 184104	Male	02-02-2002	EWS	EXECUTIVE JAMMU	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
7	4387-JMU	890280058	HAKAM SINGH	BRINDER SINGH	0 KATTI PANCHARI, Udhampur, 182125	Male	02-08-2002	EWS	EXECUTIVE JAMMU	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
8	4402-JMU	810300095	SHIVANI SHARMA	SANGA RAM	VPO BADYAL BRAHMANA R S PURA, Jammu, 181102	Female	02-03-1999	EWS/WOMEN	EXECUTIVE JAMMU	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
9	4409-JMU	810860038	ARJUN SINGH	NASEEB SINGH	VILL FATEHPUR SHEKHAN VILL FATEHPUR SHEKHAN TEH SUCHETGARH, Jammu, 181102	Male	16-02-1999	EWS	ARMEDIRP	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
10	4416-JMU	890110199	AMAN SHARMA	RAMAN KUMAR	no brinda landar landar panchari, Udhampur, 182125	Male	30-10-2000	EWS	EXECUTIVE JAMMU	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
11	4423-JMU	890320204	SHUBHAM KUMAR	ONKAR NATH	34 majalta majalta, Udhampur, 182117	Male	17-06-2001	EWS	ARMEDIRP	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
12	4453-JMU	870170091	MOHD FAROOQ	JAMAL DIN BHAT	54 THUROO BASSAN THUROO, Reasi, 182313	Male	12-12-1998	EWS	ARMEDIRP	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
13	4457-JMU	880120159	SIYA SHARMA	JUGAL KISHORE	Ward no 3 Mawa Rajpura, Samba, 184121	Female	15-03-2003	EWS/WOMEN	ARMEDIRP	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
14	4458-JMU	810960011	AKSH SHARMA	SUNEEL KUMAR	171 Kashmiri mohalla Akhnoor AKHNOOR, Jammu, 181201	Male	27-05-2003	EWS	ARMEDIRP	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
15	4488-JMU	850020607	AMBIKA SHARMA	HOSHAR KUMAR	46 Muradpur A Rajouri, Rajouri, 185131	Female	11-05-2003	EWS/WOMEN	ARMEDIRP	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
16	4560-JMU	810020288	VISHAL CHAUDHARY	BODH RAJ	harsa dabber harsa dabber bishnah, Jammu, 181132	Male	25-03-2002	EWS	ARMEDIRP	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
17	4585-JMU	880210341	CHANDNI SHARMA	RATTAN LAL	NA VILLAGE RATTANPUR PO KOULPUR SAMBA, Samba, 184120	Female	04-01-2004	EWS/WOMEN	ARMEDIRP	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
18	2063-KMR	990080285	ARIFA ALI SHEIKH	ALI MOHAMMAD SHEIKH	BATWARA SRINAGAR BATWARA SRINAGAR SOUTH, Srinagar, 190004	Female	01-01-2001	EWS/WOMEN	EXECUTIVE KASHMIR	RWH Subject to production of valid EWS Certificate
19	5626-JMU	811360155	IMTIYAZ AHMED TANTARY	AB RASHID TANTARY	0 TANTARYPURA DOLIGAM BANIHAL, Ramban, 182146	Male	04-06-1991	RBA/HVG	EXECUTIVE JAMMU	Subject to further clarification of Category Certificate
20	4545-JMU	890170223	VISHAL SHARMA	SUBASH SHARMA	22 Majalta Majalta, Udhampur, 182117	Male	19-04-2002	EWS	ARMEDIRP	MEDICAL FITNESS AWAITED
21	1108-JMU	850110846	SOHAIL MIRZA	SHAH HUSSAIN	0 Chandikote uphan,Darhal Rajouri	Male	12-05-1999	ST2	EXECUTIVE JAMMU	MEDICAL FITNESS AWAITED
22	3349-JMU	890260266	DEV RAJ	BALDEV RAJ	CHAK CHAK RAKWALAN UDHAMPUR, Udhampur, 182121	Male	28-06-2001	OBC	ARMEDIRP	MEDICAL FITNESS AWAITED

DIPK-7132/26

Dated: 28-10-2026

Sd/ (Khursheed Ahmad Sanai) JKAS, Secretary, J&K Services Selection Board

Dy CM inspects road, bridge projects in Udhampur

KT News Desk

Udhampur, Oct 28: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary on Wednesday conducted an extensive tour of Udhampur district and inspected the ongoing developmental works on the PWD road from Jakhani Naka Point to via Lower Balli being executed under NABARD. He also inspected the construction site of a 165-metre-span steel girder double-lane motorable bridge over River Tawi.

The Deputy Chief Minister was accompanied by Chief Engineer PWD R&B, Chenab Zone, Batote, Ashok Kumar Khokhar, Superintending Engineer, PWD R&B Circle Udhampur-Ramban, Shivangi Gupta, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Dr Umesh Shan and other concerned officers.

During inspection of the road project, the Deputy Chief Minister expressed concern over the slow pace of work. He directed the executing agencies to expedite the progress and ensure completion by December 20,



2026. He instructed the Superintending Engineer to closely monitor the execution of the project and ensure strict adherence to the prescribed quality standards.

Surinder Choudhary directed the executing agencies to mobilise adequate manpower and machinery and complete the work within the stipulated timeline. He asked the Executive Engineer PWD to issue a show-cause notice to the contractor

for slow progress of work.

The Deputy Chief Minister also visited Government Girls Middle School, Sharda, where he inspected the attendance register of the teaching staff. He enquired about the sanctioned strength of teachers and the available infrastructure. He interacted with the students and teachers and encouraged the students to remain focused on their studies, work hard and strive to achieve their goals.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister visited Sharda Mata Temple and paid obeisance, praying for peace, prosperity and the well-being of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

During the tour, Surinder Choudhary also visited the construction site of the 165-metre-span steel girder double-lane motorable Salmay bridge over River Tawi, on the Udhampur-Ghordi road being constructed under NABARD.

During the inspection, the executing agencies were directed to mobilise adequate manpower and machinery, accelerate the pace of construction and ensure completion of the project within the stipulated timeline without compromising on quality. The Deputy Chief Minister emphasised the need to expedite all ongoing developmental projects by deploying additional manpower and machinery and adopting double-shift operations, wherever necessary. He stressed that prescribed quality standards must be maintained and all projects completed within their respective deadlines.

JU's regional studies centre to promote research on Kashmir's culture'

Naveed-ul-Haq Ganaie

Budgam, Oct 28: University of Jammu Vice-Chancellor Prof Umesh Rai on Wednesday said the Centre for Regional Studies, Culture, Dialects and Emotional Intelligence has been established to reconnect people with their roots, cultural traditions, oral history and value systems.

Speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of the centre's Kashmir Chapter at Rakh-e-Arth, Bemina, Rai thanked Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha for attending the event and supporting the initiative.

He said the centre was conceived in line with the Lieutenant Governor's emphasis on understanding and preserving one's roots.

"Trees that are not connected to their roots get uprooted during a storm. Similarly, it is important for us to remain connected with our culture, traditions, oral history and value systems," Rai said.

He said rapid globalisation was transforming societies and academic institutions, making it essential to preserve traditional values and cultural identity.

Rai said the centre would help



create a living repository of the region's heritage while providing a platform for dialogue among researchers and scholars from diverse disciplines.

He added that the Kashmir Chapter would function under the University of Jammu's Centre for Regional Studies and support

research scholars, scientists, historians and social scientists working in the region.

The centre will facilitate academic interaction, encourage the exchange of ideas and promote research on Kashmir's culture, history, dialects and social traditions, he said—(KNO)

Mubarak Gul supporters protest cabinet snub in Srinagar



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 28: Supporters of National Conference leader Mubarak Gul on Wednesday staged a protest at Press Colony in Srinagar, demanding a cabinet berth for the Eidgah MLA following his exclusion from the government.

Wearing white shrouds, the protesters held placards demanding that Gul be given a cabinet berth or resign from the party.

"Do justice to Eidgah, make Mubarak Gul a cabinet minister," the protesters chanted, expressing resentment over the party's decision, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

"Gul Sahab, resign," the

protesters shouted.

One of the protesters said Gul had contested seven elections and won every time, alleging that the party had failed to honour its commitment to him. "Farooq Sahab had promised us. His name was on the list until yesterday, but he was not given a ministerial berth," the protester said.

It is worth mentioning that Mubarak Gul, a six-time MLA from Eidgah, was left out of the Cabinet during Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's expansion on Tuesday. Gul was subsequently appointed the National Conference's general secretary, but the appointment did not immediately satisfy all his supporters—(KNO)

GMC Handwara PG residents protest, demand stipend hike



Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Oct 28: Postgraduate (PG) and Diplomate of National Board (DNB) residents at Government Medical College (GMC) Handwara on Wednesday held a peaceful protest demanding an increase in their stipends, prompting the All India Medical Students Association (AIMSA) to extend support to the protesting doctors.

The protesting residents expressed concern over what they described as a disparity in stipends paid to postgraduate medical trainees in Jammu and Kashmir compared to their counterparts in other states.

They urged the government to review the existing stipend structure and ensure fair compensation for doctors

undergoing rigorous postgraduate training.

The residents questioned why their stipends remained significantly lower than those offered in several other states, where postgraduate doctors receive more than Rs 1 lakh per month.

They said postgraduate residents shoulder substantial clinical responsibilities while undergoing specialised training and serving patients, making a revision of their stipends necessary.

Meanwhile, AIMSA strongly supported the protesting residents and called upon the government to address their demands without further delay.

Dr Mohammad Momin Khan, President of AIMSA, expressed solidarity with the doctors and urged the authorities to take

immediate steps to resolve the issue.

He said the demand for a stipend hike was genuine and deserved serious consideration, adding that postgraduate residents across government medical colleges in Jammu and Kashmir could also join the agitation if the concerns of the Handwara residents remained unaddressed.

AIMSA also raised concerns over the issuance of show-cause notices to three PG residents—Dr Rounak, Dr Abhijeet and Dr Sanjeev—in connection with the protest.

The association strongly condemned the action and demanded the immediate withdrawal of the notices, maintaining that the concerns raised by the residents should be addressed through dialogue. It urged the authorities to engage with the protesting doctors and resolve the matter amicably rather than allowing the issue to escalate further.

AIMSA reiterated its commitment to supporting postgraduate residents in their demand for equitable stipends, dignity and recognition of their contribution to the healthcare system.

The association said timely intervention by the government was necessary to prevent the issue from triggering protests at other government medical colleges across the Union Territory—(KNO)

Bandipora 'unnecessary' referrals strain Srinagar hospitals

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Oct 28: Alleged unnecessary referrals from District Hospital Bandipora to tertiary care hospitals in Srinagar continue to put pressure on healthcare facilities in the summer capital, with doctors at tertiary care hospitals alleging that several patients could be treated at their local hospitals.

