



‘PEDAL THROUGH PARADISE’

J&K emerging as land of possibilities: LG Sinha

Says region no longer confined to challenges of past; commends Jammu & Kashmir Police’s role beyond security, law enforcement

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 29: Stating that Jammu and Kashmir is emerging as land of possibilities, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, on Thursday said the story of region is no longer confined to the challenges of the past but it is also the story of the efforts of the present and the possibilities of the future.

Addressing felicitation ceremony of winners of the “Pedal Through Paradise” cycling event here, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, “Jammu and Kashmir is emerging as a land of possibilities where youth are excelling in sports, education, innovation and entrepreneurship.”

He emphasized that the true progress of any region is secured when its youth have access to opportunities, confidence in their abilities and a strong sense of unity.

LG Sinha lauded the enthusiasm, determination and aspirations displayed by the



participants of the “Pedal Through Paradise.”

He said that the event reflected the optimism, self-confidence and vibrant spirit of a new Jammu Kashmir, driven by the energy and talent of its youth.

LG Sinha commended the Jammu Kashmir Police for extending their role beyond security and law enforcement through meaningful community

outreach initiatives.

J&K POLICE HAVE COMBINED SECURITY WITH COMPASSION

He said that the programmes such as “Pedal Through Paradise” demonstrate a commitment to strengthening bonds of trust with citizens by combining discipline with inspiration and duty with social responsibility. | [More on P6](#)

Sacrifices of martyrs continue to inspire J&K Police: DGP

Pays tribute to 1,621 police martyrs, announces memorial tournaments



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Asserting that sacrifices continue to inspire efforts of Jammu and Kashmir Police to maintain peace and security, Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat on Thursday said force is committed to mentor younger generation and help society in | [More on P6](#)

MeT predicts light rain, thunderstorms today

Dry weather thereafter

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Oct 29: The Meteorological Centre Srinagar on Thursday said that Jammu and Kashmir is likely to witness brief spells of light rain, thunderstorms, hailstorms and gusty winds at scattered places on Friday, with light snowfall possible over higher reaches

According to the weather forecast accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) weather is likely to remain generally dry on October 31, while partly cloudy conditions are expected from November 1 to 3, with a brief spell of precipitation possible at a few places late on November 1 or in the evening.

From November 4 to 7, the weather is expected to remain generally dry, although isolated places may receive light rain or light snowfall over higher reaches late on November 5 or in the evening.

The advisory said no significant weather | [More on P6](#)

Army Commander reviews op preparedness along Poonch, Rajouri LoC

KT News Desk

Jammu, Oct 29: Northern Army Commander Lt Gen Pratik Sharma on Thursday visited frontline units along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch and hinterland formations in Rajouri to review operational preparedness and the prevailing security situation.

According to the Army’s Northern Command, Lt Gen Sharma was briefed on operational challenges, joint intelligence mechanisms and coordination among security agencies.

In a post on X, Northern Command, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said: “Lt Gen Pratik Sharma, Army Commander Northern Command, visited frontline units | [More on P6](#)

WORLD STROKE DAY

Nearly 1 in 3 in J&K has high BP, high salt, hypertension raise stroke risk: Cardiologist

Regular blood pressure checks, exercise key to prevention; ‘even simple measures like indoor walking, stretching can help during winter’, Dr Khalid Mohiuddin advises

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Oct 29: Excessive salt consumption, uncontrolled high blood pressure, obesity, unhealthy dietary habits and physical inactivity are among the major factors increasing the risk of stroke, with seasonal changes and sedentary lifestyles during winter adding to the health concerns in Kashmir, a noted cardiologist said.

In an interview with the news agency - Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Head of the



Department of Cardiology at Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, Dr Khalid Mohiuddin, said many of the

risk factors associated with stroke were preventable but required greater public awareness, timely diagnosis and sustained efforts to adopt healthier lifestyles. He said high blood pressure was one of the most important risk factors that needed to be addressed, warning that uncontrolled hypertension could damage blood vessels and increase the likelihood of serious cardiovascular and cerebrovascular complications, including stroke.

According to the cardiologist, almost one in three people in Jammu and Kashmir suffers from high blood pressure, | [More on P6](#)

Rashtriya Ekta Diwas

LG Sinha urges inclusive participation

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 29: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting to review preparations for Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, or National Unity Day, across Jammu and Kashmir.

Observed each year on the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the day honours his contribution to India’s unification.

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, DGP Nalin Prabhat, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Chandraker Bharti, senior police and civil administration officials, divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners,



SSPs and other officials, both in person and virtually.

The Lieutenant Governor directed officials to ensure smooth and peaceful arrangements for the ‘Run for Unity’ and the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas pledge, reflecting the spirit of Ek Bharat | [More on P6](#)

Ali Mohammad Sagar assumes office

Assures responsive governance

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 29: Minister for Revenue; Power Development Department (PDD); Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs; Disaster Management, Monitoring, Relief and Rehabilitation (DMMR); and Elections, Ali Mohammad Sagar, on Thursday assumed office.

Soon after taking charge, the Minister met several deputations representing different sections of society. They raised



public issues, developmental concerns and administrative grievances requiring the intervention of the concerned departments, and sought their early resolution.

Sagar heard the deputations and took note of the issues raised. He assured them that the government was committed to addressing genuine

Positions are a trust: LG Sinha to new officers

Congratulates successful UPSC, JKAS candidates



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 29: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday addressed a felicitation ceremony for successful candidates of the UPSC Civil Services Examination 2025 and the Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service

(JKAS) Examination 2024. Congratulating the candidates on their remarkable achievement, the Lieutenant Governor also extended his best wishes to their parents, whose selfless efforts helped them realise their aspirations.

Addressing the young officers, the | [More on P6](#)

SC Collegium clears 9 Advocates as Judges for J&K HC

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 29: The Supreme Court Collegium has cleared the proposal for appointment of nine advocates as judges of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. As per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), in its meeting held on 29th October 2026, the Collegium cleared the proposal for appointment of Vishal Sharma, Vikram Kumar Sharma, Namgyal Wangchuk, Pawan Kumar Kundal, Tahir Majid Shamsi, Tabasum Zafar, Amit Gupta, | [More on P6](#)

Special traffic plan for Darbar Move on Oct 31, Nov 1

‘Heavy traffic from Jmu-Sgr to be restricted; fruit trucks to get priority’

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 29: Heavy traffic will not be allowed from Jammu towards Srinagar during the Darbar Move movement on October 31 and November 1, while fruit-laden trucks will be given priority, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Traffic Kashmir Haseeb Ur Rehman said on Thursday.

Speaking to reporters at the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Rehman said a special traffic plan had been put in place for the movement, with priority to be given to Darbar Move vehicles. “We have kept special provisions for fruit trucks. If the road is closed, we assemble them on

the front line so that we can send them to Jammu on priority,” he said.

Rehman said traffic movement had so far remained smooth, with no major problems reported. He added that the department would try to give priority to fruit trucks if weather conditions deteriorated in the coming days.

He advised commuters to follow traffic advisories issued through print, electronic and social media and said road-status updates could also be obtained by calling the Traffic Control Unit at 103.

Regarding the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, he said traffic was moving smoothly | [More on P6](#)

Census 2027
Principal Census Officer Urban
stresses accurate population enumeration
across Srinagar’s urban jurisdiction
Inaugurates 2-day training session for phase-II

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 29: Principal Census Officer (Urban), Srinagar (Commissioner SMC), Dr. Basharat Qayoom, Thursday inaugurated a two-day training programme for Phase II of Census 2027 at the Central Office, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Karan Nagar, emphasising the need for accurate, systematic and comprehensive Population Enumeration across Srinagar’s urban jurisdiction.

During the inaugural session, Dr. Basharat, as per an official statement, stressed that all census functionaries must discharge their assigned responsibilities with utmost diligence, precision and accountability to ensure the collection of reliable and error-free population data. He underscored the importance of complete coverage of assigned enumeration areas, accurate recording of individual-level particulars and strict adherence to the prescribed census methodology and guidelines.

The Principal Census Officer emphasised the need for effective coordination among Charge Officers, Census Resource Personnel, Census Clerks, Technical Assistants and other functionaries to ensure uniform implementation of prescribed procedures. He highlighted the importance



of systematic supervision, regular monitoring of progress, timely reporting and prompt resolution of operational challenges during the enumeration process.

Dr. Basharat further stressed that particular attention must be given to preventing omissions, duplication and discrepancies in data collection. He underscored the importance of maintaining data quality, following prescribed technical procedures and ensuring the confidentiality and secure handling of census information.

The training programme was attended by the City Census Officer (Urban), Charge Officers, Nodal Officers of SMC, Census

Resource Personnel, Census Clerks and Technical Assistants.

Experts from the Census Department, including Deputy Director, Assistant Director and District Coordinator, imparted detailed training on census methodology, operational procedures, technical requirements and the responsibilities of various census functionaries.

The session will cover key aspects of Population Enumeration, including the collection, recording and verification of individual-level information, adherence to prescribed questionnaires, comprehensive coverage of assigned areas and measures to ensure accuracy

and consistency in the data collected. Participants were also briefed on field-level procedures, supervisory mechanisms, digital tools and established reporting protocols.

Phase II of Census 2027, comprising Population Enumeration, is a crucial component of the nationwide census exercise, involving the collection of individual-level demographic, socio-economic, educational and other prescribed particulars. The accuracy and completeness of this information are essential for developing a reliable population database.

Census data provide a vital foundation for evidence-based policymaking, public administration and development planning. For urban local bodies, reliable population statistics are essential for assessing demographic trends, identifying emerging civic requirements and planning infrastructure and essential public services in accordance with the needs of the population.

The two-day training programme marks an important step towards strengthening institutional preparedness and building the capacity of census functionaries for the accurate, coordinated and effective implementation of Phase II of Census 2027 across Srinagar’s urban jurisdiction.

Telecom Committee Meeting

Service providers directed to
improve connectivity in Anantnag

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, OCTOBER 29: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, Thursday chaired a meeting of the District Telecom Committee at the DC Office Complex, Anantnag, to review various issues pertaining to telecommunication services and the progress of telecom infrastructure development in the district.

During the meeting, the Chair, as per an official statement, was apprised of the progress achieved in the establishment and upgradation of telecom infrastructure across the district.

It was informed that work on most of the identified sites is in progress, while several other sites are nearing completion. The meeting was further informed that telecom towers are being upgraded in a phased manner, alongside the construction of new towers, to strengthen network coverage, improve connectivity and ensure the delivery of quality telecommunication services to the public.

While reviewing the bottlenecks affecting the pace of execution, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for close coordination and cooperation among all concerned departments, service providers and other stakeholders.

He directed the officers concerned to maintain effective and real-time communication to promptly address issues arising during the implementation of telecom infrastructure projects.

Emphasising the vital role of telecommunications in socio-economic development, public service delivery and overall connectivity, the DC stated that reliable communication services are essential for facilitating development and ensuring convenient access to services for the people, particularly in areas with inadequate network coverage. The DC directed the telecom service providers, including

BSNL, Jio and Airtel, to expedite the ongoing works, remove operational bottlenecks and ensure the provision of reliable, seamless and hassle-free services to consumers across the district. He also stressed the need for timely implementation of the BharatNet project to strengthen digital connectivity and improve access to communication services in rural and remote areas.

Revenue officers were directed to facilitate the identification and allotment of suitable land for the installation of telecom towers and to resolve land-related issues and other impediments, if any, that may hamper the execution of projects. They were asked



to extend all necessary support to ensure that work progresses smoothly and within the stipulated timelines.

The DC reiterated that all concerned departments and telecom service providers must work in close coordination to address connectivity-related challenges, accelerate infrastructure development and ensure that the benefits of improved telecommunication services reach every area of the district.

The meeting was attended by the Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Superintending Engineer (SE), KPDC, officers from the Public Works Department (PWD), Assistant Commissioner Panchayat (ACP), Tehsildars, Divisional Forest Officers of Lidder and Bijbehara, and representatives of BSNL, Airtel, Jio, Indus Towers and other concerned departments and agencies.

DDC Bandipora reviews
progress under UT Capex,
Tribal Sub Plan, DA-
JGUA, DMF, CSR

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, OCTOBER 29: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, Thursday chaired a review meeting at the Mini Secretariat to assess the physical and financial progress of various developmental schemes and sectoral plans across the district.