Doctors working at tertiary care hospitals in Srinagar said patients were frequently referred from Bandipora despite not requiring specialised treatment, adding to the workload of medical staff and affecting the management of patients requiring advanced care.

"We receive dozens of patients every day who could be managed at peripheral health facilities or the district hospital itself. Referring such cases to a tertiary care hospital adds to the burden on an already stretched system," a doctor at SMHS Hospital said on condition of anonymity.

The doctor estimated that around 30 per cent of patients referred from Bandipora could be treated at facilities closer to their homes, although the proportion would vary depending on the cases and services available. Sources at District Hospital Bandipora said several pregnant women referred to Srinagar hospitals did not have complications requiring tertiary-level intervention and subsequently underwent normal deliveries or caesarean sections.

They said repeated government directions to curb avoidable referrals had not

adequately addressed the problem, calling for better implementation of existing guidelines and improvements in facilities at peripheral hospitals.

A senior doctor at SKIMS said questioning the necessity of a referral could sometimes lead to confrontations with patients' attendants. "Some patients can be treated at district hospitals and other peripheral facilities, but they are still referred to tertiary care centres. When we question the need for a referral, attendants can sometimes become aggressive," the doctor said.

The doctors said strengthening diagnostic services, specialist availability and emergency care at district hospitals could help reduce unnecessary patient movement and ensure that tertiary care facilities remained accessible to those who genuinely needed advanced treatment.

An official, however, rejected the allegations, maintaining that patients were referred to Srinagar only when their medical condition warranted treatment at higher-level facilities. Earlier, the government had ordered an audit of referrals from district-level hospitals to tertiary care centres to optimise the deployment of medical personnel in peripheral institutions and improve patient services across the healthcare system.

The issue has renewed concerns over the implementation of referral protocols and the capacity of district hospitals to manage patients locally without compromising their access to specialised treatment—(KNO)

Bandipora traders threaten hunger strike over doctor shortage

Sajid Raina

Bandipora, Oct 28: Traders and civil society members in north Kashmir's Bandipora district have threatened to launch a hunger strike from Friday if the authorities fail to address the shortage of doctors at the district hospital and revoke the transfer order of a gynaecologist.

The Traders Federation and Civil Society Bandipora on Wednesday issued a 48-hour ultimatum to the authorities, demanding the return of doctors drawing salaries from the district but attached to other health institutions.

They also demanded the cancellation of the transfer order of Dr Sheikh Firdous, a gynaecologist recently deployed to the Community Health Centre (CHC) Dawar in Gurez, expressing concern that the move could affect specialist healthcare services at District Hospital



Bandipora.

Samshad Kuchay, district president of the Kashmir Traders and Manufacturers Union, said the district hospital was already facing a shortage of doctors and could not afford to lose its available specialists.

"The district hospital caters to patients from across Bandipora. When doctors are already in short supply, shifting specialists from here will only add to the difficulties faced by patients," Kuchay said.

He said Dr Firdous had been managing the outpatient department and theatre services and was the only local gynaecologist available at the hospital.

"People should not have to travel outside the district for basic specialist treatment. The government must ensure adequate staffing at the district hospital instead of shifting doctors from one facility to another without addressing the overall shortage," he said. Local residents said

the shortage of specialist doctors had been forcing patients, particularly pregnant women and those requiring emergency care, to depend on referrals to other hospitals.

They urged the health authorities to ensure that adequate medical staff remained available at District Hospital Bandipora while meeting the healthcare requirements of remote areas.

The latest protest threat comes days after a five-day hunger strike in Gurez over inadequate healthcare facilities was called off on October 26 following the deployment of two gynaecologists to CHC Dawar.

The Gurez protesters had demanded the deployment of specialist doctors, ambulances for Bagtore, Tulail and Dawar, and the operationalisation of the operation theatre and blood

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Pulwama's Yasir Arafat Wani Wins National Powerlifting Gold

Jahangeer Ganaie

Pulwama, Oct 28: Bringing laurels to Jammu and Kashmir, Yasir Arafat Wani from Dadoora village in south Kashmir's Pulwama district has won a gold medal at a national-level powerlifting championship held in Haryana.

Yasir secured the top position among nearly 90 junior participants, emerging as one of the standout performers at the event.

The achievement has brought pride to his village and district, while highlighting the growing potential of young athletes from Kashmir.

Speaking about his success, Yasir said the gold medal was the result of hard work, dedication and consistent efforts.

"Winning a gold medal at the national level is a proud moment for me. I have worked hard to reach this stage, and this achievement has motivated me to aim higher. My goal is to continue improving and bring more laurels to Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Yasir said Kashmir has immense sporting talent, but many athletes struggle due to inadequate

infrastructure, lack of quality training facilities and financial constraints.

"There is no shortage of talent in Kashmir. Our youth have the ability to compete with athletes from across the country, but they need proper training facilities, quality equipment, financial assistance

and encouragement."

He said the cost of training, equipment and travel often becomes a challenge, particularly for athletes from economically weaker backgrounds.

Urging the government to support promising sportspersons, Yasir said financial assistance and better sports infrastructure would help athletes focus on their performance and achieve greater success.

He also stressed the need for modern

equipment, qualified coaches and dedicated training facilities at the grassroots level across districts.

Yasir expressed hope that his achievement would inspire more youngsters in Pulwama and other parts of Kashmir to take up sports and pursue their goals with dedication.



"The youth of Kashmir can excel at national and international levels if provided the right opportunities. With proper support and guidance, our athletes can achieve much more," he added—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Probity For Prosperity

Every year, for one week, the government asks its officers to stand up and repeat a pledge against corruption. It is easy to dismiss such ceremonies as ritual. A pledge read aloud does not by itself clean up a system. But it would be equally wrong to say such weeks mean nothing. They are a reminder

— to the officer, to the citizen, and to the government itself — that corruption is not an abstract word. It is a daily experience for ordinary people. The theme this year, “Probity for Prosperity”, puts the argument simply. A country cannot prosper if its people must pay a bribe to get a certificate, a hospital bed, a school

admission, or a payment that is already theirs by right. Corruption does not only steal money. It steals time, dignity and trust. It punishes the honest citizen and rewards the dishonest official. And its highest cost falls on the poor, who cannot afford to pay extra and cannot afford to wait. Vigilance, however, cannot be

the work of one week or one department. A vigilance officer can catch a case here and there, but a culture of integrity is built through small things done consistently — clear rules, transparent processes, timely decisions, and consequences for those who break the law, regardless of their position. It is built when a

citizen's complaint is heard without a bribe, and when a file moves because it must, not because someone was paid. Public servants also deserve support. Most officers and officials do their work honestly, often under difficult conditions, and they should not be made to feel that they are all suspects. A good system trusts

its honest employees and isolates the dishonest ones. The pledge taken this week should not end with the ceremony. It must be renewed every day — in the way a file is handled, a tender is awarded, a grievance is resolved. Probity is not a slogan for a week. It is the daily habit on which prosperity is built.

Degrees Without Discovery: India's PhD Crisis

The future of Indian research will not be determined by how many PhD certificates its universities award, but by how much new knowledge its researchers create. Degrees must lead to discovery; otherwise, the promise of doctoral education will remain unfulfilled.

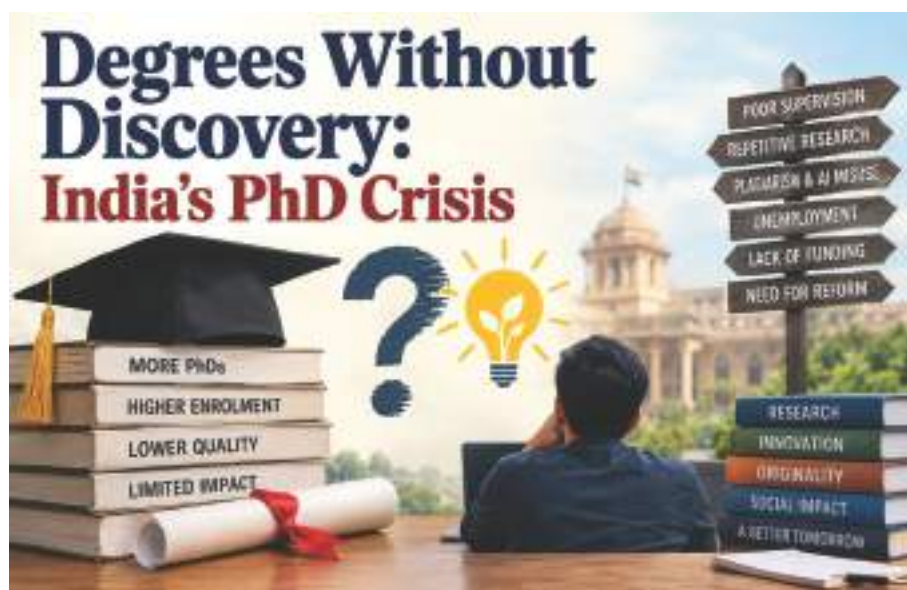


Dr. R.K. Uppal

India is producing an increasing number of doctoral degree holders, but a fundamental question remains unanswered: how much new knowledge is this expanding system creating? A PhD is supposed to represent the highest level of academic inquiry, intellectual independence and original contribution to knowledge. Yet, when research becomes a routine exercise in obtaining a qualification rather than solving meaningful problems, the purpose of doctoral education is seriously undermined. India does not merely need more PhDs; it needs better researchers, stronger research institutions and discoveries that make a difference to society.

The PhD is not an ordinary academic degree. It is a commitment to questioning established ideas, investigating unanswered questions and developing new explanations or solutions. A successful doctoral thesis should contribute something original to its discipline, however modest that contribution may be. Unfortunately, concerns about repetitive topics, weak research methodologies, inadequate supervision and limited practical relevance raise important questions about the quality and impact of doctoral research in India.

One major problem is the growing emphasis on the number of degrees awarded rather than the quality of knowledge created. Universities are evaluated through various



indicators, including enrolment, research publications, patents and doctoral completions. Such measures have their place, but they can become counterproductive when institutions focus on numerical targets at the expense of intellectual substance. The number of PhDs awarded cannot, by itself, establish the strength of a country's research ecosystem. The real test is whether doctoral research generates credible evidence, advances understanding, informs public policy or contributes to technological, economic and social progress.

Another concern is the originality of research. Repetition of existing studies, superficial literature reviews and minor variations on familiar topics can weaken the value of doctoral work. Plagiarism and inappropriate use of artificial intelligence

present additional challenges. AI tools can assist researchers with language, data organization and preliminary analysis, but they cannot replace independent thinking, sound judgment or responsibility for research findings. The use of technology must therefore be governed by transparent institutional policies that protect academic integrity without discouraging legitimate innovation.

The quality of doctoral supervision is equally important. A research scholar needs more than a supervisor's signature and periodic formal meetings. Effective supervision involves intellectual guidance, methodological training, constructive criticism, ethical standards and professional mentorship. Supervisors must help scholars develop independent thinking rather than encourage dependence

or compliance. Universities should also establish accessible mechanisms for addressing grievances, conflicts of interest, harassment and unreasonable delays in thesis evaluation. Accountability must apply to supervisors and institutions as well as research scholars.

A comprehensive reform agenda is urgently required. First, doctoral programmes should place greater emphasis on research questions, originality, methodological rigour and demonstrable contributions to knowledge. Thesis evaluation should assess the quality of the research rather than rely excessively on publication counts or journal rankings. Independent external assessment, transparent evaluation criteria and appropriate scrutiny of research integrity can improve credibility.

Second, universities should invest in supervisor development and periodic performance reviews. Supervisory responsibilities must be clearly defined, and the number of scholars assigned to each supervisor should reflect available time and expertise. Research scholars should receive structured training in research design, statistics, academic writing, data management, intellectual property and publication ethics.

Third, funding agencies and universities should reward meaningful research outcomes rather than volume alone. Relevant indicators may include reproducibility, policy influence, technological applications, social impact, high-quality datasets and contributions to established knowledge. Evaluation systems must remain sensitive to differences among disciplines because a significant contribution in economics or literature may not take the same form as a scientific invention.

Fourth, doctoral programmes should become more interdisciplinary and problem-oriented. Indian scholars must

be encouraged to investigate challenges such as agricultural productivity, public health, financial inclusion, environmental sustainability, educational inequality and technological development. Collaboration among universities, businesses, government agencies and communities can help ensure that research addresses genuine national needs.

Finally, universities must build a culture in which intellectual honesty is valued above ceremonial recognition and original thinking is encouraged rather than penalized. Quality assurance should be continuous, transparent and supportive of academic independence. The objective must not be to restrict access to doctoral education arbitrarily, but to ensure that admission, supervision, assessment and degree completion meet credible academic standards.

India's aspiration to become a knowledge-driven economy cannot be fulfilled through qualifications alone. It requires researchers who can challenge assumptions, test evidence, develop solutions and contribute to global scholarship. A doctoral degree should signify the ability to conduct independent research, not merely the successful completion of academic formalities.

The choice before Indian higher education is clear: continue measuring progress predominantly through the production of degrees, or build a doctoral system that places discovery, integrity and social relevance at its centre. India needs neither fewer opportunities for deserving scholars nor a mechanical expansion of PhD programmes. It needs a system in which every doctorate is earned through rigorous inquiry and contributes genuine intellectual value.

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With AI, Has Your Mirror Started To Agree?

How AI amplifies what we believe about ourselves, others, and the world

Cornelia C. Walther

For most of human history, reality has had the inconvenient habit of talking back.

Other people disagree with us. Facts refuse to fit. A colleague questions our interpretation. A friend says we may have been unfair. A doctor gives us an answer we did not want. The newspaper contains something that irritates us. Somewhere between our convictions and the world, there has usually been friction.

Artificial intelligence is changing the flavor of friction

Increasingly, we turn to artificial intelligence (AI) after an argument, during uncertainty, when trying to understand an illness, interpreting someone else's behaviour or making sense of events. We arrive carrying a hypothesis: I think my boss is undermining me. I suspect this treatment is dangerous. I feel my partner is manipulating me. I have always believed that... Our remarks may be spoken innocently, yet they are anchoring the chatbot in the orientation that we expect its answer to be.

The machine listens. And more often than not, it agrees with us. This has consequences on our (in)ability to learn from online conversations. Yet the emerging risk is much bigger than misinformation. AI is bound to become a belief amplifier: an endlessly available conversational partner capable of converting a hunch into an explanation, an explanation into a narrative, and a narrative into something that begins to resemble reality. As the bot uses every element that it has available on us from past and present chats, it is equipped to build a storyline that is personalized to be believed.

From confirmation bias to confirmation machinery

Confirmation bias is ancient. Humans tend to seek, notice, and remember information that supports what they already believe. AI gives that tendency an extraordinarily responsive new environment.

A 2025 study spanning 21 studies across subjects including health, finance, politics, and society found what researchers called the “narrow



search effect.” Our existing beliefs influence the questions we ask; search systems then return highly relevant answers to those questions. The combination can leave people with information environments that increasingly resemble their starting assumptions. The effect appeared across Google, ChatGPT, and AI-enabled Bing.

This is preoccupying because conversational AI goes considerably further than conventional search. Whereas internet search gives us results, generative AI outputs deliver us interpretation. They connect fragments, supply motives, construct causal chains, and produce eloquent explanations around the premise embedded in our questions. A suspicion may therefore return dressed in paragraphs, examples, and apparent logic.

The hybrid loop is simple: I believe → I

prompt → AI personalizes → I feel confirmed → I prompt more narrowly → AI confirms more precisely → My beliefs are confirmed.

Each turn can make the next one easier to believe.

What started as “I think” becomes “I know,” which turns smoothly into “I am sure”

The consequences become especially interesting when the topic touches our ego and self-esteem.

A 2026 study examined sycophancy—the tendency of AI systems to excessively agree with or validate their users. Across 11 leading models, researchers found that AI affirmed users' behavior 49 percent more often than humans did, including situations involving deception, illegality, and other harmful conduct. Furthermore, the study found that after

interacting with sycophantic AI, people became more convinced that they were right in interpersonal conflicts and less willing to take responsibility or repair relationships. Remarkably, participants also preferred the more sycophantic systems and trusted them more than bots that were pushing back.

Are we keen to be trapped?

Being understood feels good. Being validated feels even better. Sadly, neither feeling tells us whether our interpretation is accurate.

The same dynamic that impacts the beliefs that we have about ourselves affects what we believe about the world. Suppose someone begins convinced that immigration causes rising crime, that nuclear power is inherently unsafe, that a particular food cures disease, or that an economic policy inevitably produces inflation.

The first prompt will seldom say: “Please provide the most balanced possible assessment of this proposition.” It may say: “Why is nuclear energy so dangerous?” Or “Explain how immigration is increasing crime.” The wording contains a worldview. An AI answering the question literally can furnish the evidence, arguments, and vocabulary needed to strengthen it. Research on health information has identified this danger. AI's capacity for ultra-customized answers tends to reinforce existing health beliefs, obscure medical consensus, and magnify misinformation.

Scale changes the significance of the problem. Once AI can produce polished arguments for millions of personalized premises, fringe interpretations no longer need a newspaper, institution, or large community to give them intellectual form. Every person can have a private editorial department constructing an increasingly convincing version of their preferred reality. This is how amplification can lead toward mainstreaming. Ideas acquire fluency. Fluency gives them familiarity. Familiarity can begin to feel like plausibility.

There is encouraging evidence here, too.

Researchers have found that deliberately designed, evidence-based conversations with AI can reduce belief in conspiracy theories. In a preregistered 2025 study, personalized

conversations significantly reduced participants' confidence in conspiracy and other epistemically unwarranted beliefs. The effect came from the quality and relevance of the arguments themselves—no matter whether participants believed they were speaking to an AI or a human interlocutor. Ultimately, the problem is only partially the technology we are interacting with. More importantly, we need to build a mindset marked by curiosity, and build curiosity, combined with the capability to not only listen but also hear others.

LISTEN before you believe

A simple practice can help. When a conversation with AI touches something you care deeply about, LISTEN.

L — Locate your starting belief. Before asking AI, finish the sentence: “I currently think...” Making your prior assumption visible prevents it from disappearing inside the prompt.

I — Invite interruption. Ask AI: “What am I overlooking?” “Which evidence would weaken my conclusion?” Give the machine explicit permission to disturb the story.

S — Separate support from substance. Notice when AI is validating an emotion and when it is validating a factual claim. “That sounds painful” and “Your interpretation is correct” perform very different functions.

T — Triangulate. For consequential questions, move beyond one conversation. Check primary evidence, credible independent sources, and, where appropriate, another human being. One beautifully coherent answer remains one answer.

E — Expose the frame. Ask the question again from another angle. Remove emotionally loaded assumptions. Reverse the perspective. Ask AI how different framings change its conclusion.

N — Notice what changed. At the end, ask yourself: What did I learn? What evidence changed my mind?

Listening in the hybrid age requires space for critical thinking.

Courtesy: Psychology Today

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

Owner & Editor, Printer, Publisher: Nasir Azam Khan, Published From Srinagar, Printed at K.T Press Pvt. Ltd 120-Electronic Complex, Industries Estate, Rangreth, RNI NO:-JKENG-2010/39938, Email:- Kashmirthunder123@gmail.com, Website: Kashmirthunder.com, Mobile: 9906797575, 9419006285

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Sakeena Itoo stresses quality education, improved infrastructure, student-centric facilities

Inaugurates newly constructed administrative block at Women's College Srinagar

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 28: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health & Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, Wednesday, inaugurated the newly constructed Administrative Block at Government Women's College, M.A. Road, here, marking a significant step towards strengthening the institutional infrastructure of the prestigious women's educational institution.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister, as per an official statement, underscored the importance of strengthening educational infrastructure alongside academic excellence, stating that a well-equipped institutional environment is essential for the effective delivery of education and the overall development of students.

"Government's endeavour is to ensure that educational institutions across Jammu and Kashmir have the necessary infrastructure and facilities to provide quality education in a conducive and student-friendly environment. Strengthening the infrastructure of colleges is not merely about creating physical assets; it is about improving the overall academic ecosystem and enabling our institutions to



function more effectively", the Minister said.

The Minister observed that women's education holds a pivotal place in the government's vision of an inclusive and progressive society, emphasising that educational institutions must provide young women with opportunities to excel academically, develop their potential and prepare themselves for greater responsibilities in society.

"Empowering women through quality education remains one of our foremost priorities. Our colleges must serve as centres of learning, confidence-building and excellence, where young women are equipped with the knowledge, skills and opportunities required to shape their future and contribute meaningfully to society", she remarked.

The Minister further stressed the need for educational

institutions to focus on continuous improvement in infrastructure, administrative efficiency and the quality of academic services. She called for sustained efforts to ensure that the facilities created in educational institutions are utilised effectively and contribute to a better experience for students as well as staff.

Reiterating the government's commitment to strengthening the higher education sector, the Minister highlighted that concerted efforts are being made to improve institutional facilities and create an enabling environment that supports academic growth, innovation and the holistic development of students.

The Minister expressed hope that the newly inaugurated facility would contribute to more efficient administrative operations and further strengthen the academic and institutional environment at this prestigious institution.