The meeting, as per an official statement, reviewed progress under the UT Capex Tribal Sub Plan, Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA-JGUA), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), District Mineral Fund (DMF) and Revenue Capex.

During the meeting, the DDC undertook a scheme-wise review of projects being implemented by various line departments and executing agencies. She was apprised of the status of completed and ongoing works, as well as projects yet to commence under the Tribal Sub Plan and DA-JGUA.

Emphasising the need to prioritise tribal welfare and development in marginalised areas, the DDC directed the concerned departments to expedite implementation of projects aimed at improving access to essential amenities and promoting inclusive socio-economic development.

Reviewing works under CSR, DMF and Revenue Capex, she stressed the need for close inter-departmental coordination to address field-level bottlenecks, site clearance issues and procedural delays.

The DDC directed the executing agencies to accelerate the pace of work, expedite billing and ensure timely and optimum utilisation of allocated funds before the close of the working season.

She also stressed adherence to prescribed quality standards, technical specifications and project timelines, directing sectoral officers to undertake regular field inspections and maintain close monitoring of ongoing works to ensure accountability and timely achievement of developmental targets.

The meeting was attended by Superintending Engineers of R&B and Hydraulic circles, Chief Planning Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development, District Programme Officer ICDS, Chief Education Officer, Chief Medical Officer, officers from Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Handicrafts and Handloom departments, and other concerned district officers.

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 Srinagr 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

GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL
SHAKTI (PHE) DEPTT.

Ground Water Division Srinagar Baghi-Ali-Mardan, Nowshara Srinagar.

E-mail:- hakeemmushtaq.75316@jk.gov.in

Tel./FaxNo:-0194-2411285

EXTENSION NOTICE 4TH.

Subject: 1. Construction of Machine Drilled Hand Pump Operated bore well at Chopan Mohalla Panchayat Halqa Chewa-B in District Bandipora. (Sl. No. 01).

Reference: This office e-NIT No. 58/JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2026-27, issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp/9502-16, dated: 07-09-2026. Bearing Tender ID No. 2026_PHE_323981_1.

Due to "NO Response" for the above mentioned work advertised vide e-NIT No. and Tender ID No's under reference. Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 27-10-2026 Up-to 01:00 PM are extended as per the details given below:-

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Last date & Time of submission of bids	09-11-2026 Up-to 01:00 PM
2.	Date & Time of opening of tenders	10-11-2026 01:00 PM

NOTE:

All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endstt: nos.

No: -JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp./15820-34.

Dated: 27-10-2026.

DIPK-7158/26 DATED: 29-10-2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE)
Deptt.
Ground Water Division Srinagar.

GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPTT.
GROUND WATER DIVISION SRINAGAR BAGHI-ALI-MARDAN,NOWSHARA SRINAGAR.

E-mail:- hakeemmushtaq.75316@jk.gov.in

Tel./FaxNo:-0194-2411285

Extension Notice 6th of
Re-Tender Notice/ Corrigendum 2nd.

Subject: 1. Construction of 200mm dia Production Well by ODEX Method at Kasnard Pannard Sangnard Well No. 2 District Anantnag.
2. Construction of Production Bore Well at Kharbatpora Ratnipora District Pulwama.

Reference:1. This office Re-Tender Notice/Corrigendum 2nd issued vide endorsement No:

JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp/7818-34, dated: 20-08-2026 Bearing Tender ID No. 2026_PHE_307406_5 & 6.

2. This office Extension Notice 4th issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/26- 27/Camp/2377-93, dated: 11-05-2026 of Re-tender Corrigendum Notice 1st vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/ Camp./ 2893-2909,Dated: 19-06-2026, Bearing Tender ID No. 2026_PHE_307406_3 & 4.

3. This office e-NIT No. 04/JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2026-27, issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp/64-76, dated: 03-04-2026. Bearing Tender ID No. 2026_PHE_307406_1 & 2.

Due to "NO Response" for the above mentioned work's advertised vide e-NIT No. and Tender ID No's under reference. Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 27-10-2026 Up-to 11:00 AM.

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Last date & Time of submission of bids	09-11-2026 Up-to 01:00 PM
2.	Date & Time of opening of tenders	10-11-2026 01.00 PM

NOTE:

All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endstt: nos.

No: -JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp/15765-82.

Dated: 27-10-2026.

DIPK-7166/26 DATED: 29-10-2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.
Ground Water Division Srinagar.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
JAMMU AND KASHMIR SERVICES SELECTION BOARD

Muthi, Akhnoor Road, Jammu/ZamZam Complex Rambagh, Srinagar (www.jkssb.nic.in)

NOTIFICATION

Subject: Document Verification of candidates falling under consideration zone for the post of Wild Life Guard, Inspector, FPF Guard, Social Forestry Worker and Field Assistant- regarding.

The Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) conducted an OMR-based written examination for the posts of Wildlife Guard, Social Forestry Worker, Inspector (FPF), FPF Guard and Field Assistant in the Department of Forest, Ecology & Environment, pursuant to Advertisement Notification Nos. 03 of 2021 and 04 of 2022, under Item Nos. 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 185, 186, 189, 190, 592, 593, 594, 605 and 606.

The result/score sheet of the written examination for the aforesaid posts was notified vide Notification No. JKSSB- COEOEXAM (UT)/14/2026- 03 (7842028), dated 28.04.2026 and 11.06.2026, respectively.

Subsequently, vide Notification No. JKSSB- COEOEXAM (UT)/14/2026- 03 (7842028), dated 29.07.2026, candidates were shortlisted for appearing in the Physical Standard Test (PST)/Physical Endurance Test (PET) in the ratio of 1:6 of the number of vacancies to be filled in each category, as approved by the Board. The shortlisted candidates falling within the consideration zone accordingly underwent the PST/PET in accordance with the prescribed requirements of the relevant Advertisement Notifications.

The JKSSB conducted the PST/PET of eligible shortlisted candidates from 07.09.2026 to 08.09.2026 at Srinagar and from 11.09.2026 to 13.09.2026 at Jammu.

Accordingly, with a view of ensuring timely filling of all requisitioned vacancies, the candidates falling within the consideration zone for the aforementioned posts, as detailed in Annexures A, B, C, D and E to this notification are hereby called upon to appear in person before the designated Document Verification Committees of the Board for verification and scrutiny of their documents/certificates, as per the schedule and venue indicated against their respective names in the relevant annexure.

The candidates shall produce the following documents/certificates in original, along with one set of self- attested photocopies, before the designated Document Verification Committee:

- Copy of Application Forms.
 - Two passport size recent colour photographs.
 - One original photo ID Proof i.e. Aadhar card/Voter Card/Pan Card/Passport etc.
 - D.O.B Certificate (10th Diploma/Marks card).
 - Valid Category Certificate, if belongs to reserved categories.
 - Domicile Certificate.
 - 10 + 2 Marks Sheet/ Diploma.
 - Qualification/Certificates prescribed for the post as mentioned in the relevant Advertisement Notification.
 - In the case of candidates claiming possession of equivalent education qualification, it shall be mandatory to produce the relevant Equivalence Certificate from the concerned authorities at the time of Document Verification, and the Board shall take an appropriate view based on the norms governing the subject.
 - Bonafide certificate on the format prescribed by the Board duly issued by the Controller/Registrar of the concerned University/ Institute/Board in respect of candidates, who have obtained the qualification from outside the UT of J&K.
 - In addition, any other certificate, as may be required as part of eligibility for a specific post, shall also be produced.
 - Checklist sheet/form to be submitted by candidates at the time of their D.V (as per Annexure "X").
- The candidates who fail to appear before the respective Document Verification Committee (s) on the scheduled date shall forfeit their right to selection.

29.10.2026

DIPK-7205/26 DATED: 29-10-2026

(Reyaz Ahmad Malik) JKAS
Controller of Examinations, J&K Services Selection Board

World Stroke Day

‘Stroke increasingly hits younger people’

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Oct 29: Doctors on Thursday cautioned that stroke is increasingly affecting younger people, warning that changing lifestyles, uncontrolled hypertension, diabetes, smoking, obesity and physical inactivity are contributing to the growing burden of the condition.

On World Stroke Day, they said that many strokes can be prevented through timely identification and management of risk factors, regular health check-ups and healthier lifestyle choices, while emphasising that recognising warning signs and seeking immediate medical attention can significantly improve outcomes.

Doctors said stroke, which occurs when the blood supply to a part of the brain is interrupted or when a blood vessel in the brain ruptures, can lead to serious complications, including paralysis, speech difficulties, cognitive impairment and, in severe cases, death.

Although stroke has traditionally been associated with older people, an increasing number of younger individuals are also at risk, making awareness about preventive measures and early symptoms particularly important.

Dr Syed Maqbool, a cardiologist at Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu, speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said changing lifestyle patterns have emerged as a major contributor to the increasing risk of stroke among younger



people. "Stroke is increasingly affecting younger people, and our changing lifestyle is a major contributor. Uncontrolled hypertension, diabetes, smoking, obesity, unhealthy diets, physical inactivity and chronic stress are silently increasing the risk," he said.

He said the growing burden of stroke was a matter of concern, particularly because many such incidents could be prevented through timely intervention and better management of underlying health conditions.

"The real concern is not just the rising burden of stroke, but our failure to prevent many of these devastating events," he said.

Stating that stroke should not always be viewed as an unavoidable medical emergency, he said, "Most importantly, stroke is not always inevitable. Early detection and control of risk factors can prevent many strokes. Prevention saves lives. Early recognition saves the brain. Every minute matters."

The cardiologist advised people to pay

particular attention to blood pressure, blood sugar levels, body weight and daily physical activity instead of waiting for symptoms to develop, and that adopting a balanced diet, avoiding tobacco, maintaining a healthy weight and engaging in regular exercise can help reduce cardiovascular risks and, in turn, lower the risk of stroke.

Dr Showkat Ahmad Shah, a cardiologist at GMC Anantnag, said protecting cardiovascular health was essential for reducing the risk of stroke, as several major risk factors affect both the heart and the brain. "On World Stroke Day, my message as a cardiologist is simple: protecting your heart also protects your brain. The growing burden of stroke is linked to uncontrolled blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, obesity and lack of physical activity, alongside an ageing population," he said.

He said hypertension was particularly concerning because it often develops without noticeable symptoms, leaving many people unaware that they are at risk. "High blood pressure often causes no symptoms, and feeling well is no reason to stop treatment. Check your blood pressure, take prescribed medicines regularly and make time to walk every day," he said.

Highlighting the importance of recognising stroke symptoms, Dr Shah said sudden facial drooping, arm weakness, difficulty speaking, loss of vision or loss of balance may indicate a stroke and should never be ignored. "Seek emergency care immediately, even if the symptoms improve, and

note when they started," he said, warning that delaying treatment in the hope that symptoms would subside could have serious consequences, including permanent disability.

"Do not wait for morning; a few minutes can make a lasting difference to someone's ability to speak, walk and live independently," he added.

Doctors said the time between the onset of stroke symptoms and the initiation of treatment is critical, as prompt medical assessment can help determine the appropriate treatment and improve the chances of recovery. They advised people to seek emergency medical assistance immediately if stroke symptoms appear, even if they disappear after a short period, as temporary symptoms may also signal a serious underlying problem.

They also stressed the need to improve public awareness about stroke prevention, particularly among younger people who may overlook risk factors because they consider themselves healthy, and reiterated that regular health check-ups, adherence to prescribed medication, physical activity, healthy eating and avoiding tobacco remain among the key measures to reduce the risk of stroke.

While not every stroke can be prevented, greater awareness, early intervention and timely emergency care can save lives and help reduce the long-term physical, emotional and social consequences of the condition, they said—(KNO)

BJP shedding crocodile tears over Satish Sharma's exclusion: Dy CM



Yogesh

Jammu, Oct 29: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary on Thursday accused the BJP of "shedding crocodile tears" over the removal of independent MLA Satish Sharma from the council of ministers.

Rejecting the BJP's allegations that Jammu had been inadequately represented in the Omar Abdullah-led cabinet following the recent reshuffle, Choudhary questioned the opposition party's change of stance over Sharma's exit. "Not long ago the BJP attempted to politically damage both of us and sought our removal from the government," Choudhary alleged.