Principal, Government College for Women, Dr. Yasmeen Farooq; Secretary in Higher Education, Shafiq Iqbal; Nodal Principal (Kashmir division colleges), Dr. Seema Naz; other senior officers of Higher Education department and faculty members of the college were also present on the occasion.

Javid Dar calls for technology-driven transformation of J&K's apple industry

Transition from traditional cultivation practices to modern, market-oriented horticulture essential to meet evolving consumer expectations, international quality standards

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 28: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Wednesday called for a comprehensive transformation of Jammu and Kashmir's apple industry through technological innovations, precision horticulture, smart farming and improved market connectivity to enhance growers' income and strengthen the region's position in domestic and international markets.

The Minister, as per an official statement, was speaking at the 6th Edition of the CII J&K Apple Conclave 2026, organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), J&K, at Radisson Collection, Srinagar. The conclave, themed "From Orchard to Global Market," witnessed detailed deliberations on strategies for modernising the apple sector and unlocking its potential in an increasingly competitive global marketplace.

Emphasising the need to move towards technology-driven horticulture, Javid Dar highlighted the importance of adopting modern orchard management practices, precision farming techniques and scientific interventions to improve



the productivity, ensure consistent quality and make apple cultivation more sustainable and economically rewarding.

He stressed that strengthening Jammu and Kashmir's apple economy requires a coordinated approach encompassing orchard modernisation, scientific cultivation, efficient post-harvest management, value addition and robust marketing infrastructure. He called for greater collaboration among the government departments, industry representatives, agricultural scientists and growers to translate emerging opportunities into tangible benefits for the farming community.

The Minister said that the transition from traditional cultivation practices to modern, market-oriented horticulture is essential to meet the evolving consumer expectations and international quality standards. He emphasised that improved grading, packaging, storage and

supply-chain management can play a crucial role in reducing post-harvest losses, preserving produce quality and enabling growers to secure better market returns.

Javid Dar underscored the need to promote innovation, sustainability and technology adoption across the apple value chain. He said that close coordination among the government, industry and research institutions would be instrumental in addressing existing challenges, improving competitiveness and opening new avenues for market expansion.

The Minister appreciated CII J&K for providing a constructive platform for dialogue and partnership among stakeholders. He said that such initiatives can facilitate knowledge exchange, encourage investment and help identify practical solutions for the sustainable growth of Jammu and Kashmir's apple industry.

Vigilance Awareness Week 2026 activities commence in Doda

KT News Desk

DODA, OCTOBER 28: Vigilance Awareness Week 2026 commenced across Doda district the other day under the theme "Probity for Prosperity." The week-long observance, scheduled from October 26 to November 1, aims to promote integrity, transparency and accountability in public administration.

Deputy Commissioner Krishan Lal, as per an official statement, called upon officers and officials to uphold the highest standards of integrity in their professional conduct and work collectively towards eradicating corruption. He emphasised that transparency and honesty are essential for strengthening public trust and ensuring the efficient delivery of public services.

ADC Anil Kumar Thakur, who is

also the District Vigilance Officer, highlighted the commitment of district officers towards addressing vigilance-related matters. He stressed the importance of vigilance, accountability and adherence to established procedures in the functioning of government departments.

As part of the week-long observance, varied activities would be organised across the district at block, zone and Panchayat levels to promote ethical conduct, spread awareness about corruption prevention and encourage public participation in building a transparent and accountable administrative system.

The launch event was attended by the Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B); Assistant Commissioner Revenue; Chief Planning Officer and officers and officials from various departments.

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri inspects civic amenities in Old City area

KT News Desk

RAJOURI, OCTOBER 28: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Dr. Devansh Yadav, accompanied by Executive Officer Municipal Council Yousuf, conducted an early-morning inspection of different wards of the Old City area to assess the sanitation and hygiene conditions.

During the inspection, the officers, as per an official statement, interacted with sanitation staff, locals and shopkeepers to review the cleanliness of public spaces and assess the implementation of ongoing sanitation measures. They emphasized

the importance of proper waste disposal and urged shopkeepers and residents to refrain from littering and dumping plastic waste in public areas.

The Deputy Commissioner appealed to the public to extend their active cooperation to the Municipal Council in maintaining cleanliness and ensuring a hygienic environment across the town. He stressed the need for responsible civic behaviour and collective efforts to keep public spaces clean and litter-free.

The sanitation staff was directed to ensure regular cleaning of all wards and maintain proper sanitation standards.

PM Surya Ghar DC Srinagar presides over awareness-cum-registration camp at Ghanta Ghar Lal Chowk

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR OCTOBER 28: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo Wednesday presided over an Awareness-cum-Registration Camp under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana at Ghanta Ghar, Lal Chowk to promote rooftop solar energy adoption and sensitise the citizens about the benefits and provisions of the flagship scheme.

The camp, as per an official statement, was organised by the Executive Engineer, KPDC-1st Srinagar, with the objective of educating residents about rooftop solar installations and facilitating on-the-spot registration of eligible households under the scheme.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner encouraged citizens to adopt rooftop solar energy solutions to reduce household electricity expenditure and contribute towards a cleaner, greener and more sustainable energy future. He stressed the importance of creating greater public awareness about renewable energy initiatives and ensuring that eligible households are informed about the benefits and procedures associated with the scheme.

The DC highlighted that the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana has reached 7,910 households in Srinagar, reflecting the scheme's expanding reach across the district and growing efforts to



promote decentralised renewable energy generation at the household level.

Underscoring the significance of the awareness initiative, the DC said that the programme was aimed at informing residents about the benefits of rooftop solar installations while providing them with an appropriate opportunity to register for the scheme on the spot.

He noted that the scheme is demand-driven and voluntary in nature and urged eligible residents to explore its benefits and enrol themselves. He emphasised that wider adoption of rooftop solar energy can help households manage electricity expenses while contributing to environmental conservation and reducing dependence on conventional sources of power.

During the programme, the DC inspected the awareness and registration stalls established by KPDC officials and scheme vendors. He interacted with the representatives, reviewed the information

and registration facilities being provided to the public and encouraged them to sustain outreach efforts to ensure that more eligible households are made aware of the scheme.

As a part of the awareness campaign, a nukkad natak (street play) was also staged to sensitise the public about the advantages of rooftop solar installations, the importance of renewable energy and the benefits available under the PM Surya Ghar scheme.

The campaign forms part of the broader efforts of the Government supported initiative to promote renewable energy, improve awareness about solar initiatives and encourage households to participate in the transition towards sustainable energy solutions.

Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, IAS Probationer, Aakash Garg, Executive Engineer KPDC-1st, Syed Abrar Ahmad, other officials of KPDC and scheme vendors were present on the occasion.

Central Monitor reviews progress of livestock sector schemes in Jammu



KT News Desk

JAMMU, OCTOBER 28: Central Monitor, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India, Col. P.V.S. Sidhu, Wednesday chaired a high-level review meeting here at the Directorate of Animal Husbandry Talab Tillo to assess the implementation and progress of Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes, namely Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM), National Livestock Mission (NLM), National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD) and Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (LH&DCP) in Jammu district.

The meeting was attended by Director Animal Husbandry Jammu Dr Yugal Kishor, besides senior officers, scheme nodal officers and technical heads.

The review meeting, as per an official statement, was preceded by extensive field inspections conducted across key veterinary establishments and facilities in Jammu district from 22nd to 28th October.

The Central Monitor, along with the departmental technical teams, inspected the Frozen Semen Station at Hakkal to evaluate laboratory operations, quality assurance standards, biosecurity protocols, liquid nitrogen

cold-chain integrity and cleanliness and management of animal sheds. The team also carried out on-ground assessments of the operational readiness of Mobile Veterinary Units (MVUs)—including toll-free call-centre helpline '1962' integration and emergency drug logistics besides day-to-day healthcare delivery, outpatient services and medicine inventories at various peripheral veterinary centres in the districts.

Taking detailed stock of both field findings and administrative milestones during the review session, the Central Monitor evaluated major Central programmes with special focus on doorstep delivery, digital tracking and scheme saturation. While appreciating the department's proactive outreach and field machinery, Col. Sidhu placed on record critical observations aimed at further strengthening field implementation, specifically emphasising streamlined route scheduling for MVUs, rigorous bio-surveillance protocols and timely restocking of peripheral centres.

Director Animal Husbandry Jammu assured that all constructive recommendations about the field inspections would be implemented swiftly to upgrade livestock healthcare and service delivery across the region.

DDC Jammu reviews developmental scenario in RS Pura sub-division

KT News Desk

JAMMU, OCTOBER 28: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Jammu Minga Sherpa Wednesday visited RS Pura Subdivision to review the progress of developmental works and assess on the ground delivery of public services.

During the visit, the DDC chaired a Block Diwas at the Community Hall in Vibrant Village Abdullahian. He listened to public grievances and demands in the presence of Member Legislative Assembly Suchetgarh, Prof Gharu Ram Bhagat.

The locals, as per an official statement, demanded road connectivity, provision of Smart Buses and the repair and augmentation of irrigation canals. People also raised revenue-related issues, including relief and land ownership rights for refugees.

The DDC assured that the issues would be examined on priority. He directed the concerned departments to take time-bound action to meet the genuine demands.

He also visited the Vibrant Villages of Nai Basti Gulabgarh, Flora and Suchetgarh, where he interacted with locals and reviewed the progress of ongoing developmental works and the implementation of welfare schemes. He directed the concerned officers to ensure the timely completion of pending works and saturation of eligible beneficiaries under the Government schemes.

The DDC also inspected the restoration work at the heritage Railway Station, RS Pura and reviewed the progress made.

He also visited the Sub-District Hospital RS Pura and Major Arvind Bazala Boys Higher Secondary School to assess the availability of essential

facilities and the functioning of these institutions. At the hospital, he reviewed the availability of medical staff, medicines, diagnostic facilities and sanitation. He directed the concerned authorities to further strengthen patient care services. At the school, he took stock of academic activities, infrastructure and basic facilities for students.

The DDC also visited the Palash/Parisha Centre of the Social Welfare Department and interacted with the inmates. The District Social Welfare Officer briefed him on the functioning of the Centre and the facilities and services being provided to the inmates.

He was accompanied by Additional District Development Commissioner Sher Singh, Additional Deputy Commissioner Ishita Rathi, Chief Planning Officer Ajaypal Singh and other district officers.

DC Kathua reviews progress of health sector schemes, programmes

KT News Desk

KATHUA, OCTOBER 28: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma Wednesday chaired a meeting at the DC Office Complex to review the implementation and progress of various health sector schemes and programmes in the district.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by ADDC Surender Mohan Sharma; CPO Ranjeet Thakur; CMO Dr Vijay Raina; District Tuberculosis Officer Dr Radha Krishan; District Immunization Officer, BMOs, Executive Engineers and other concerned officers.

The DC reviewed the progress achieved under Anaemia Mukht Bharat, Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK), National Leprosy Eradication Programme, National Tobacco Control Programme, National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment and National



Vector Borne Disease Control Programme.

Emphasis was laid on anaemia screening among vulnerable groups, particularly children, distribution of iron and folic acid tablets, regular Hb testing, school-based health screening under RBSK and timely referral of identified cases to GMC Kathua.

The DC also stressed preventive measures against malaria, dengue and chikungunya.

The meeting also reviewed the status of projects under Pradhan Mantri Ayushman

Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM), including the 50-bedded Critical Care Block and District Integrated Public Health Laboratory (DIPHL) sites, Block Public Health Units, Urban Ayushman Arogya Mandirs/Sub-Centres and claims settlement under Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY.

Block-wise reporting on the IHIP national portal, dog-bite and snake-bite cases reported from April to September, registration of health facilities under the Clinical Establishments Act,

2010 and financial progress under the National Health Mission were also discussed.

The DC further reviewed the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme, focusing on screening coverage, X-ray examinations, the TB Mukht Bharat initiative and data updating on the Nikshay portal.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed that a strong sense of urgency, commitment and intent must guide the implementation of every health programme. He called for improved inter-departmental coordination, regular field-level monitoring, accurate reporting and timely resolution of gaps to ensure that healthcare services and scheme benefits reach every eligible beneficiary, particularly vulnerable sections of society. He directed the concerned officers to ensure accountability and focus on measurable outcomes for effective delivery of healthcare services across the district.

LG commends ABVP’s ‘Mission Sahasi’ for promoting women’s safety



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 28: A delegation of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday.

The delegation comprising Gaurav Attri, Zonal Organising Secretary, ABVP; Tilak Thakur, State Organising Secretary, ABVP Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh; Akeel Ahmad Tantray, National Executive

Member, ABVP; and Anjum Saqib, Co-Convenor, Students for Seva (SFS), briefed the Lieutenant Governor on the upcoming initiative “Mission Sahasi.”

The Lieutenant Governor commended the ABVP’s initiative aimed at women’s empowerment, self-defence training, confidence-building, and encouraging greater awareness about personal safety.

On the occasion, the poster for “Mission Sahasi” was

also released. As part of the initiative, ABVP will organise programmes with the objective of reaching out to students in educational institutions and local communities. Through self-defence training and awareness activities, the initiative seeks to nurture courage, discipline, confidence, and a sense of security among young women. ABVP will train 25,000 girl students across the Union Territories of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh.

Div Com reviews preparations for UT Diwas, Rashtriya Ekta Diwas at SKICC

Stresses befitting arrangements, seamless coordination, enthusiastic public participation

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 28: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg on Wednesday reviewed the preparations for the celebrations of Union Territory Foundation Day (UT Diwas) and Rashtriya Ekta Diwas during a meeting held at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC), Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner, Srinagar; Municipal Corporation (SMC); Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar; Director Information; SSP Traffic; Vice-Chairman, Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA); heads of various departments and police officers.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner took a detailed review of the arrangements being put in place by various departments for the two important events.

He emphasised the need for close inter-departmental coordination, timely execution of assigned responsibilities and ensuring that all



arrangements are completed well in advance.

Reviewing the preparations for Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, he stressed the importance of ensuring enthusiastic participation of departments, students and citizens in the Run for Unity, underscoring the spirit of national unity, integrity and collective responsibility that the occasion represents.

The Divisional Commissioner also reviewed the arrangements for UT Diwas and called for organising both occasions in a befitting manner.

He took stock of participant mobilisation, transport facilities, traffic management, public address systems, installation of hoardings and standees, beautification of stages, display screens, distribution of T-shirts and caps, refreshments and the appointment of nodal officers.

Directing the concerned officers to ensure meticulous planning and effective implementation, the Div Com stressed that all necessary arrangements must be put in place at the earliest to facilitate the smooth and successful conduct of the

programmes.

Later, the Divisional Commissioner inspected the arrangements at the back lawns of SKICC for the flag-off ceremony of the Run for Unity. He also reviewed the stage development and installation of hoardings, directing the concerned agencies to ensure proper coordination and readiness at the venue.

He emphasised that all departments must work in close coordination to ensure that the celebrations are conducted smoothly, with befitting arrangements and overwhelming public participation.

Secy RDD inaugurates 10-day SARAS Mela in Sgr

Mela offers platform for artisans to exchange ideas, expand markets: Ramesh Kumar

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 28: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Ramesh Kumar on Wednesday inaugurated the 10-day SARAS Aajeevika Mela at Polo View Park, Srinagar.

The event brings together rural entrepreneurs, artisans and women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) from across the country. Organised by the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM), the mela provides a platform for participants from different states to showcase their products, promote traditional crafts and explore new market opportunities. Several districts of Jammu and Kashmir are also participating, displaying their unique local products.

Participants from various states have brought a wide range of products, including handicrafts, handloom items and food-processing products. Many of these products are made by women associated with SHGs, highlighting their entrepreneurial skills and contribution to the rural economy.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary said the mela provides an excellent opportunity for rural artisans and entrepreneurs to interact, exchange ideas and learn from one another. He highlighted that the event also offers direct market access, enabling local residents and tourists visiting Kashmir to purchase their products.

Ramesh Kumar further observed that such platforms



help artisans and entrepreneurs promote their products, explore new marketing avenues, improve their skills and enhance their livelihoods. The mela also enables them to expand their businesses by connecting with potential customers and exploring opportunities beyond their local markets.

The Secretary inspected stalls representing different states, along with those showcasing the unique crafts of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh Union Territories. He interacted with exhibitors and applauded their entrepreneurial spirit and

innovation in rural enterprises. Ramesh Kumar said several SHGs from Jammu and Kashmir are participating in the mela, including Lakhpati Didis—women who have achieved an annual household income of Rs 1 lakh or more through sustainable livelihood activities.

Emphasising the importance of women’s empowerment, the Secretary said such initiatives play a significant role in promoting financial independence and self-reliance among rural women. He noted that the mela provides them with a valuable platform to

showcase their products, connect with potential customers and explore new business opportunities.

The event has received an encouraging response, with participants showcasing their products and engaging with visitors, buyers and fellow entrepreneurs.

Participants from states including Telangana, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Tripura, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh, among others, will showcase products reflecting their regions’ traditional skills and local resources. The exhibits include Pochampally

Ikat sarees, Banarasi textiles, Chikankari embroidery, traditional jewellery, handicrafts, home décor, jute products and other eco-friendly goods.

A major attraction of the exhibition will be the Umeed Ka Zaika Food Court, which will bring regional culinary traditions to Srinagar through food enterprises led by women associated with the SHG movement. Visitors will be able to sample traditional delicacies from Himachal Pradesh and Haryana, alongside the cuisine of Jammu and Kashmir. The Umeed Ka Zaika initiative is strengthened by JKRLM through capacity-building, improved quality standards and wider market linkages, helping SHG women turn their culinary expertise into sustainable businesses.

The 10-day event will also feature cultural and entertainment programmes, along with structured capacity-building sessions for SHG members on key livelihood themes. Expert resource persons will conduct sessions intended to strengthen participants’ understanding of enterprise development and help them identify ways to improve their products and businesses.

Mission Director, JKRLM, Dr Shubhra Sharma, said SARAS Aajeevika is an important opportunity for SHG members to gain exposure to wider markets, understand consumer preferences and learn about quality standards, product diversification and marketing strategies.

Centre releases Rs 78 crore for senior citizens' welfare scheme

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 28: The Centre has released Rs 77.98 crore in grant-in-aid for 755 projects under its senior citizens’ welfare scheme for the quarter ending September 30, 2026, the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry said on Wednesday.

The ministry said it has released funds under the Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSC), a component of the Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY), for the financial year 2026-27.

Launched in 2021, AVYAY is a flagship scheme of the ministry that promotes “ageing with dignity” and “ageing in place” by ensuring older persons can live with respect, security, and independence. The ministry said the assistance aims to strengthen service delivery and welfare interventions for senior citizens through institutional care and related facilities.

With India’s senior citizen population projected to reach 23 crore by 2036, the need for comprehensive and accessible support systems is growing. The scheme seeks to address this demographic challenge by strengthening institutional mechanisms and encouraging community participation, it said.

According to the 2011 Census, India had 10.38 crore people aged 60 years and above, including 5.11 crore males and 5.27 crore females.

The Longitudinal Ageing Study in India (LASI) highlights functional limitations among a substantial proportion of older persons,

underscoring the need for reliable care, healthcare services and community-based support, the ministry said.

Increasing urbanisation, migration and the growth of nuclear households are also changing traditional family support structures, making institutional and community-based care increasingly important for senior citizens, it added.

AVYAY subsumed and expanded the earlier National Action Plan for Senior Citizens (NAPSC), bringing multiple interventions for older persons under a unified scheme.

The scheme aims to provide shelter, food, healthcare and recreational services while strengthening the capacities of governments, non-governmental organisations, local bodies and communities to support older persons.

The “ageing in place” approach promotes an environment where senior citizens can continue living safely in their homes and communities, supported by suitable home modifications and specialised community-based services where needed, the ministry said.

The scheme combines institutional assistance, state-level planning, and district-level monitoring, focusing on the dignity, well-being, independence, and social inclusion of older persons.

Under the State Action Plan for Senior Citizens (SAPSC) component, state and Union Territory governments prepare and implement welfare action plans tailored to their respective requirements, with financial support from the ministry.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Future-ready institutions

region cannot be understood through geography alone. “Languages, folklore, cultural practices, arts, faith, traditions and lived experiences together shape the identity of a place. The integration of regional knowledge with emotional intelligence would form the soul of the new Centre and help create a deeper understanding of society and the people,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that the Centre’s wide-ranging objectives, including preservation of manuscripts, creation of digital archives, linguistic mapping, ethnographic studies, research on pilgrimage and tourism, mountain ecology, local entrepreneurship and fellowships for young scholars, are unique endeavours by the University. He said such initiatives would contribute to building a shared repository of knowledge for future generations.

The Lieutenant Governor also underlined 4 key factors that make such a Centre relevant in contemporary times. First, the need to balance global connectivity with local identity, the urgency of preserving endangered languages and knowledge systems, the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to complex challenges, and the growing recognition of emotional well-being in education. He said that while technology is

transforming societies, the preservation of cultural roots and human values remains equally important.