"BJP leaders branding us 'Jaichands' (traitors) and used labels such as 'Satish Abdullah'

and 'Surinder Abdullah' to attack us politically," he added.

"Those who tried to politically damage us and get both of us dropped from the government are now shedding crocodile tears over Satish Sharma's removal," Choudhary said, accusing the BJP of adopting a contradictory position for political gains.

Expressing disappointment over Sharma's exit from the cabinet, the Deputy Chief Minister thanked Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and National Conference president Farooq Abdullah for retaining him in the government. He maintained that his appointment as Deputy Chief Minister ensured Jammu's representation in the cabinet.

Responding to BJP chief spokesperson Sunil Sethi's description of the National Conference as a "Muslim Conference", Choudhary

questioned the BJP's record on providing adequate representation to Muslim leaders in senior ministerial positions in governments led by the party.

He also defended his community identity, asserting that his Jat background did not diminish his association with the Dogra community. Objecting to remarks that he said had hurt the sentiments of Jat people, Choudhary questioned why his community background had become a subject of political controversy.

Referring to the region's history, he said members of the Jat community had served during the rule of Maharaja Hari Singh and maintained that his community background should not be used to question his identity as a Dogra.

The Deputy Chief Minister also challenged the BJP to substantiate its corruption allegations against him, urging the party to examine the financial interests and businesses of its own leaders before making accusations against others.

Pertinently, the political exchange comes in the wake of the recent expansion of the Omar Abdullah-led cabinet, during which four ministers from Kashmir were inducted. The reshuffle triggered a fresh debate over regional representation in the J&K government, with the BJP questioning Jammu's share in the cabinet—(KNO)

KMC awaits NMC nod to begin MBBS admissions

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Oct 29: Kashmir Medical College (KMC), Sempora, is awaiting approval from the National Medical Commission (NMC) to begin MBBS admissions, with aspirants and their families hoping for an early decision that would open new avenues for medical education within the Valley.

The institution is expected to expand opportunities for local students aspiring to become doctors, allowing them to pursue medical education closer to home while strengthening the region's healthcare education infrastructure.

The KMC has invested around Rs 750 crore in developing its infrastructure, recruiting faculty members and doctors, and establishing essential facilities over the past two years as it prepares to commence its MBBS programme.

The institution has been working towards creating a comprehensive medical education and healthcare

facility, with infrastructure and human resources aimed at supporting academic activities, clinical training and patient care.

The facility represents one of the biggest private-sector investments in the healthcare sector in Jammu and Kashmir and aimed to strengthen the region's medical education capacity while expanding access to specialised healthcare services. It has generated employment for healthcare professionals and supporting staff contributing to the overall healthcare infrastructure of the Union Territory.

Locals and health professionals believe the college could provide an important addition to the Valley's medical education landscape, particularly at a time when many families are concerned about sending their children abroad amid geopolitical tensions affecting

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Youth engagement, sporting activities key to prosperous J&K: DGP Prabhat

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 29: Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat on Thursday stressed the need for greater youth engagement and increased sporting activities to build a secure, healthy and prosperous Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the closing ceremony of 'Pedal Through Paradise 2026' in Srinagar, the DGP said greater participation

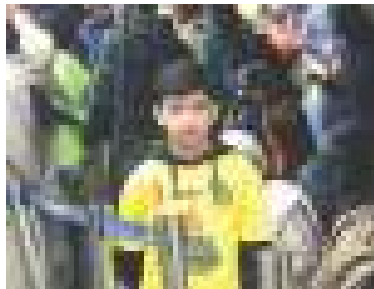
of youth in sports is important for the overall well-being and progress of the region.



"More and more youth engagement, more and more sporting activity, a secure and most importantly, a very healthy, heartening and prosperous Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

The cycling event was organised by J&K Police to encourage youth participation in sports and promote fitness and a healthy lifestyle—(KNO)

12-year-old Qasim Mir leads the way at 'Pedal Through Paradise'



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Oct 29: While much of Srinagar was still asleep, 12-year-old Mohammad Qasim Mir was already awake at 4 am, eager to head to Dal Lake for the cycling event 'Pedal Through Paradise'.

Among the thousands who participated in the event, Qasim, a resident of Bagh-e-Mehtab, stood out as an example of how a passion for fitness and sports can take root at a young age.

His father, Mir Murtaza said that Qasim was determined not to miss the event.

"We have all been awake since 4 am because my son would not let us sleep. He was so excited," Murtaza said.

Organised by the Jammu and Kashmir Police, the cycling event brought together participants from different age groups to promote physical fitness, cycling and healthy lifestyles.

Murtaza said it was Qasim's first experience of participating in such an event and that he has a keen interest in cycling and other sporting activities.

"He loves racing and taking part in these activities. He was very excited," he said.

Qasim said he thoroughly enjoyed the ride and was happy to be part of the event.

Accompanied by his parents, the young cyclist braved the chilly morning and joined thousands of participants along the banks of Dal Lake, turning his enthusiasm for cycling into a memorable experience—(KNO)

Bemina residents complain of unscheduled power cuts

KNO

Srinagar, Oct 29: Residents of Lane 4, Iqbal Abad in Srinagar's Bemina area have expressed resentment over frequent unscheduled power cuts, saying the erratic electricity supply is causing inconvenience to households and disrupting studies of students preparing for examinations ahead of winter.

Residents said that the area is fully metered and, as per the notified curtailment schedule, power cuts should be limited to 30 minutes. However, they alleged that frequent and prolonged outages have become routine.

Continued on
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MLA Chadoora backs cabinet reshuffle Hails CM Omar's 'efforts to ensure district representation



Naveed Ul Haq Ganaie

Budgam, Oct 29: Senior National Conference (NC) leader and MLA Chadoora Ali Mohammad Dar on Thursday welcomed the recent cabinet reshuffle in Jammu

and Kashmir, describing it as a good decision. He appreciated Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's efforts to ensure representation for different sections and districts.

Speaking to reporters, Dar

said that Omar Abdullah and NC president Dr Farooq Abdullah had made efforts to accommodate people from different backgrounds in the Council of Ministers.

He added that the Union Territory has a limited

ministerial strength. "Five ministers had been appointed earlier, of whom one was dropped, while four new faces were inducted as part of the reshuffle," he said, adding that senior leaders had also been included in the new ministerial team.

The NC leader said that CM Abdullah had made considerable efforts to ensure district-wise representation.

"We understand that people from different districts have expectations of representation in the government. While some areas, including Shopian and Baniptora, had not received representation in the reshuffle, we are hopeful that they would also get their turn at an appropriate time," he said—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Friday Brief: Signs Of The Merciful

Birds appear in the Quran not as decoration but as evidence. In Surah Al-Mulk, Allah asks a question that is easy to read and hard to answer: “Do they not see the birds above them, spreading and folding their wings? None holds them up except the Most Compassionate”. The verse does

not simply admire flight. It points to the One who sustains it. The use of the name “Al-Rahman” here is deliberate. The same mercy that provides for human beings holds the bird in the air. To watch a bird is to watch a sign of care. The Quran also uses birds to teach trust and humility. When Ibrahim (Peace Be

Upon Him) asked to see how Allah gives life to the dead, he was commanded to take four birds and scatter them on different hills, then call them back. The lesson was not about the birds. It was about certainty of the heart. In the story of Sulaiman (Peace Be Upon Him), the hoopoe is missed at roll call and

later returns with news of a whole kingdom. A small bird becomes an instrument of knowledge and guidance. In Surah Al-Fil, birds are sent against an army, carrying stones of clay. The weak creature becomes the carrier of divine justice. The Hadith literature adds a gentler dimension. The Prophet (Peace Be

Upon Him) warned against harming birds without right, and said that if anyone kills even a sparrow unjustly, Allah will question him about it on the Day of Judgment. He (PBUH) also said, “Settle the birds in their nests,” discouraging the pre-Islamic practice of disturbing them for omens. And in a beautiful image

of the people of Paradise, he (PBUH) described hearts as soft and free of sin, “like the hearts of birds”. For the believer, these references carry a simple message. Birds are not ours to harm at will. They are signs of a mercy that holds everything in place. To notice them is to remember the One who holds us too.

Neurology & Qur’an Speak About Smartest Bird On Earth

The Quran opens a great door of learning by showing the raven as a mentor to man. Ravens seem to be good teachers of logical thinking, creative problem solving, team work, strategic planning, and effective resource management – all while showing utmost respect to the environment.

Sahar El-Nadi

Birds are not generally perceived to be smart animals; in fact, it's demeaning to call someone “bird-brained”.

But one day, I was reading a verse of the Qur'an involving a bird teaching early humans an important practice, which made me stop and think of the significance of the verse and the qualities of this specific bird, leading me to an interesting learning experience.

Here is the verse which is part of the story of the sons of Adam, Cane and Able: “The (selfish) soul of the other led him to the murder of his brother: he murdered him, and became (himself) one of the lost ones. Then Allah sent a raven, who scratched the ground, to show him how to hide the shame of his brother. “Woe is me!” said he; “Was I not even able to be as this raven, and to hide the shame of my brother?” then he became full of regrets- (Qur'an, 5:30-31).

My experience with the Qur'an is that when it singles out a creature, it means it literally and specifically, not broadly. It gives us a hint to look closer and study it deeper for a well of untapped knowledge.

So, I assumed this should be the case with ravens since the verse clearly appoints this bird as a mentor for humans, and clearly shows that humans would be humbled by the solutions found by ravens for some of their critical problems.

As a result, I wondered: which animal is the most intelligent after human beings? Like many people, I thought of the dolphins for that honor, but after a very enjoyable online search, I was in for a big surprise.

Latest research shows a very unexpected candidate for the top position in animal intelligence, the black bird, which many cultures consider as a harbinger of ill fate and death (maybe because of its solemn role of burial in the story above?), this super intelligent bird is the raven!

The Scientific American magazine published research results of scientists Bernd Heinrich and Thomas Bugnyar – Vermont University, Canada and St Andrews University, Scotland – which show the



exceptional mental abilities of the ravens.

“These birds use logic to solve problems and some of their abilities even surpass those of the great apes,” they say.

In these experiments, ravens were given very complex tasks which they have never encountered before and they're not programmed for doing naturally, yet they managed to succeed every time, finding creative, logical solutions to the tasks.

More surprisingly, they did it right the first time, every time, with no trial and error process whatsoever!

The experiments show that ravens were able to test possibilities in their minds in record time, select the most effective solution, and apply it correctly the first time they tried it, something that most intelligent creatures, cannot match.

Some experiments show that ravens are cunning enough to make other animals work for them to make their food scavenging easier, and to secure more than 90% of the prey others have hunted for them. Some

have even learnt and taught others to make hunting tools.

Lessons to Learn
Birds in the Quran: The Hoopoe

In one experiment, a raven fashioned a hook out of a piece of straight wire to fish the food out with it. In another experiment, where the food inside the tube is floating on a small amount of water at the bottom of the long tube, the raven first measures the tube using its beak, then drops the exact number of small pebbles in the tube needed to raise the water level enough for its beak to reach the food.

Seeing a video of the above experiments, I decided to try my own little experiment – on humans: I played the video where the raven uses the pebbles to a number of people of different ages, and stopped it right before it showed the raven's brilliant solution, and then asked my audience what they would do if they were in its place?

The unanimous answer was “tip the tube, spill the water with the food, and grab the

food” but they were amazed and humbled (exactly like the son of Adam in the Qur'anic verse) when they saw that the raven didn't take the easy way out of spilling the water; but made sure that it got its food without disturbing or damaging the environment where it found it; a precious lesson that many humans need to learn..

Another incredible video shows the ravens in Japan which have been caught on CCTV cameras.

First, they learnt to throw hard-shelled nuts -that were too tough for them to crack- from high trees to the streets to crack them open and eat them.

Then they developed the process into throwing the nutshells in the path of speeding cars to crack them faster, and to avoid the risk of getting run over by heavy traffic, they refined their technique even more, learning to wait for the traffic lights to turn red keeping the cars at bay.

Then diving down quickly from treetops to snatch their food, all the while keeping an eye on the lights, and flying away safely as soon as the lights changed.

Ravens are also capable of teaming up to trap and kill a prey: two of the ravens would fly to the ground to block its escape route, while the others attacked it. This behavior suggests that they know what each other and the lizard are thinking, which is known as a 'theory of mind', say the scientists at Tel Aviv University.

Crows would even team up to solve problems set for them during experiments, and would recognize themselves when they looked in a mirror.

Another sign of their high intelligence is that they adapt to very different terrain, from deserts to mountains.

They learn to find food even in the harshest conditions, and they know how and when to use other animals to help them get a meal they couldn't otherwise reach. “Ravens are cognitively equal to a two-year-old child,” says biologist Thomas Bugnyar.

Crows are very social species and live in large extended family groups, yet their few fights within a family are usually short and

involve only a few pecks, they would only fight to death enemies endangering their families. Compare that with the behavior of the son of Adam who killed his own brother!

As they watch ravens pass test after difficult test, the researchers are wondering what purpose all this cleverness serves, since other birds get through life just fine with far less intelligence? Well, perhaps ravens have a higher purpose in nature than their simple bird life?

The Quran opens a great door of learning by showing the raven as a mentor to man. Ravens seem to be good teachers of logical thinking, creative problem solving, team work, strategic planning, and effective resource management – all while showing utmost respect to the environment.

So, perhaps this is the right time for us to learn from these intelligent creatures, as we seem to need their brain power the most to bring us back to our senses as peaceful guardians of planet Earth.

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About Sahar El-Nadi

Sahar El-Nadi is an Egyptian freelance journalist who traveled to 25 countries around the world and currently based in Cairo. Sahar also worked in many people-related careers in parallel, including presenting public events and TV programs; instructing training courses in communication skills; cross cultural issues; image consulting for public speakers; orientation for first-time visitors to the Middle East; and localization consulting for international educational projects.

Courtesy: AboutIslam

The Arab Vote Just Rewrote Israel’s Political Map

The surprise of this election is that Palestinian citizens of Israel showed up to vote in historic numbers; the test now is to see what they can get for it

Osama Al-Sharif

Israel's election ended without a clear winner, but one result rattled the two major competing camps.

Neither Benjamin Netanyahu's bloc, at roughly 53 seats at the latest count, nor Gadi Eisenkot's, at around 48, could reach the magic number of 61 or more to form the next government. But the Arab parties, running under the Joint List and the United List, or Ra'am, have together snatched a historic 19 seats in the 120-seat Knesset.

That would be the largest Arab representation in Israeli history, up from 10 seats today and above the 15 seats they won in 2020. Whatever the final tally, the Arab parties have emerged as this election's surprise upset, and possibly kingmakers.

Analysts at the Israel Democracy Institute once described the long slide in Arab turnout in Israeli general elections as seemingly irreversible: from about 75 percent in 1999 to 44.6 percent in 2021, then 53.2 percent in 2022. This week, the turnout was about 80 percent, above the national figure of 77.7 percent; a number that has sent tremors across the Israeli political scene, especially since Palestinian citizens of Israel make up about a fifth of Israel's population.

Several factors explain this popular mobilization. The first and most direct factor is anger at Netanyahu's far-right government, which is perceived as ideologically anti-Arab, with far-right racist ministers openly inciting against their community. In a



September Israel Democracy Institute poll, 54 percent of Palestinian citizens of Israel named rising crime their top voting issue.

The second factor is same-day backlash. Netanyahu spent Election Day fearmongering and warning that Palestinian citizens of Israel were flooding polling stations and accused them of trying to steal the election. Media reports say Likud and Religious Zionism sent nearly 2,000 activists to Arab polling places, which Arab parties say was meant to scare voters.

The third possible factor is the national drive, especially by right-of-center parties and the left, to get rid of Netanyahu after the October 2023 security breach and what followed. Many Palestinian citizens of Israel have their own reasons to punish Netanyahu, whom they blame for the atrocities committed in Gaza and the wave of terror being

carried out by Israeli fanatics in the West Bank.

While neither competing Zionist camp expected the Arab parties to do so well, the stunning win has blocked Netanyahu's path to forming a government on his own. His bloc is eight seats short of 61, Eisenkot's is 13. High Arab turnout denied both a majority, but by the end of the day it could hurt Eisenkot more, since Netanyahu can still hope to attract parties from outside his bloc. At the same time, Eisenkot needs Arab votes in some form to reach a majority.

From now on it is a horse-trading ritual, not unusual in Israeli politics. Eisenkot has three likely routes. First, he can invite Arab parties into his government, which is unlikely for several reasons. His allies, namely Avigdor Liberman and Naftali Bennett, have ruled out direct Arab participation.

The second possible route is a quid-pro-quo deal in which Arab parties back him from outside, providing a parliamentary safety net. Joint List leader Yousef Jabareen has offered exactly that to any government seeking to oust Netanyahu. At the same time, Ra'am's Mansour Abbas wants a real partnership and says he is talking to both blocs.

A third route, which is reportedly backed by elements in the Donald Trump administration, is a unity government between Netanyahu and Eisenkot. It is possible on paper, but question marks remain about whether everyone involved would accept it, especially in the opposition bloc, where Eisenkot and Liberman have vowed not to serve under Netanyahu under any circumstances.

Eisenkot and the Arab lists can do one thing immediately: replace the current Likud head of the Knesset and force an independent committee to investigate the security failures of Oct. 7, 2023, and Netanyahu's responsibility, something the prime minister has avoided on multiple occasions.

For an Arab party to join an Israeli government, there is precedent. In 2021, Abbas signed a coalition deal with Bennett and Yair Lapid worth billions of dollars for the Arab community, which also led to the recognition of several Bedouin villages. Netanyahu himself reportedly negotiated with Abbas earlier, a claim Likud denies; but a deal fell through because Bezalel Smotrich objected.

For Netanyahu, any partnership between Eisenkot and the Palestinian citizens of Israel means derailment of his chances and his

political comeback. Within hours of the exit polls, he dismissed any partnership with Arab parties as treasonous and said a government working with them would endanger Israel.

Later on Wednesday, Likud claimed the Arab parties stole the election and demanded an investigation into vote rigging in Arab polling stations, but these are allegations. Netanyahu's inciting message is the same: a government that depends on Arab votes will be branded illegitimate from its first day.

Until the Israeli president decides on who will have the first attempt to form a government, far-right parties that campaigned on Arab turnout as a threat will campaign next on Arab influence as a threat. Some analysts also believe Netanyahu will try to force a new election if his efforts to form a new government fail, which could negatively affect the turnout of Palestinian citizens of Israel, as happened in 2021 after repeated elections, giving the far right a new push to claim a majority.

For the euphoric Arab parties, the best response is to convert turnout into genuine commitments on crime and budgets before extending any support. Such commitment will satisfy the voters who showed up. The 2019 and 2021 collapses show how quickly such gains can vanish. The surprise of this election is that Palestinian citizens of Israel showed up to vote in historic numbers. The test now is to see what they can get for it.

Osama Al-Sharif is a journalist and a political commentator based in Amman.

Courtesy: Arab News

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

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Comm Secy DMRRR, Div Com Kashmir assesses readiness of flats at Transit Camp Zewan

‘Ensure comprehensive arrangements, complete all necessary preparations for smooth conduct of inauguration ceremony’

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 29: Commissioner Secretary Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (DMRRR), M. Raju, and Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, Thursday visited Transit Camp Zewan to takr first hand appraisal of the readiness of accommodation flats for migrant employees ahead of their inauguration and allotment.

During the visit, the officers, as per an official statement, reviewed arrangements for the inauguration ceremony, including preparations for the stage and inauguration stone, the handover of keys to beneficiaries, and the installation of the Public Address System (PAS).

They also inspected essential civil amenities, including



electricity and water supply, functioning of lifts, sanitation, lighting, and security arrangements.

On the occasion, the officers directed all concerned departments to ensure comprehensive arrangements and complete all necessary preparations for the smooth conduct of the inauguration ceremony.

The officers were accompanied by IGP Kashmir Sujit Kumar, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar

Akshay Labroo, SSP Srinagar Dr. G.V. Sundeeep Chakravarthi, Director Information, Commissioner Relief and Rehabilitation (Migrants), and officers from the Roads and Buildings (R&B), Public Health Engineering (PHE), Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL), Mechanical Engineering Department (MED), and Hospitality and Protocol departments.

MP Er Gulam Ali Khatana holds Public Darbar at Chaklipora Anantnag

Urges People to avail benefits of Govt schemes

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, OCTOBER 29: Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Er. Gulam Ali Khatana, Thursday presided over a Public Darbar at Government Higher Secondary School, Chaklipora, Block Chittergul, Anantnag, to listen to public grievances and address issues concerning the people.

During the Darbar, local residents, public representatives and various delegations projected their demands and highlighted issues related to basic amenities, essential services and developmental requirements.

The issues raised included power supply, drinking water, healthcare facilities, tourism, education, road connectivity, agriculture and other public



utility services.

Er. Khatana, as per an official statement, reviewed arrangements for the inauguration ceremony, including gave a patient hearing to the participants and took note of the grievances and demands put forth by them.

Addressing the gathering, the MP reiterated the Government's commitment to the overall development of Jammu and Kashmir, with a

special focus on the welfare of the poor, educated sections of society and tribal communities.

He urged officers to create awareness among people through Panchayats about various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, including those related to agricultural loans, Kisan Credit Card (KCC), employment generation, financial assistance and marriage assistance. He also encouraged eligible

beneficiaries to avail benefits of these schemes.

He assured the people that their genuine grievances would be taken up with the concerned authorities for appropriate intervention.

He also directed officers of the concerned departments to take prompt cognisance of the issues raised during the Darbar and ensure their timely redressal through coordinated efforts.

Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Anantnag, Chief Planning Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development, Chief Education Officer, Lead District Manager, officers from PDD, PHE, R&B, Horticulture, Agriculture, Tourism, Health, Rural Development, National Highways, Food, Forest and District Industries Centre, along with the Tehsildar and other concerned officers and representatives from various departments, were present during the Public Darbar.

MD NHM reviews winter preparedness across health institutions



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 29: Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM) J&K, Athar Aamir Shafi-ul-Khan, Thursday chaired a review meeting at the State Health Society Office in the Old Secretariat, Srinagar, to assess and strengthen winter preparedness across healthcare institutions in the region.

The meeting, as per an official statement, reviewed arrangements for the inauguration ceremony, including was attended both in person and via virtual mode by the Director Health Services Jammu/Kashmir, Chief Medical Officers, NHM Programme Managers, and other senior health officials.

Conducting an exhaustive district-wise review, the Mission Director placed core emphasis on maintaining uninterrupted medical services during the challenging winter months. He evaluated the availability of essential medicines, proper heating arrangements, and reliable power backup systems across all healthcare facilities to ensure patient comfort and operational continuity. Reviewing grassroots medical staffing, he stressed the adequate deployment of manpower and field-level workers, particularly ASHA workers and ANMs, while also directing enhanced preparations and resource allocation for the effective management of seasonal

respiratory diseases.

A major focus of the deliberations was maternal and child healthcare safety in remote and snow-bound terrain. The Mission Director directed officials to maintain a precise line listing of all pregnant women, proactively identify high-risk pregnancies or any patients requiring specialized medical intervention, and ensure their proper tracking and mobilization for respectful institutional delivery. Emphasizing a zero-tolerance approach toward avoidable tragedies, he strongly reiterated that the administration must ensure zero maternal and infant deaths alongside absolute prevention of home deliveries.

To tackle logistical challenges during heavy snowfalls, the meeting finalized a robust deployment plan for 108 Ambulance services, with a specific priority on stationing 4x4 ambulances in difficult and snowbound areas.

Officials were instructed to maintain close liaison with the Mechanical Engineering Department, Police, and other stakeholder agencies for immediate snow clearance and unhindered emergency transit routes.

Concluding the meeting, the Mission Director directed all Chief Medical Officers to conduct rigorous and regular field visits to proactively identify and bridge any operational gaps ahead of the peak winter season.

Secy RDD reviews SBM-G progress, stresses accountability, faster execution of sanitation assets

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 29: Secretary, Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj, Ramesh Kumar, on Wednesday directed officers to intensify field inspections, expedite pending works and ensure visible improvements in sanitation infrastructure and waste management across Kashmir Division while reviewing the district-wise performance of the Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G).