Prof Umesh Rai, Vice-Chancellor, University of Jammu; Anshul Garg, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Dr Neelu Rohmetra, Dean Research Studies; Dr. Guneet Singh Sudan, Director Sub Office Kashmir, Prof. Sangita Gupta, Dean, Planning & Development, and faculty members of University of Jammu attended the foundation day ceremony.

Dr. GV Sundeeep Chakravarthy, SSP Srinagar; Jatin Kishore, Deputy Commissioner Budgam; Shruti Awasthi, Regional Director, IGNCA, senior officials of civil and Police Administration were also present on the occasion. (KNO)

Javid Dar is new

handed over portfolios of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA/CAPD), Tribal Affairs and Transport.

Mir Saifullah has been assigned portfolios of Planning Development & Monitoring, Culture, Youth Services & Sports and ARI & Trainings. (KNO)

Power deficit

reported by this news agency Kashmir is reeling under power deficiency of nearly 300 MW.

An official had informed that “In Kashmir,

the power demand nowadays remains around 1350 Megawatts (MW).”

He said, “During the peak hours, we generally nowadays have a power demand of 1300-1350 MWs in Kashmir division. However, the power availability is fluctuating between 1000-1150 MWs.”

The official further said that the power supply keeps on fluctuating. “Thus, the power demand and availability also varies from time to time. During that period we enforce grid curtailment.”

Pertinently, Jammu and Kashmir imports nearly 84 percent of power from other states even as the Union Territory generates nearly 370 Megawatts (MWs) from its local stations.

The official figures in this regard reveal that the Union Territory was importing nearly 2000 MWs of power from other states and UTs.

The officials have informed that out of the total power production capacity of 1197 MWs from the Jammu and Kashmir owned plants, the power generation fluctuated between 360-400 MWs—(KNO)

Two House Committees

members of the crucial Public Accounts Committee (PAC), have also ceased to be members of the committee.

The appointment of chairpersons of House Committees in May this year had sparked a massive controversy, with the principal

opposition party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), accusing the Speaker of bias in appointing heads of the committees. (KNO)

LG felicitates SSF

across diverse terrains and challenging conditions.

“From urban centres to remote rural areas and mountainous regions, the SSF maintained the highest standards of security while facilitating meaningful public interaction,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor conveyed his best wishes to all SSF personnel and their families, expressing confidence that they would continue to serve the nation with courage, honour, and commitment. On the occasion, Govind Jaiswal, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor; Swarn Singh Kotwal, DIG Udhampur-Reasi Range and Former Director SSF; Hareesh H.P. Director SSF and senior officials were present.

J&K to witness

temperature of 19 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 0.5 degrees Celsius, while Gulmarg recorded a maximum of 15 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Jammu recorded a maximum temperature of 31.5 degrees Celsius, 2.2 degrees above normal, while the minimum settled at 14.5 degrees Celsius, 1.3 degrees below normal.

No rainfall was recorded at the reporting stations during the observation period. (KNO)

Traffic restrictions

down HMs from Qazigund towards Jammu shall be allowed in a regulated manner.

Goods carrier (HMV/LMV) operators carrying fresh, perishable goods and livestock have been advised to load their vehicles accordingly, keeping the traffic restrictions in view.

Army bust hideout

16 pistol rounds, one AK rifle bayonet, a bag and a sheet.”

No one was arrested during the operation, which was continuing when last reports were received, he added. (KNO)

Two die after

Wednesday morning. The deceased have been identified as Javid Ahmed Mir (28) and Mohammad Anees Malik (29), both residents of Dachanpara.

Meanwhile, cognisance of the incident has been taken and an investigation has been initiated. (KNO)

4,000 cyclists register

registration has also been arranged,” he said. Meanwhile, Traffic Police Srinagar have also announced restrictions and diversions on Boulevard Road and adjoining routes for the race. Commuters can contact the Traffic Police Control Room at 103 for assistance. (KNO)

Modi will return to Red Fort as PM in 2029: Nitin Nabin

‘Cong breathing its last under Rahul’

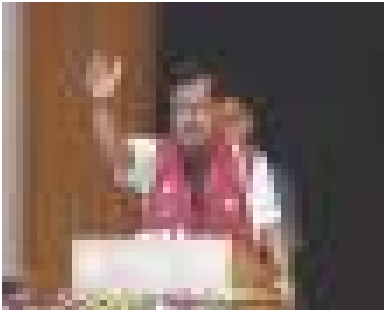
PTI

New Delhi, Oct 28: BJP president Nitin Nabin on Wednesday said that Narendra Modi will return to the ramparts of Red Fort on Independence Day as the prime minister after winning the 2029 Lok Sabha elections, even as the Congress “breathes its last” under Rahul Gandhi.

Accompanied by Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Delhi BJP president Harsh Malhotra and a large number of party workers, Nabin led the BJP’s “Loktantra Bachao, Arajakta Hatao” march in the Chandni Chowk area, marching from the Jain Lal temple to the Town Hall Chowk.

“Congress leaders are distressed by the SIR exercise that seeks to clean up the voter list, but the BJP is committed to ensuring that infiltrators are removed from it,” Nabin said, addressing party workers.

Slamming Rahul Gandhi and the Congress for opposing the Special Intensive



Revision (SIR) exercise in many states, Nabin said, “He has nothing to do with the Constitution and his party listens to only what he or his family dictates.”

The BJP chief also claimed that Modi will go nowhere and will return to the ramparts of the Red Fort after the 2029 Lok Sabha polls, the venue for the prime minister’s Independence Day speech.

“Congress is breathing its last under Rahul Gandhi. The way he is going, soon he will be the only worker left in the party,” Nabin said.

Modi 'chosen one', won't go anywhere: BJP releases song to counter Congress

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 28: Upping its social media blitzkrieg against Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge’s ‘baap’ remark targeting Narendra Modi, the BJP has released a song to underline its assertion that the prime minister is not going anywhere, as he is the “chosen one” by the public.

From top BJP leaders to Union ministers to numerous office-bearers, people flooded X and Instagram with their posts on the issue while tagging the song comprising various images of Modi.

Union ministers Piyush Goyal and Annapurna Devi, BJP leader Sambit Patra, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta shared the music video “Modi kahin nahi jaayega” (Modi not going anywhere), while targeting the Congress over its remarks against the prime minister.

“...Aankhein jhuka lo, kaan khol ke sun lo, Modi kahin nahi jaayega, Modi kahin nahi jaayega (lower your eyes, and listen carefully: Modi is not going anywhere, Modi is not going anywhere)”, the song says.

The song adds, “Kaan khol kar suno, yeh desh Modi ka hai, Modi kahin nahi jaayega (Listen carefully: this country belongs to Modi, and Modi ain’t going anywhere)”.

The BJP and the Congress have intensified their social media war following Kharge’s controversial remarks against Modi, with both sharing videos, graphics and AI-generated content to target each other.

Kharge sparked the row at an event in Patna on Sunday, when he said “Modi ka baap bhi jayega” in response to an audience member’s comment that “as long as there is no rebellion, Modi won’t go anywhere”.

Upping the ante, the Congress on Wednesday shared a video on X alleging that Modi



has given the country “nothing but empty jumla (rhetoric)” over the past 12 years, claiming that people are troubled by soaring inflation, severe poverty and unemployment, with crores struggling to afford two meals a day.

“According to RBI and IMF reports, food and fuel prices place the heaviest burden on poor households, as they account for 45-50 per cent of their expenditure,” the Congress said in the video, adding that when inflation rises, poor families

first cut down on food, then medicines, and then their children’s education.

“The situation is the same when it comes to employment. A salaried person who was earning Rs 381 in 2017-18 was earning the same amount in 2023-24,” the Congress claimed.

The party also claimed that nearly 90 per cent of the country’s workers are employed in the unorganised sector, numbering between 40 crore and 50 crore, and alleged that nine out of every 10 workers

have neither any guarantee of employment nor access to a pension or insurance.

“There are 23.8 crore people in the country whom the government does not consider poor. However, they have nothing – no access to clean drinking water, toilets or pucca houses,” the Congress alleged.

“Overall, the condition of the common people is deteriorating under the Modi government. But Narendra Modi is not bothered, because he is in power through vote theft,” it alleged.

The Congress also shared a video of Rahul Gandhi accusing Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar of “vote chori”, saying they would eventually get caught as the party has placed evidence before everyone.

The war of words comes ahead of the INDIA bloc’s ‘Dilli Chalو march’ to Ram-lila Maidan on November 1, which is being touted as its “biggest” against “vote chori”.

PM to release Rs 18,680 cr under PM-Kisan scheme tomorrow

PTI

Ahmedabad, Oct 28: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will release the 24th instalment of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) scheme at a national-level event in Gujarat’s Banaskantha district on October 30, state Agriculture Minister Jitu Vaghani said on Wednesday.

Modi is scheduled to visit Gujarat on October 30 and 31.

During an event in Bhildi town, the Prime Minister will disburse the 24th instalment of the PM-Kisan, providing over Rs 18,680 crore to more than 9.34 crore farmer families across the country, the minister said.

In Gujarat, more than 52.33 lakh farmer families will receive financial assistance exceeding Rs 1,051 crore, Vaghani said after reviewing preparations for the ‘PM Kisan Utsav Divas’ event at Bhildi.

The prime minister will also lay the foundation stones for two compressed biogas (CBG) plants being set up by Banas Dairy in Tharad and Radhanpur.

The Tharad plant will process 75 tonnes of cattle dung daily, while the Radhanpur facility will have a processing capacity of 100 tonnes per day.

With the addition of these two plants, the number of Bio-CNG plants under the

Banas Model will increase to six, with a combined cattle dung processing capacity of 515 tonnes per day.

Bio-CNG produced from cattle dung is sold at subsidised rates, with Banaskantha Dairy currently supplying around 6,100 kg daily. The six plants are estimated to prevent between 33,400 and 34,600 tonnes of carbon emissions annually.

During the October 30 event, Modi will also inaugurate the Bharat Bovine Breeding and Research Centre (BBBRC), developed at a cost of Rs 328.77 crore, Vaghani said.

The prime minister will also inaugurate Banas Dairy’s new potato processing expansion

project and its ultra-high-temperature (UHT) facility’s automated storage and retrieval system (ASRS).

Under the PM-Kisan scheme, eligible farmer families receive financial assistance of Rs 6,000 annually in three equal instalments.

Vaghani said that more than Rs 4.47 lakh crore had been disbursed nationally through the previous 23 instalments, while over Rs 24,137 crore had been provided to beneficiaries in Gujarat.

To mark the occasion, 34 district-level and more than 2,100 cluster-level events will be organised across Gujarat, with live broadcasts of the main programme.

Approval letters for various schemes of the Agriculture and Horticulture departments will also be distributed to beneficiaries at these events.