Chairing a comprehensive review meeting, the Secretary, as per an official statement, reviewed arrangements for the inauguration ceremony, including assessed the progress of key sanitation and waste management infrastructure, including Community Sanitary Complexes, Community Compost Pits, Community Soak Pits, Segregation Sheds, Plastic Waste Management Units, Decentralised Wastewater Treatment Systems (DEWATS), Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs) and GOBARDhan biogas plants.

The meeting was attended by Director Finance Umar Khan, Joint Director Planning Kamal Kumar Sharma, Deputy Director Rural Sanitation, Kashmir, Shabir Ahmed Hakak, besides Assistant Commissioners Panchayats and Executive Engineers of Rural Engineering Wing (REV) from across Kashmir Division.

Reviewing district-wise progress, Kumar emphasised that the creation of infrastructure alone was not sufficient, stressing that every asset must be functional, accessible and deliver its intended benefits to rural



communities. He called for a shift towards outcome-oriented implementation, stronger monitoring and tangible improvements on the ground.

Taking stock of the status of Community Sanitary Complexes, the Secretary questioned the delays in initiating targeted works, observing that preparatory activities, including identification of suitable land and completion of tendering formalities, should have been undertaken well in advance, as the targets were linked to the financial year.

While officers cited land-related issues and the need to identify alternative sites as major challenges, Kumar stressed that such constraints must be identified and addressed at the planning stage rather than being cited subsequently as reasons for delays.

The Secretary underscored the need for sound financial planning, timely submission of proposals and completion of all prescribed formalities to ensure the effective release and utilisation of funds. He observed that delays in implementation could not be attributed solely to the Government or the availability of funds, emphasising that district-level officers must

fulfil their responsibilities by ensuring timely proposals, adherence to procedures and continuous monitoring of works.

He also sought a detailed account of works for which funds had been allocated, those taken up for execution and projects completed so far, directing officers to ensure accountability at every stage of implementation.

Calling for greater dedication and efficiency, Kumar said public resources must translate into functional sanitation infrastructure, cleaner villages and improved services for rural communities. He directed officers to undertake regular and purposeful field visits to assess the functionality of sanitation facilities, identify deficiencies and ensure their timely rectification.

The Secretary further directed that operational issues relating to vehicles, faecal sludge treatment infrastructure, electrical components and other essential requirements be resolved in coordination with the concerned departments. He also stressed the need to constitute dedicated teams wherever required to address bottlenecks and ensure the smooth functioning of sanitation facilities.

The review also highlighted challenges in identifying suitable land for key sanitation infrastructure, particularly FSTPs, DEWATS and GOBARDhan biogas plants. Limited capacity-building support, inadequate technical training and the absence of dedicated personnel at district, block and Gram Panchayat levels were also identified as constraints affecting effective implementation and monitoring.

DC Shopian, SSP tour Town to review traffic management

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, OCTOBER 29: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh, along with Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmed Choudhary Thursday conducted a tour of Shopian town to take stock of traffic management, ongoing development works and measures for the beautification of the town.

During the visit, the officers, as per an official statement, reviewed arrangements for the inauguration ceremony, including inspected key locations across the town and reviewed the existing traffic management arrangements, with a focus on ensuring smooth vehicular movement, minimising congestion and facilitating hassle-free movement of commuters and pedestrians.

The DC also reviewed the status of ongoing development works and initiatives aimed at improving civic amenities, public infrastructure and the overall appearance of the town.

At the outset of the visit, the DC inspected the Multilevel Car Parking site near the Municipal Council, Shopian, being constructed by R&B Shopian at an estimated cost of Rs 4.98 crore.

The DC directed the Executive Engineer, R&B, to expedite all remaining construction works to ensure completion at the earliest to help ease traffic congestion in the town.

The DC inspected the entry and exit points of District Hospital Shopian and directed the concerned officials to initiate road widening, property

acquisition and removal of bottlenecks to ensure smooth access for ambulances and patients.

He also inspected various markets in the town and directed the shifting of local Sumo stands and vendors to suitable designated locations to ensure smooth traffic flow while safeguarding the livelihoods of local drivers and traders.

The DC also inspected the Clock Tower and the main markets of Shopian and interacted with Market Associations, members of civil society, Traders Federation and local residents.

He directed CEO MC, for construction of proper kiosks and vending spaces, market beautification and provision of essential facilities for vendors.

The DC also took stock of traffic flow, public amenities and market arrangements around the Fourway Junction.

He also interacted with members of the Auqaf Committee at Jamia Masjid and assured them that cleanliness and maintenance in the surrounding area would be accorded top priority.

The concerned departments were directed to maintain close coordination and take necessary measures to ensure the smooth functioning of the town and timely resolution of public issues.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone; ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; ACR, Shakoor Ahmed Dar; CEO, Suhail Ahmed Malik; Executive Engineers of R&B, PDD and PHE; Tehsildar Shopian; DySP; ARTO; and other concerned officers.

43rd ISMPP Annual National Convention

Javid Ahmad Dar calls for climate-resilient horticulture, science-led crop protection

KT News Desk

Srinagar, October 29: Minister for Agriculture Production, Finance, Mining and Cooperatives J&K Govt, Javid Ahmad Dar, addressed the 43rd Annual National Convention of the Indian Society of Mycology and Plant Pathology (ISMPP) as chief guest at the University of Kashmir (KU) on Thursday.

The convention, as per a KU statement, is being held on the theme "Advances and Challenges in Plant Pathology under Climate-Resilient Agriculture."

The three-day convention, from October 29 to 31, is jointly organised by the University's Department of Botany and ISMPP, with Rajasthan College of Agriculture, Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology, Udaipur.

In his presidential address, Shri Javid A Dar said that several apple varieties once commonly grown in Kashmir, a decade or two ago, are no longer found

in the Valley. He linked this change to evolving horticultural practices and stressed the need to identify and promote varieties and crops that are both economically viable and resilient to changing climatic conditions.

The Minister said that changing weather patterns and disease pressures pose serious challenges to agriculture and horticulture, sectors closely tied to livelihoods across Jammu and Kashmir. He called for research and practical measures to help growers adapt while protecting crop health and sustaining production.

The Minister described the Government of Jammu and Kashmir's Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), as a unique initiative with no parallel in the country. He emphasised that financial assistance and a strong support system are important to help growers make agriculture and horticulture more viable and sustainable.

Vice-Chancellor KU Prof.

Nilofer Khan who was guest of honour on the occasion said the theme was timely in view of climate change, emerging plant diseases, declining soil health, food security and environmental sustainability. She noted the particular importance of these issues for Jammu and Kashmir, where apple, saffron, walnut and other high-value crops contribute significantly to the regional economy.

Prof. Khan highlighted the potential of molecular diagnostics, genomics, microbiome research, artificial intelligence and digital disease forecasting in plant health management.

She also emphasised biological control, microbial bioformulations and integrated disease management, alongside collaboration among universities, research institutions, industry, government and farming communities to bring research-based solutions to farmers.

Dr. K. L. Gujar, Joint Director, ICAR, New Delhi, and Prof. S. S. Chahal, President, ISMPP and

former Vice-Chancellor of PAU and MPUAT, also addressed the inaugural session. Dr. Pokhar Rawal, Secretary, ISMPP, spoke about the national convention. A souvenir was also released on the occasion.

During the inaugural session Dr. Suresh Pande was conferred the ISMPP's Chahal Lifetime Achievement Award.

Prof. Aijaz Ahmad Wani, Head, Dept. of Botany KU and Convener, delivered the welcome address while as opening remarks were delivered by Prof. Mohd. Yaqub Bhat, Dept. of Botany KU and Organising Secretary of the event. Prof. Abdul Hamid Wani, Dept of Botany is the Co- convener of the event.

The inaugural proceedings were conducted by Prof. Anzar Ahmad Khuroo, Dept of Botany KU while as vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. Sajad-un Nabi, Co-organising Secretary.

The programme features three scientific themes: Frontiers in Plant Pathology, Resilient

Director Horticulture Kashmir chairs review meeting of Horticulture developmental schemes



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 29: Director Horticulture Kashmir Vikas Anand, Thursday chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of various horticulture developmental schemes being implemented by the department.

During the meeting, the Director, as per an official statement, reviewed arrangements for the inauguration ceremony, including reviewed the physical and financial progress of ongoing developmental schemes viz. CSS, CAPEX, HADP, HDP and other developmental activities aimed at

strengthening the horticulture sector in Kashmir valley.

The Director emphasised the need for timely implementation of government schemes, effective utilization of allocated funds, and ensuring that the benefits of various departmental initiatives reach the farming community. The officers were directed to maintain close coordination with field functionaries and regularly monitor the progress of works at the ground level.

Stress was also laid on providing technical guidance to farmers, promoting modern horticultural practices, and encouraging the adoption of

scientific methods to improve productivity, quality, and farmers' income.

The Director called upon all officers to work with dedication and accountability to achieve the prescribed targets within the stipulated timelines. The officers were further directed to address the concerns of farmers promptly and ensure effective delivery of departmental services.

The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of the department's commitment to the sustainable development of the horticulture sector and the overall welfare of the farming community.

ACB J&K hosts Youth Parl, Vigilance Awareness Session at GDC Kishtwar

KT News Desk

Kishtwar, Oct 29: Continuing its initiative to widely propagate observance of honest work culture for a sustainable and prosperous India, the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) J&K organised a Youth Parliament and Vigilance Awareness Session at Government Degree College Kishtwar as part of the Vigilance Awareness Week-2026 themed "Probity for Prosperity".

Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma was the Chief Guest and SSP Sunny Gupta the Guest of Honour at the event organised under the supervision of SSP ACB DKR, Vipan Chandran, along with senior officers and officials of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Doda-Kishtwar-Ramban (DKR) Range.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from approximately 400 students,

representing different colleges of the district, along with 50 government officials, faculty members and ACB officers and officials.

A key highlight was the Youth Parliament Session, which provided students with a platform to understand parliamentary procedures, constitutional principles, democratic responsibilities and lawful mechanisms for bringing about change. Through constructive debates, participants deliberated on issues of public importance, fostering critical thinking and encouraging responsible, transparent and citizen-centric governance.

Two motions were taken up for deliberation, including "Protection of Neglected and Abandoned Senior Citizens in Jammu and Kashmir" and "Ensuring Sustainable Drinking Water Supply under JJM during Winter".

After detailed deliberations, both motions and their accompanying resolutions were put to vote and passed by a majority, highlighting the youth's commitment to addressing public concerns and promoting accountable governance.

To further reinforce awareness of integrity and vigilance, an interactive Kahoot! Questionnaire Session (Audience Poll) was conducted, featuring questions on departmental functioning, anti-corruption measures, ethical values and good governance. Students and officials participated enthusiastically, making the session informative and engaging.

The dignitaries and guest speakers shared their professional experiences and offered valuable insights into improving efficiency and transparency in government departments.

NHM Director NHM reviews Children's Hospital Bemina services

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 29: In a continued effort to strengthen specialized pediatric and neonatal healthcare services across the Union Territory, Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM), J&K, Athar Aamir Ul Shafi, on Thursday conducted on-site monitoring and review visit today at the 500-bedded Government Children Hospital, Bemina.

The visit covered key operational units within the premier facility, including the District Early Intervention Centre (DEIC), Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), High Dependency Unit (HDU), Nutrition Rehabilitation Centre (NRC), Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), laboratories, Paediatric Surgery Ward, Operation Theatre, and the Lactating



Ward.

Accompanied by the Principal of Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar Dr. Iffat Hassan; Administrator Associated Hospitals GMC Srinagar, Medical Superintendent of Govt. Children Hospital

Bemina, Head of Departments, Divisional Nodal Officer NHM Kashmir, and Programme Managers of NHM J&K, the Mission Director reviewed the execution and on-ground delivery of core National Health Mission programmes. These

included Maternal and Child Health services, RBSK, RKSK, National Ambulance Services (102/108), blood services, NQAS, and free drug and diagnostic initiatives.

Discussions during the review further emphasized the ongoing commitment to up-grading level-III NICU capacity, streamlining high-end medication and consumable supplies, addressing critical staffing requirements, and enhancing patient care amenities such as the lactating ward.