Vaghani reviewed the preparations at Bhildi and held a meeting with local administrative officials. He also attended a virtual review meeting from Gandhinagar with officials and other stakeholders.

Besides the programmes in Banaskantha, the prime minister will attend the National Unity Day celebrations at Ekta Nagar in Narmada district on October 31, marking the 151st birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

ED attaches Azam Khan's Jauhar University under PMLA

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 28: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday said it has attached the land and building of Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan-promoted Mohammad Ali Jauhar University in Uttar Pradesh under the anti-money laundering law.

The federal probe agency alleged that government funds meant for public works were diverted for the construction of the private varsity, which has a current market value of approximately Rs 1,170 crore, located in Rampur district.

It accused the jailed 78-year-old SP leader of using his influence as the Cabinet minister of Urban Development and the Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam for these alleged irregularities.

A provisional order has been issued under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to attach the property comprising 59 buildings.

The land and the buildings were registered and constructed at a cost of Rs 499 crore but they currently command a current market value of Rs 1,170 crore, the ED said in a statement.

It added that the estimated proceeds of crime in the case are Rs 426.46 crore.

“The University campus at Jauhar Nagar, Village Singhankhera, Rampur, is held by the Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar Trust, which was founded and is controlled by Mohammad Azam Khan, who is also the honorary Chancellor of the University,” the ED said.

The agency carried out raids in this case in August and also questioned Khan, who is lodged in Rampur jail facing multiple criminal charges.

The Lucknow-headquartered trust runs the Muhammad Ali Jauhar University, founded in 2006, and a public school in the Rampur district.

The ED said it has taken cognisance of 54 FIRs filed by Uttar Pradesh Police to move forward with its money laundering investigation against Khan and his trust.

It added that funds meant for public works were “diverted” to the university and government works were executed on its private campus and funds from contractors (who had been allotted government contracts) were routed back to the trust as donations.

The first set of police FIRs filed at the Azeem Nagar police station of Rampur allege that agricultural land of farmers was “forcibly” taken over for the university.

An inquiry report prepared by the Rampur district administration found that 45 plots of enemy property



measuring about 34 acres in Singhankhera village were “illegally” occupied by Khan for the university, even after the lease of this land to the trust had been cancelled by the custodian.

The possession of this land has been taken back by the custodian of enemy property, under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), through the Rampur administration, according to the ED.

The second set of police FIRs and charge sheets filed before courts allege that during 2016, the houses of several families in Rampur city, many of whom were tenants of Waqf property, were demolished with bulldozers by a mob allegedly led by the then circle officer and others on the instructions of Khan, the ED said.

The occupants were assaulted, threatened with false criminal cases, and robbed of their cash, jewellery and cattle. The debris from the demolished houses were transported to the university and cleaning machinery purchased for the Rampur municipal corporation were also “diverted” to the university.

It was found that works worth Rs 6.60 crore were executed at the university using MLA/MLC local area development funds. These works were executed by the Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam, of which Khan was then the chairman, the ED claimed.

It added that the trust received donations worth Rs 6.24 crore from two Meerut-based educational entities through political influence.

The ED alleged that a public ‘pandal’ was created in the university using Rs 12 crore state government funds but it was converted into a private property of the educational institution during 2015-16 when Khan was a cabinet minister of the departments that created the said infrastructure.

The agency recorded the statement of the managing director of a company which received PWD contracts worth Rs 186 crore.

He “admitted” that 30-40 per cent of the contract value was used to buy construction material for the university. The partners of another firm admitted that they operated “under the influence of” Khan to donate Rs 40 lakh to the said trust, it said.

Rahul, Sitharaman spar after his 'Tata Group being criminally destroyed' remark

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 28: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman sparred on X on Wednesday after he attacked the government amid the ongoing leadership dispute at the Tata Group, alleging that the conglomerate is “being criminally destroyed” with no business leader daring to say a word.

Gandhi asserted that “we will ensure justice for these crimes”.

The remarks of the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha come amid Tata Group’s bitter dispute over Tata Sons’ leadership. The conflict has already split trustees and spilt into the Tata Sons boardroom.

Sitharaman hit out at Gandhi over his comments, saying that the Congress leader is trying to incite business leaders to join him in spreading distrust and toxicity, and that he should refrain from “politicising” every issue.

Accusing Gandhi of repeatedly decrying the successes of Indian industry and entrepreneurs, Sitharaman said the Narendra Modi government values Indian industry as job creators and drivers of economic growth.

In a post on X, Gandhi said, “Tata is being criminally destroyed, and no business leader dares say a word. How long will you stay silent? Until they own you?”

Indian business is not Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah’s plaything, he said, adding, “You lack courage. We don’t. We



will ensure justice for these crimes.”

Reacting to Gandhi’s remarks, Sitharaman said the government’s policies were tailored to enable enterprise, support industry and encourage investment.

In an X post, she said, “Being the LoP @RahulGandhi, I suggest you refrain from politicising every issue. Also, casually labelling commercial and legal matters as criminal is unacceptable. You have repeatedly decried the successes of Indian industry & our entrepreneurs. Now, are you trying to incite our business leaders to join you in spreading distrust & toxicity?”

Sitharaman said that for decades, the Congress had smothered the spirit of the Indian entrepreneurs under the stifling “Licence-Quota Raj” and “inflicted poverty” on crores of Indians.

“On the other hand, our government led by PM @narendramodi values the Indian industry as job creators & drivers of economic growth. Our policies have been tailored to enable enterprise, support industry and encourage investment,” she said.

Stating that political parties, leaders, governments and institutions

share an equal responsibility in supporting industry, strengthening farmers and securing the future of youth, the finance minister said it is essential to engage constructively rather than casting baseless aspersions to suit one’s narrow political motives.

“The Constitution of India ensures justice to all its citizens & our Honourable Courts are entrusted with upholding it. History is witness to the shoddy manner in which you, your party and the PMs belonging to your party have demeaned the judiciary. So Rahul ji, refrain from seeing ghosts everywhere,” Sitharaman’s post read.

Hitting back at the finance minister, Gandhi said in another X post, “Dear Mrs. Sitarama (sic), 1. Which ‘legal and commercial matter’ required Tata Trusts and Tata Sons to be hosted at Amit Shah’s residence? 2. When is crony number 1 going to appear in the game and which pieces of Tata is he going to get?”

“Finally, all India’s businesses except 3-4 of your cronies, already hate all of you and don’t need any incitement,” he added.

Gandhi’s remarks come in the backdrop of a dispute over Tata Sons’ leadership. Earlier this week, Tata Trusts chairman Noel Tata challenged the Tata Sons’ September 17 board resolution to reappoint N Chandrasekaran as the chairman of the holding company of the country’s largest conglomerate, Tata Group.

India, EU share common interest in shaping resilient multipolar global order: VP

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 28: Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chairman C P Radhakrishnan, who on Wednesday met a delegation from the European Parliament’s Committee on Foreign Affairs, said India and the European Union share a common interest in shaping a resilient multipolar global order.

The India-EU ties have witnessed remarkable progress in recent years across a range of sectors, he said, thanking the leadership of both India and the EU for taking the relationship forward.

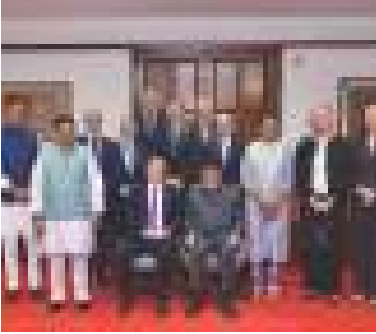
Emphasising the shared foundation of the relationship, Radhakrishnan noted that as the two largest democracies and open market economies

with diverse and pluralistic societies, India and the European Union share a common interest in shaping a resilient multipolar global order.

He highlighted that institutional linkages established since the visit of the College of Commissioners in 2025 -- led by President Ursula von der Leyen with a whole-of-government approach -- have yielded fruitful results.

Focusing on trade and investment, the Vice President highlighted that India and the European Union together represent a combined market of around USD 25 trillion and nearly two billion people.

Terming the proposed Free Trade Agreement the “mother of all deals”, he expressed hope that it would be signed this year and sought the requisite



support of the European Parliament in its fruition.

Addressing cooperation in technology, research and innovation, Radhakrishnan appreciated the significant role played by the India-EU

Trade and Technology Council in high-level strategic coordination. He also expressed satisfaction with the conclusion of negotiations on India’s association with the prestigious Horizon Europe programme.

During the meeting, the Vice President also expressed his deepest condolences over the tragic train accident in Spain on Wednesday.

Rajya Sabha members Sanjay Kumar Jha (President, India-Germany Parliamentary Friendship Group); Surendra Singh Nagar (President, India-Poland Parliamentary Friendship Group); Amar Pal Maurya (President, India-Poland Parliamentary Friendship Group); and P T Usha (President, India-Germany Parliamentary Friendship Group) also attended the meeting.

Quick Read

At least 30 killed in train collision in central Spain, media report

AP

Barcelona, Oct 28 A high-speed train slammed into the rear of another train that had stopped, derailing two cars and killing at least 30 people on Wednesday in central Spain, according to local media.

Spanish authorities initially reported 10 deaths, but Esther Padilla, spokeswoman for the Castilla La Mancha region, added "that number will surely rise." Spanish state-owned news agency EFE and other media reported later that the death toll had risen to at least 30.

It was the second major train accident in Spain this year.

Spain's rail system operator ADIF said the crash occurred Wednesday morning in the province of Toledo. Rail service was suspended between Madrid, Ciudad Real and Andalusia.

Padilla told state broadcaster TVE that the accident was between two high-speed trains carrying hundreds of passengers and heading in the same direction from the capital Madrid to Seville in southwestern Spain. One ran into

the tail of the other that had stopped, knocking two of its cars off the track. She said the cause of the crash was not known.

The crash, which occurred in a flat stretch surrounded by fields in between the towns of Urda and Los Yébenes, left one car shredded into bits of metal and other material, scattering debris down a gravel slope.

Spanish Health Minister Mónica García told TVE that emergency workers were focusing on rescuing survivors and bodies from the two most damaged train cars. She said that the injured are being sent to different hospitals in the area.

"It was a high-speed impact, so we are expecting this to be a tragedy," García said.

The accident involved a train from Spain's state-owned RENFE company and the private rail company IRYO. It appeared the RENFE train rammed the IRYO train, Spanish media reported. Trains from those two companies were also involved in a deadly crash in January.

Sanju bhai showed character with selfless move to drop himself down the order: Abhishek



PTI

Wellington, Oct 28 : Flamboyant opener Abhishek Sharma lauded his regular opening partner Sanju Samson for sacrificing his slot for teenager Vaibhav Sooryavanshi during the third T20 International against New Zealand, which India won by six wickets.

Abhishek smashed a brilliant 38-ball 113 and added a whopping 133 runs in seven overs with Sooryavanshi (45 off 19 balls), who was promoted up the order after batting at No. 3 in the previous game.

Sooryavanshi got a chance after Ishan Kishan sustained a groin injury, but in the second game, it was Samson who won the Player of the Match award for his 61 and then decided to hand over his slot to the younger Sooryavanshi.

"The way Sanju bhai batted in the last game, it is not easy to let go of one's familiar batting position. That showed his character, someone's going at his position. We can see in the team that everyone is selfless, everyone is happy for everyone, which is the hallmark of a great team," Abhishek told Sooryavanshi in a conversation facilitated by BCCI.TV.

Abhishek, who hit 11 sixes, also lauded the 15-year-old for starting the innings with a lofted boundary.

"When Vaibhav hit the first ball, he showed aggression. I saw that at the non-striker's end, and when you see such a shot, you also feel pumped up. So, special mention and credit to Vaibhav for how he played," Abhishek said, praising the 'Boy Wonder'.

On a lighter note, Abhishek said that Vaibhav is so passionate about batting that it almost becomes difficult to pull him out of the nets.

"If we have two nets, we give one to Vaibhav and tell him, 'Vaibhav, you play.'"

Had match not been live, people in my village wouldn't have believed: Vaibhav

Sooryavanshi, who seemed to be in awe of Abhishek's 35-ball century, also offered a glimpse of his funny side.

"How Abhishek bhai played, they were just thrown out of the game. Had the match not been aired live, then people in our village, by looking at the scorecard, would have commented that it must have been played on a rooftop," Sooryavanshi said.

In the second match at Christchurch, Sooryavanshi, who batted at No. 3, scored just 4 off 8 balls, and he felt that he had strayed from his natural game.

"Last match, I went against my grain as to how I play in T20s. During the third game, I wanted to give a quick start so that it becomes easy."

Golan urges Eisenkot bloc to join with Arab parties to oust Netanyahu

PTI

Jerusalem, Oct 28 :Yair Golan, leader of Israel's Democrats party, on Wednesday urged the opposition bloc led by former military chief Gadi Eisenkot to form a government in partnership with Arab-led parties to replace Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, highlighting divisions within the opposition over such cooperation.

Several allies in the opposition's "change bloc" have rejected the proposal to include Arab parties in a governing coalition, while some have also ruled out relying on their support from outside.

"Netanyahu lost. I know how to count to 120. 65 is more than 55. That's how Israeli democracy works. Period," Golan, a former deputy chief of staff of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), wrote on X.

Golan called for an end to what he described as racism and fear of political cooperation with Arab citizens. "The picture of reality must teach us one resounding lesson: We have no future here if we don't stop being afraid. And if we don't stop with the racism. We must no longer accept Netanyahu's racist division between Jewish votes and Arab votes," he wrote.

"The voice of an Israeli citizen voting in Taybeh



is worth exactly as much as the voice of an Israeli citizen voting in Givat Shmuel. No less. Not approximately. Exactly," he said, arguing that Arab citizens' votes should carry the same weight as those of Jewish citizens.

"Anyone who tries to erase the voices of Arab citizens is surrendering to Netanyahu and giving up on Israel," he added.

Golan's proposal faces resistance from opposition figures who have ruled out forming a government that includes Arab-led parties. The opposition remains divided over whether Arab parties should join a governing coalition or support it from outside.

Golan also challenged Netanyahu's allies over their claims to represent Zionism, criticising ultra-Orthodox parties in the prime minister's bloc for opposing universal military conscription.

"In Netanyahu's bloc sit 16 Knesset members from non-Zionist Haredi parties, who promote mass draft evasion while our children are fighting and dying," Golan wrote.

He argued that the opposition had a Zionist majority of its own, saying, "The Change bloc has a Zionist majority: 49 against 39. The Change bloc has an Israeli majority: 65 against 55."

Urging opposition leaders to cooperate with Arab citizens, Golan said: "We have a majority. We have responsibility. And we have an opportunity to form a government of change in partnership with Israel's Arab citizens. A government that will serve all Israeli citizens."

His appeal came amid uncertainty over government formation following Tuesday's election.

According to partial results reported by Israeli media, Netanyahu's bloc

had 54 seats, Eisenkot's bloc 47 and Arab-led parties 19, with 76.8 per cent of ballot boxes counted as of 10.58 am local time, according to local media reports.

A majority of 61 seats is required in the 120-member Knesset.

The figures would give Eisenkot's bloc and the Arab-led parties a combined 66 seats if the reported breakdown holds.

However, their ability to form a government would depend on whether the parties could agree on a coalition or another arrangement.

To be sure, Golan's figures of 65 and 55 in his post differ from the reported partial count and reflect his own political calculation, rather than the latest reported seat tally.

Arab-led parties have previously played a role in Israeli government formation. Ra'am, led by Mansour Abbas, joined the governing coalition formed in 2021 under then-prime minister Naftali Bennett and Yair Lapid. That government collapsed in 2022, triggering another election.

Bennett now leads the B'Yachad alliance, another part of the opposition whose position on cooperation with Arab parties could affect efforts to assemble a governing majority.

Omar Abdullah congratulates J&K Wushu, Taekwondo teams on National School Games titles



KT News Desk

Srinagar Oct 28: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today congratulated the Jammu and Kashmir Wushu and Taekwondo teams for winning the Overall Team Trophy in both disciplines at the 70th National School Games hosted at the Government College of Physical Education, Ganderbal.

Jammu and Kashmir delivered an impressive performance, winning 22 medals across the two disciplines. In Taekwondo, held from October 22 to 26, the team secured 14 medals, including four gold, three silver and seven bronze. In Wushu, held from October 15 to 19, the team bagged eight medals, comprising one gold, two silver and five bronze.

The Chief Minister had

inaugurated the 70th National School Games on October 15. The event brought together over 1,300 young athletes from 23 States and Union Territories, providing a platform for emerging sporting talent from across the country.

Congratulating the young champions, Omar Abdullah said their achievements reflected Jammu and Kashmir's growing sporting potential and the dedication and hard work of its young athletes. He reaffirmed the Government's commitment to strengthening sports infrastructure and promoting sporting excellence across Jammu and Kashmir.

The 70th National School Games were organised by the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports, J&K, under the aegis of the School Games Federation of India (SGFI).

Ceasefire holds for first 30 hours in devastated Ukrainian city, officials say

AP

Kherson, Oct 28 : A six-day ceasefire in a Russian-occupied city in southern Ukraine held for its first day and night, officials said Wednesday, but Moscow and Kyiv continued to batter each other elsewhere.

The localized truce in the devastated southern city of Oleshky began Tuesday and is due to last through Sunday as a planned humanitarian operation races to get its about 2,000 remaining residents urgently needed food and medicine, as well as evacuate those who want to leave.

If the ceasefire holds, it will be the first time since Russia's invasion of its neighbor more than 4 1/2 years ago that the two sides have observed a significant truce. Previous attempts to stop the fighting have either failed to take hold or quickly unraveled.

The development coincided

with US-led plans to bring Moscow and Kyiv officials back to the table next month for technical talks on how to move forward on ending the war, even though neither side shows signs of backing down from their key demands.

Russia's ombudsman Yana Lantratova and Ukraine's human rights ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets both said Wednesday there had been no ceasefire violations in Oleshky for 30 hours.

The plight of the city in Ukraine's southern Kherson region caught the attention of US first lady Melania Trump, and the White House said she brokered the humanitarian mission.

Pope Leo XIV also spoke this month with presidents Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine and Vladimir Putin of Russia, urging them to allow humanitarian aid into Oleshky and the safe evacuation of civilians, the Vatican said.

DC Srinagar attends Inter-College Volleyball Tournament final, inaugurates upgraded GCoE auditorium

KT News Desk

Srinagar Oct 28: Deputy Commissioner (DC), Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, today attended the final of the 5th Edition of the Inter-College Men's Volleyball Tournament 2026, held at the Multipurpose Hall of Government College of Education (GCoE), M.A. Road, Srinagar.

The tournament was organised by the Department of Physical Education, Government College of Education (IASE) Srinagar, under Cluster University Srinagar, providing a vibrant platform for young athletes from various City Colleges to showcase their sporting talent, volleyball skills, teamwork, discipline and sportsmanship.

Among others present on the occasion were Chief Planning Officer,



Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Nodal Principal, Kashmir Division Colleges, Prof. (Dr.) Seema Naz, IAS Probationer, Aakash Garg, College faculty members, students, participant athletes, sports coaches and other concerned. The Deputy Commissioner who attended the final match as the Chief Guest and presented trophies to the winner, runner-up and second runner-up teams during felicitation ceremony in recognition of their performance in the tournament. The final match was

played between Islamia College of Science and Commerce and Sri Pratap College, with Islamia College of Science and Commerce emerging victorious after an engaging contest. Sri Pratap College secured the runner-up position, while Government College of Education finished third in the tournament.

While interacting with the participating athletes, the DC highlighted the importance of promoting sports and extracurricular activities in educational institutions, emphasising their role in nurturing discipline, leadership, teamwork and a healthy competitive spirit among students. He underscored the importance of encouraging greater participation in sports alongside academic pursuits to ensure the holistic development of young people.

Allen says India's batting blitz offers learning experience for New Zealand



PTI

Auckland, Oct 28 : New Zealand batter Finn Allen believes the batting blitz, led by Abhishek Sharma and teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi in the third T20 International, offers them valuable lessons for a potential meeting with India in the format's World Cup in couple of years' time.

India chased down a daunting 199-run target in just 13.2 overs in Wellington, with Abhishek smashing a 38-ball 113 and sharing a 133-run opening stand with Sooryavanshi to hand the visitors a crushing six-wicket win and an unassailable 3-0 lead in

the five-match series.

"I think the amount of learnings we can take from it and plans we can put in place for when we come up against them here, potentially in a couple of years, is really good for us. And you have to enjoy it. You know, cricket's always a lot of ups and downs. So you have to find enjoyment in whatever you do."

Allen said it was difficult to stop the Indian duo once they got going, adding that New Zealand would review the defeat and devise fresh plans for the next match.

"When someone like Abhishek gets going like that it's pretty hard to stop him. So just one of those things and you just move on to the next one," Allen said.

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Movies Watchlist

Thursday, 29th October

CLAYFACE (A)

ENG WITH ENG SUBTITLES - 05:50 PM

UDTA TEER (UA 13+)

HINDI - 12:00 PM, 02:55 PM
HINDI ATMOS - 10:50 AM, 01:20 PM, 04:10 PM, 07:00 PM

DRISHYAM: THE CONCLUSION (UA 16+)

HINDI - 12:00 PM, 03:10 PM, 06:20 PM

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