The Mission Director appreciated the dedication of the healthcare personnel and reiterated NHM's steadfast commitment to bridging infrastructural gaps, ensuring seamless emergency transport services, and elevating pediatric healthcare standards in the hospital.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

J&K emerging

"Initiatives such as 'Pedal Through Paradise' are testimony to the fact that the Jammu Kashmir Police have combined security with compassion, discipline with inspiration, and duty with social commitment, so that bonds of the heart may be forged with the people of the Union Territory of Jammu Kashmir," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that the achievement of winners symbolises the changing face of Jammu Kashmir and highlighted the potential of youth to contribute to inclusive growth and national development.

He observed that the Civic Action Programmes of the Jammu Kashmir Police have created new opportunities for youth engagement, skill development and sporting excellence, fostering confidence and constructive participation in society.

EMBRACE POSITIVE IDEAS, KNOWLEDGE

LG Sinha said, "I have always emphasised that the true upliftment of any region occurs when its youth have faith in their eyes, opportunities in their hands, and a feeling of unity in their hearts. I am confident that events such as "Pedal Through Paradise" will inspire the youth of Jammu Kashmir to contribute significantly to the development of the nation through their talent, hard work, and determination."

The Lieutenant Governor stated that initiatives like 'Pedal Through Paradise' and 'Jashn-e-Dal' are more than sporting competitions and they inspire discipline, perseverance and resilience among participants.

He called upon citizens to embrace positive ideas, knowledge and innovation for collective advancement.

He said the youth power is the nation's greatest asset and encouraged young generation to actively participate in sports and community programmes. He also reiterated the importance of building a drug-free Jammu Kashmir, stressing that society must support and rehabilitate those affected by substance abuse with empathy and care.

The Lieutenant Governor urged all stakeholders to work together for peace, progress and a healthy, prosperous and secure Jammu Kashmir, and congratulated all participants for carrying forward the spirit of positive change through sports.

"It is the collective responsibility of all of us to provide the youth with platforms where their energy receives a positive direction, their talent receives encouragement, and their dreams receive the opportunity to be realised.

All sections of society must participate in the fight against drugs. We must take three resolves today- first, we will always move forward for peace, we will move forward for progress and we will move forward to build a healthy, prosperous, secure, and bright Jammu Kashmir," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Nalin Prabhat, DGP; S.J.M.Gillani, Special DG Coordination PHQ; Abdul Ghani Mir, Commandant General Home Guards; Nitish Kumar, ADGP Armed; Ashok Yadav, ADG, BSF; Alok Kumar, Director, Fire & Emergency Services; senior officers of Police and Civil Administration; members of Cycling Associations, prominent citizens and youth in large number attended the felicitation ceremony. (KNO)

Sacrifices of martyrs

addressing social evils.

Addressing the closing ceremony of 'Pedal Through Paradise 2026', organised by J&K Police at Police Golf Course, Dal Lake, the DGP Prabhat, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) paid rich tributes to 1621 police martyrs and announced 'Martyrs Memorial' football and hockey tournaments in their honour.

He said, "Youth is an asset and the future of the nation. Their aspirations and participation in productive activities are important for the overall progress of society and the country's economic development."

DGP Prabhat said, "Sports provide young people with an opportunity to develop discipline, fitness and a sense of responsibility."

The DGP said that more and more youth engagement, more and more sporting activity are a prerequisite for a very healthy, heartening and prosperous Jammu and Kashmir.

DGP Prabhat said cycling is not merely a symbol of a healthy lifestyle but it also helps in instilling discipline among participants.

He said excessive mobile phone use and

screen addiction have become a concern across the world, affecting individual health and society, adding that participation in sports could help young people develop healthier habits.

The DGP said the police, in coordination with the administration, have been organising sporting events at the district level to encourage wider youth participation.

Referring to recent events, he said participation in the Kashmir Marathon had been encouraging, while 'Jashn-e-Dal' also witnessed participation from women and young people.

DGP Prabhat said the upcoming sporting calendar included Martyrs Memorial football and hockey tournaments to honour police personnel who laid down their lives in the line of duty and encourage young people to participate in sports.

The cycling event was organised by J&K Police to promote fitness, discipline and a healthy lifestyle among young people. (KNO)

India ready to share

people-to-people connections, promote digital innovation and support capacity-building initiatives. He said greater youth engagement would help build a peaceful, resilient and prosperous Indo-Pacific. (KNO)

Positions are a

Lieutenant Governor said that while they had cleared one of the country's most competitive examinations, they must always remember that positions and designations are not personal possessions, but a trust reposed in them by the people. He emphasised that humility is the foremost qualification for good governance and effective administration.

Speaking to the JKAS officers, the Lieutenant Governor said their success reflected not only individual merit but also the aspirations, resilience and democratic spirit of Jammu and Kashmir. He highlighted the Union Territory's rich intellectual and cultural heritage and expressed confidence that the young officers would contribute significantly to truth, justice and public welfare.

The Lieutenant Governor recalled Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's vision of the civil services, which he described as the nation's "steel frame." He urged the successful candidates to preserve the dignity of public service and focus on meaningful work rather than public recognition. He observed that the true test of an administrator lies in responding sensitively to the concerns of the most vulnerable citizens.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted lessons in compassion, courage, service, leadership, evidence-based decision-making and commitment to humanity drawn from the lives of well-known personalities across the globe. He advised the future public servants to look beyond procedures and files, and recognise the human realities and aspirations behind every decision.

"Behind every file lies a precious life. I urge you to also look at the data hidden behind files, recognise the people standing behind those figures and understand their needs.

"Leadership is not a special privilege, but a great responsibility to serve others, guide them, support them and empower them," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor outlined a three-stage framework for the candidates' future professional journey. First, he urged them to understand realities on the ground by engaging directly with citizens and local institutions. Second, he advised them to build transparent, technology-enabled systems that minimise delays and improve service delivery. Third, he called on them to safeguard institutions and uphold ethical standards as they assume leadership positions in the future.

The Lieutenant Governor said that India in 2047 would be shaped by the values, work culture and decisions of today's young public servants. He urged them to dedicate themselves to public welfare and ensure their legacy is defined not by the prestige of office, but by the positive impact they make on the lives of ordinary citizens.

"The responsibility for the future rests on your shoulders. There are moments when the course of history changes with extraordinary speed. I believe we are passing through such an era today. I hope you will serve the people in such a way that the impact is visible in their lives, and that your life is recognised not by the prestige of your office, but by the outcomes of public welfare," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Rehana Batul, Director General, J&K Institute for Management, Public Administration

and Rural Development (JKIMPARD); Dr. GV Sundeeep Chakravarthy, SSP Srinagar; Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; Owais Ali Bhat, Director, Exceptional Academy; and office-bearers of the Academy attended the felicitation ceremony.

LG Sinha urges

Shreshtha Bharat.

Calling for broad public participation, Sinha urged schoolchildren, youth, security personnel and citizens from all sections of society to take part in the observances.

He also directed that unity runs and ceremonial parades be organised at district headquarters and police stations, and that national unity programmes be held in prisons across Jammu and Kashmir.

SC Collegium

Pranav Kohli and Anupam Raina, Advocates, as Judges of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. (KNO)

Ali Mohammad Sagar

He reiterated the government's focus on improving public service delivery, enhancing administrative efficiency and reducing difficulties in accessing essential services.

The Minister stressed the need for close coordination among departments to resolve public issues in a timely manner. He said effective governance requires a proactive approach, accountability and sustained engagement with citizens.

Sagar said matters raised by the deputations would be taken up with the relevant authorities for examination and appropriate action, wherever required. He reaffirmed his commitment to public welfare, effective governance and the timely redressal of people's concerns.

The interaction reflected the government's continued emphasis on direct communication with citizens and addressing grievances through appropriate administrative channels.

J&K's new media

30, Education and Health Minister Sakina Itoo informed the Legislative Assembly that the government was working on a new media policy and that the Information Department had been given four months to formulate the guidelines.

The issue was raised by National Conference MLA Bashir Ahmad Shah Veeri, who sought measures to address the alleged misuse of social media and online attacks on public representatives.

During the discussion, several legislators called for a regulatory framework to tackle the issue, while others cautioned against restrictions that could undermine press freedom.

Itoo said politicians could not hold the media solely responsible for the misuse of social media, noting that political actors also contributed to the problem. She also called for greater accountability for content circulated on online platforms. (KNO)

MeT predicts light

activity was expected across Jammu and Kashmir until November 7.

Meanwhile, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 22.7 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 4.3 degrees Celsius on Wednesday, according to the Meteorological Centre's daily weather report.

Gulmarg recorded the lowest minimum temperature among the main Kashmir Valley stations at minus 0.1 degrees Celsius, while Pahalgam recorded a minimum of 2.2 degrees Celsius.

Qazigund recorded a maximum temperature of 22.5 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 2.6 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara recorded a maximum of 24.6 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 2.3 degrees Celsius.

In Jammu division, Jammu city recorded a maximum temperature of 31.5 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 14.1 degrees Celsius. Katra recorded a maximum of 29 degrees Celsius, while Kathua recorded 30.8 degrees Celsius.

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

Army Commander

along the Line of Control in Poonch and hinterland formations in Rajouri to review operational preparedness and prevailing security dynamics."

The Army Commander also interacted with troops and urged all ranks to remain proactive,

vigilant and mission-ready to maintain operational preparedness and sustain operational dominance. (KNO)

Nearly 1 in 3 in J&K

highlighting the scale of the problem and the need for regular monitoring, particularly among people with other risk factors.

High salt consumption a major concern

Dr Mohiuddin said excessive salt consumption was one of the important dietary factors contributing to the rising burden of hypertension and stroke in the region. "Consuming too much salt can increase blood pressure, placing additional strain on the heart and blood vessels. When blood pressure remains elevated over a prolonged period, it can damage the blood vessels supplying vital organs, including the brain," he said.

Uncontrolled hypertension can increase the risk of both ischaemic stroke, which occurs when a blood vessel supplying the brain becomes blocked, and haemorrhagic stroke, which occurs when a blood vessel ruptures and causes bleeding in or around the brain, he added.

Dr Mohiuddin urged people to pay greater attention to their daily salt intake and avoid the habit of adding excessive salt to food. Dietary habits, he stressed, should be improved by reducing salt consumption and making healthier food choices, particularly among people who already have high blood pressure or a family history of cardiovascular disease.

"Excessive consumption of salty foods, including processed and packaged products, can contribute to high sodium intake, and people should pay attention not only to the salt added during cooking but also to the amount present in foods consumed regularly," he said. "Reducing salt intake, however, should go hand in hand with regular blood pressure checks and appropriate medical treatment wherever required."

High blood pressure remains a major stroke risk

The cardiologist said hypertension was a significant public health concern in Jammu and Kashmir, with nearly one-third of the population reportedly affected. He said keeping blood pressure under control was essential to reducing the risk of stroke and other serious complications.

"High blood pressure often develops without obvious symptoms, which means people may continue to live with the condition without knowing that their health is at risk. Over time, uncontrolled hypertension can damage blood vessels and increase the likelihood of heart attacks, kidney disease and strokes. In some cases, the first indication of the problem may be a serious medical emergency," he said.

Dr Mohiuddin said people should not wait for symptoms to appear before checking their blood pressure, and that regular monitoring is particularly important for people who are overweight, physically inactive, have diabetes or have previously been diagnosed with hypertension. He advised people diagnosed with high blood pressure to follow medical advice, take prescribed medicines regularly and avoid discontinuing treatment simply because their readings have improved.

Lifestyle changes, including reducing salt intake, maintaining a healthy weight, exercising regularly and eating a balanced diet, can also help improve blood pressure control, but people who require medication should not rely on lifestyle changes alone or alter their treatment without consulting their doctor, he said.

Why stroke risk may increase during winter Dr Mohiuddin also highlighted the relationship between cold weather and cardiovascular health, explaining that stroke risk can increase during winter. "Cold temperatures cause blood vessels near the skin to narrow to conserve body heat, which can increase blood pressure and place additional strain on the cardiovascular system, particularly among people who already have hypertension or other underlying conditions," he said.

He also pointed towards changes in daily routines during winter as another factor. "During the colder months, many people in Kashmir tend to remain indoors for extended periods and reduce their physical activity, while also consuming calorie-rich foods. Such changes can contribute to weight gain, worsen blood pressure control and increase the long-term risk of cardiovascular disease," he said.

The cardiologist stressed that people should remain physically active even during winter through indoor exercises, walking in safe

conditions and incorporating movement into daily routines. Those with existing heart conditions, he said, should seek medical advice about the intensity of exercise suitable for them.

Sedentary lifestyle and unhealthy food habits

Explaining how inactivity affects health, Dr Mohiuddin said remaining indoors for long periods without adequate physical movement could contribute to obesity and other metabolic problems. He said physical inactivity reduces energy expenditure and, when combined with excessive calorie intake, can lead to weight gain. "Over time, obesity can contribute to high blood pressure, diabetes and abnormalities in cholesterol levels, all of which are associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke," he explained.

The cardiologist said that regular physical activity was an important component of stroke prevention and should be maintained throughout the year, and that even simple measures such as regular indoor walking and stretching can help people remain active during the colder months.

On dietary habits, he pointed to the consumption of foods containing excessive oil, frequent intake of meat and fast food, and other calorie-rich choices as factors contributing to weight gain. He advised people to avoid excessive oil consumption, limit fast food and other calorie-dense products, and adopt a balanced dietary pattern that includes vegetables, fruits and other nutritious foods. Portion control is also important, particularly for people whose daily physical activity is limited, and people who are overweight should aim for gradual, sustainable weight management rather than short-term or extreme dietary measures.

Adequate sleep equally important

Highlighting the importance of sleep, Dr Mohiuddin said getting around eight hours of sleep daily was important for maintaining overall health, as poor or insufficient sleep can be associated with adverse metabolic and cardiovascular outcomes, particularly when it becomes a long-term pattern. Sleep problems may also contribute to unhealthy eating habits, reduced physical activity and difficulty managing weight. He advised that people should give sufficient importance to sleep alongside diet, exercise and blood pressure management, and that those experiencing persistent sleep difficulties, loud snoring or excessive daytime sleepiness should seek medical advice.

Early recognition of stroke symptoms can save lives

The cardiologist said stroke prevention also requires public awareness about recognising warning signs and seeking immediate medical attention. A stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is interrupted or when a blood vessel in the brain ruptures, and brain cells can begin to suffer damage within minutes, making timely treatment crucial.

Common warning signs include sudden weakness or numbness of the face, arm or leg, particularly on one side of the body; sudden difficulty speaking or understanding speech; sudden loss of vision; dizziness or loss of balance; and an abrupt, severe headache. "People should not ignore these symptoms even if they improve after a short period, as a temporary episode of stroke-like symptoms may indicate a transient ischaemic attack, which can be a warning of a future stroke and requires urgent medical assessment," Dr Mohiuddin said. "If someone develops symptoms suggestive of a stroke, family members should seek emergency medical assistance immediately rather than waiting for the symptoms to subside or attempting home remedies." (KNO)

Special traffic plan

under normal weather conditions, but rain or snowfall could affect movement.

On growing traffic congestion in Srinagar, Rehman said the increasing volume of vehicles was a major reason, adding that the government is considering measures to improve parking facilities and road infrastructure.

He said proposals included flyovers from Batmaloo towards Bemina and from Dal Gate towards Pandach, besides two new flyovers on the bypass.

Rehman said traffic movement would improve with the development of road infrastructure. He also said barricades were installed at times due to security concerns or information about suspicious vehicles, adding that traffic was not stopped unnecessarily. (KNO)

If permission given for 100% ethanol-run vehicles, how will supply be made: SC asks govt

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 29: The Supreme Court on Thursday sought to know from the government that if permission has been given to have 100 per cent ethanol-run vehicles, then how will the supply be made.

On October 26, the Road Transport Ministry notified changes to the Central Motor Vehicles Rules 1989, allowing flex-fuel vehicles that can run on up to E100 (nearly pure ethanol). E100 fuel allows vehicles to run on nearly pure ethanol.

On October 27, Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said the Centre has no immediate plan to increase the ethanol blending in petrol beyond the current 20 per cent.

While hearing pleas concerning ethanol allocation for Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025-26, the apex court on Thursday referred to recent media reports on the issue.

"Day before yesterday, we saw some newspaper reports wherein it is stated that 100 per cent ethanol driven vehicles are permitted," a bench of justices M M Sundresh and Prasanna B Varale said.

"Academically, we want to know if the permission is given to have 100 percent ethanol run vehicles, how will you make the supply," it asked.

Responding to the court's query, Attorney General R



Venkataramani said, "That will require large scale manufacturing re-arrangements."

During the hearing, the bench stressed on empowering farmers in the country.

The bench said there was a need to consider the aspect of larger public interest and also look at the issue from the environmental point of view.

"And, the third, I think I would put is much important from the point of view of the larger populace of the country which is the farmers. We have to address the third issue which is how to empower the farmers. This is one aspect which nobody is highlighting," Justice Sundresh observed.

Venkataramani said he would address the issue concerning

farmers during his arguments in the matter.

The bench said, "We need to empower the common man which is still in the villages."

One of the advocates appearing in the matter said ethanol promotion would help farmers in some form or the other.

Another counsel argued that some of these issues have been factored in the policy of the central government.

"The central government policy takes into account the aspect of interest of farmers also," the lawyer said.

The bench posted the matter for hearing next month.

Flex-fuel vehicles are designed to run on higher ethanol blends such as E85 (85 per cent ethanol, 15 per cent petrol) and E100 (near

100 per cent ethanol), unlike conventional petrol vehicles currently approved for lower ethanol concentrations.

Recently, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said the amendments update the emission certification provisions by expressly including E100 alongside E85.

On June 30, the apex court had ordered status quo on a Karnataka High Court direction to enhance ethanol allocation for ESY 2025-26.

The top court was hearing a plea filed by an oil marketing company, which claimed that the high court's order would destabilise the national policy of 20 per cent ethanol blending for petrol.

The high court had directed Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited and Indian Oil Corporation Limited to consider and decide a representation submitted by a dedicated ethanol manufacturer seeking enhancement of ethanol allocation for ESY 2025-26.

The high court had held that dedicated ethanol plants, which were established pursuant to government policy and are contractually bound to supply ethanol exclusively to oil marketing companies, cannot be denied the benefit of preferential allocation contemplated under the long-term offtake agreement.

Edu Min calls for focused execution, effective implementation of NEP



PTI

New Delhi, Oct 30: The new National Education Policy (NEP) is India's most comprehensive and forward-looking education reform and now calls for focused execution and effective implementation after years of deliberation, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi said on Thursday.

"India's most comprehensive and forward-looking education reform -- NEP -- now calls for focused execution and effective implementation after years of deliberation," he said.

The minister made the comments at the inauguration of the new academic building of the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA).

Joshi also launched the Indian Knowledge System Panchatantra Pariyojana and said it is a step towards integrating the country's rich civilisational heritage with education.

"India's education ecosystem

is advancing through NEP, blending modern innovation with the timeless wisdom of Bharatiya knowledge traditions," Joshi said at the event.

"The IKS Panchatantra Pariyojana is a significant step towards integrating India's rich civilisational heritage into education, nurturing values, leadership, critical thinking and responsible citizenship among young learners," he added.

The project uses the ancient animal fables of the Panchatantra to nurture essential life skills in young learners, specifically focusing on leadership, critical thinking, moral values and responsible citizenship.

The Minister further underscored the importance of strengthening institutional infrastructure, stating, "As the Sanskrit saying goes, 'Shariram-adyam khalu dharma sadhanam' -- a healthy body is essential for performing one's duties. Similarly, strong infrastructure is essential for carrying out

important work effectively.

Joshi highlighted NIEPA's role in monitoring the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, identifying implementation challenges and working closely with state governments to address them. He also stressed the importance of transitioning from rote learning to conceptual understanding, as envisaged under NEP 2020.

The minister referred to initiatives such as the PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme, which facilitated Rs 60,000 crores in soft loans for higher education, and digital learning platforms such as SWAYAM and DIKSHA.

He noted that SWAYAM had expanded access to quality digital learning and educational resources to learners across the country. Joshi reiterated the importance of equipping young people with quality education and relevant skills to meet national and global needs, enabling India to contribute more to the welfare of the world.

UPSC Chief, members call on President Murmu



PTI

New Delhi, Oct 29: UPSC chief Ajay Kumar and its members on Thursday called on President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here.

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) conducts different recruitment tests, including the civil services examination to select officers of Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) among others.

"Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission, Dr Ajay Kumar, along with members of the Commission Lt. Gen. Raj

Shukla (Retd.), Suman Sharma, Bidyut Behari Swain, Dr Dinesh Dasa, Sheel Vardhan Singh, Sanjay Verma, Sujata Chaturvedi and Anuradha Prasad, called on President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan," the President's office said in a post on X.

They presented to the President the 76th annual report of the Commission, commemorative coins and a postage stamp issued on the occasion of the centenary year of UPSC, it added.

In separate posts, it said that Governor of Karnataka Sudha Yadav and Odisha Governor Braj Mohan Ram called on President Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

CBSE scheme for 2028 Class 10 exams

5 compulsory subjects, optional skill paper as safety net

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 29: The CBSE on Thursday clarified the structure for its 2028 Class 10 board exams, where students will have five compulsory subjects with the option of an additional skill paper, which can help them clear the examination even if they fail in mathematics, science or social science.

The board also clarified that interdisciplinary area and CT and AI modules will not be included in its Scheme of Studies.

The clarification applies specifically to students studying in Class 9 in 2026-27, who will appear for their Class 10 board examination in 2028. It does not affect the current Class 10 batch.

"To align the introduction of this curricular area with the implementation schedule, the subject 'Individuals in Society' and the 'Modules of CT and AI' in Class 9 (2026-27) and the subject 'Environmental Education' in Class 10 (2027-28) shall not be part of the curriculum for these batches," Praggya M Singh, Director (Academics), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), said in a communique to school principals.

"Vocational education shall continue to be a compulsory curricular area for students of Class 10 (2028 batch). To fulfil this requirement, students may opt for either the subject 'Kaushal Vikas' or any one of the 22 skill subjects



notified by the board," she said.

Clarifying the examination structure, the CBSE outlined two pathways for vocational education, allowing students to choose between school-based assessment and a board examination leading to a nationally recognised skill certification.

According to sources in the board, the circular is intended to provide clarity to the current batch of Class 9 students as they progress to Class 10.

"Our foremost priority is to safeguard students' interests by clearly communicating the academic and examination-related provisions well in advance. The emphasis is on encouraging students to focus on meaningful learning rather than solely on examinations," a source said.

Under the scheme, the five compulsory board-exam subjects will be two languages, mathematics, science and

social science.

However, the students will study nine compulsory curricular subjects, including a third language, art education, physical education and well-being, and vocational education.

While vocational education remains compulsory, students can choose between 'Kaushal Vikas' and any one of the 22 notified skill subjects, including artificial intelligence, data science, information technology, financial markets, healthcare and design thinking. These will require a Class 10 board examination, with successful students receiving certification under the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF).

"Students opting for any of the 22 skill subjects shall have to appear in the board examination in the respective skill subject in Class 10 (2027-28). The marks and grades for that skill subject will be reflected in the marksheets issued by the Board, as per existing practice.

"NSQF certificate will also be awarded to a student for successfully passing the Board examination in the offered skill subject," the CBSE said.

Those opting for 'Kaushal Vikas' will undergo school-based internal assessment and receive a school certificate on securing at least 33 per cent marks. They will not be required to appear for the subject in the board examination.

Opp from bar bodies stopped attempt to bring retired judges back on ad hoc basis: CJI

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 29: Chief Justice of India Surya Kant on Thursday said opposition from bar associations had stopped the Supreme Court's attempt to bring retired judges back to high courts as ad hoc judges to battle the pendency of cases.

"Chief Justice Bobde, Justice Kaul and my bench, we virtually revived the practice of appointing ad hoc judges from among retired judges. We thought we would bring this practice into vogue.

"But opposition from bar associations prevented the initiative from taking off... they started passing resolutions... no chief justice can risk annoying the Bar," the CJI said.

The CJI and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana were hearing a matter related to the seniority of judicial officers in Rajasthan.

Article 224A establishes a constitutional mechanism that allows retired high court judges to be temporarily reappointed as judges of high courts.

The CJI also recalled an incident in which two judicial officers in Haryana and Punjab resigned from judicial service after seven to eight years due to new pension rules.

"Very bright officers who were practising advocates in the high court. They went, and after seven years, eight years, they resigned. One of them met me.

"I asked him, 'What have you done?' He said, 'Sir, because of the new pension rules, after my retirement, I will not get more than Rs 25,000 as pension. How do you think I am going to survive? Better I resume my practice again,'" the CJI recalled. Senior advocate P S Patwalia, appearing in the matter, requested the court to examine the pension issue for judicial officers.

Considering a backlog of over 18 lakh criminal cases, the top court on January 30 last year had allowed the high courts to appoint ad hoc judges, not exceeding 10 per cent of the court's total sanctioned strength.

'Dual PAN cards' case Allahabad HC grants bail to SP leader Azam Khan, his son

PTI

Prayagraj, Oct 29: The Allahabad High Court on Thursday granted bail to Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan and his son Mohd Abdullah Azam Khan in the alleged fake passport and dual PAN cards case.

The court also suspended the sentence of the former Uttar Pradesh minister and his son -- a former legislator -- but refused to stay the conviction. Justice Samit Gopal passed the order allowing their applications seeking suspension of sentence.

Following bail in the case, the father-son duo is likely to walk out of jail.

The court had reserved its judgment on October 15 after hearing senior advocates Abhishek Manu Singhvi and NI Jaffri, along with Advocate Shashwat Anand, appearing for Azam Khan and Abdullah Khan.

The state was represented by Senior Advocate Anoop Trivedi and Advocate Paritosh Kumar Malviya.



Azam and Abdullah Khan have filed criminal revision petitions before the high court challenging their conviction and sentence in the alleged dual PAN card case.

In November last year, additional chief judicial magistrate of the Rampur court had pronounced them guilty of forgery, cheating, using forged documents and criminal conspiracy.

The case stems from an FIR lodged in 2019 by BJP leader Akash Saxena, now an MLA, alleging that Abdullah Khan had two PAN cards containing different dates of birth and gained undue benefits through their use.

According to the prosecution, Abdullah initially obtained a PAN card from the Income Tax Department showing January 1, 1993 as

date of birth.

This matched the date recorded in his school and high school certificates. This PAN was also used to operate a bank account and file income tax returns.

However, it is alleged that for the purposes of contesting the 2017 Uttar Pradesh assembly elections, Abdullah altered his bank passbook and also changed the PAN details and filed the forged copy of the passbook while submitting his nomination papers.

The second PAN recorded his date of birth as September 30, 1990. This alleged fabrication was made so that he could be eligible to contest the polls (which requires a minimum age of 25 years). The prosecution argued that Abdullah had done so in conspiracy with his father Azam Khan.

Further, the prosecution has claimed that the bank account mentioned in the nomination papers was neither linked to nor operated through the second PAN.

Senior citizen health scheme gave 23.46 lakh hospital admissions worth Rs 5,668.80 cr in 2 years

PTI

New Delhi, Oct 29: Ayushman Vay Vandana, the health coverage scheme for senior citizens aged 70 years and above, has provided 23.46 lakh authorised hospital admissions worth Rs 5,668.80 crore in two years, with cataract surgery emerging as the most commonly availed treatment, according to official data.

Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 29, 2024, the initiative extends the benefits of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) to all eligible senior citizens aged 70 years and above, irrespective of their socio-economic status.

As of October 20, 2026, cataract surgery accounted for 4.71 lakh treatments, or around 20.1 per cent of all authorised treatments under the scheme, while chronic haemodialysis accounted for approximately 2.90 lakh treatments, a health ministry statement said.

In terms of the value of authorised treatments, Percutaneous Transluminal Coronary



Angioplasty (PTCA), a procedure used to open narrowed or blocked coronary arteries, accounted for the largest share at approximately Rs 649 crore, highlighting the scheme's role in facilitating access to specialised cardiac care.

Other major treatment categories include total knee replacement, management of acute exacerbation of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), acute febrile illness, and acute kidney injury and renal failure.

The initiative has been designed to strengthen financial protection for approximately six crore senior citizens belonging to around 4.5 crore families across

the country.

Under the scheme, eligible senior citizens aged 70 years and above are entitled to health coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation.

For senior citizens belonging to families already covered under AB PM-JAY, an additional top-up cover of up to Rs 5 lakh per year is available exclusively for them, separate from the coverage available to family members below 70 years of age.

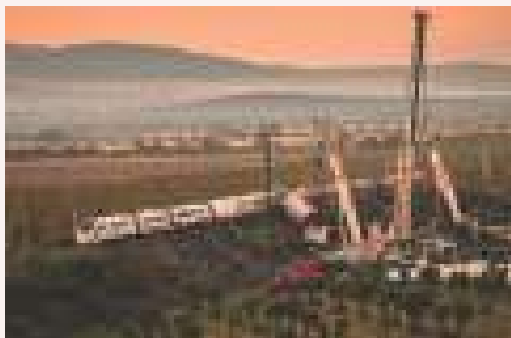
Speaking on the occasion, National Health Authority CEO Sunil Kumar Barnwal said the initiative reflects the government's commitment to ensuring that senior citizens can access healthcare with dignity, security and peace of mind.

By extending coverage irrespective of socioeconomic status, Ayushman Vay Vandana seeks to reduce the financial burden of hospitalisation on elderly citizens and their families.

The initiative, implemented by the National Health Authority under the Union Health Ministry, completed two years on Wednesday.

Quick Read

Spain grapples with second deadly train crash of the year ahead of national election



AP

Urda (Spain), Oct 29 : Spain's second high-speed rail disaster this year, in which one train struck another from behind, killing 69 people, has raised fresh concerns about the safety of the country's rail network ahead of a national election.

Search teams with sniffer dogs continued to look for victims on Thursday morning, a day after the collision in central Spain. Cranes shifted the carriages as police and soldiers picked through the wreckage strewn down the gravel slope where at least three train carriages were tossed by the impact.

One more body was found overnight, taking the death toll to 69, according to the regional leader of Castilla La Mancha, Emiliano Garcia-Page. He added that 50 people remained hospitalised.

"Yesterday we experienced a catastrophe that without a doubt has left all of Spain in shock," Garcia-Page said. "Besides bodies, there are body parts that need to be identified."

Spain's government declared three days of mourning starting Thursday. A minute of silence was held at various points at noon, including with lawmakers outside the Parliament and by rail workers and union leaders in Madrid's main train station.

A second blow to Spain's touted high-speed rail The high-speed rail network has been considered one of Spain's crowning achievements. It is the world's second-largest, after China's. Until this year, it had not experienced a deadly crash since coming into service over three decades ago.

The reputation of the Spanish railways was already tarnished when, in January, 46 people died after one train jumped the track and slammed into the side of another going the opposite way in southern Spain.

Then, just nine months later, came the collision Wednesday morning that turned a sleepy stretch of rail lined by olive groves near the village of Urda into a scene of carnage.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez pledged an investigation and improvements to restore trust in a rail system that carried 45 million travellers last year, including millions of tourists.

"It is clear that we need to reinforce the safety of our train service to rebuild the trust in our high-speed rail," Sanchez said Wednesday. "It is not acceptable for a country like Spain to endure two high-speed train accidents in the same year."

Aid mission set to enter Oleshky as local Russia-Ukraine truce holds for third day

AP

Kherson (Ukraine), Oct 29 (AP) Humanitarian aid is poised to roll into the stricken city of Oleshky on Friday, a Ukrainian official said, as a localised ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine stretched into a third day and military units cleared away landmines.

Moscow and Kyiv have observed the truce in and around the devastated southern Ukrainian city since Tuesday, despite remaining locked in war since Russia's all-out invasion of its neighbour more than 4 ½ years ago. Previous efforts to secure ceasefires either never worked out, or the truces quickly fell apart.

But elsewhere, a jet-powered Russian drone hit two trains stopped at a station in central Ukraine, killing at least 13 people and injuring 10 others, officials said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy described it in a post on X as a "horrific attack" that struck passenger trains in Dnipro.

Also, Russia's Defence Ministry said air defences downed 1,214 Ukrainian drones overnight in one of the largest drone attacks launched by Kyiv. Around half of the drones were heading to the Russian capital, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin said.

The planned six-day ceasefire around Russian-occupied Oleshky has also brought a rare and welcome stillness for civilians in the nearby city of Kherson, which is held by Ukraine and has also been wracked by the war.

The Oleshky ceasefire has held for 54 hours, officials say

Both sides thanked US first lady Melania Trump for what the White House said was her role in helping broker the temporary ceasefire so that food and medical supplies can reach some desperate 2,000 people trapped in Oleshky. Pope Leo XIV also pressed for a truce.

"The ceasefire has been in place for 54 hours now," Ukrainian ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets said Thursday, adding that aid deliveries were due to begin the following day. "The parties are fully adhering to the agreements, and no violations of the ceasefire have been reported."

Putin hosts African leaders in Moscow to strengthen Russia-Africa ties

AP

Moscow, Oct 29 : Russian President Vladimir Putin courted dozens of African leaders at a Russia-Africa summit that wraps up Thursday as he seeks to bolster Moscow's clout across the continent.

Speaking during a meeting in the Kremlin on the second day of the summit, Putin said that "Russia and Africa are united by truly strong bonds of friendship and close partnership."

"We are natural allies in building a multipolar, genuinely democratic world order, free from diktat and double standards and based on respect for the norms of international law and the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter," Putin said.

He mentioned Moscow's support for the African nations' anti-colonial fight during Soviet times.

"Russia has always been and remains committed to seeing African nations defend their sovereignty, achieve steady growth, and strengthen their economies and social sectors," the Russian leader said. "We stand ready to continue working together with you across all these areas to achieve these goals."

Putin says African states need more representation at the UN

The summit is part of the Kremlin's push to deepen ties with Africa, home to nearly 1.6 billion people and increasingly influential on the global stage.



Its 54 nations make up the largest voting bloc at the United Nations.

Moscow first hosted the Russia-Africa summit in 2019, and then again in 2023. This week's summit drew nearly 50 African nations, about 20 of which were represented by their leaders.

Speaking during Thursday's meeting, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi noted that "Africa's security and stability remain an essential condition for achieving the aspirations of its peoples."

Kenyan President William Ruto argued that "the international order must reflect the world as it is today, not the world as it was in 1945," adding that Africa "can't continue without permanent representation on the United Nations Security Council." Putin quickly backed his statement, saying that "the absence of African representatives at the UN Security Council

is unfair."

The Russian president noted that Russia's trade with African countries topped \$27 billion last year and vowed to expand it. He noted that Russian companies have pursued major investment projects in Africa in such spheres as energy, mining, industrial cooperation and logistics.

"Our business community approaches cooperation with African partners with honesty, respect, and integrity, conducting business on an equal footing," Putin said.

"Rather than siphoning off profits in the manner of the colonial practices by former imperial powers, they reinvest their earnings into the development of your national economies, they readily share advanced technologies and expertise, broadly engage local subcontractors, and help create new production facilities and

CNN, MS NOW, Politico seek permanent court order allowing access to Trump administration



AP

New York, Oct 29 : Three news outlets have beefed up their legal complaint against the White House over access, saying it is continuing to defy a judge's orders by refusing to let them return to covering President Donald Trump in the Oval Office and on Air Force One — thus violating their free speech rights by continuing to keep them out of the rotating press "pool."

CNN, MSNOW and Politico said Wednesday that the president is retaliating against them for reports he does not like, which violates US District Judge Timothy Kelly's previous orders for the administration to allow reporters for the outlets to fully return to the pool of journalists covering the president.

Even after those orders, the White House was continuing to block reporters for those outlets from covering Trump in "the very locations that the president most frequently engages with the press," Theodore J. Boutros Jr., the outlets' attorney, said in a statement.

The most recent filing asks the court to make those previous orders permanent.

At issue is whether the president, or anyone, can punish news outlets for the

content of their reports. The news organisations say that doing so is "viewpoint discrimination" forbidden by the First Amendment's free-speech protections.

Trump insists that he doesn't have to let news outlets whose reports he dislikes onto White House grounds, on Air Force One or other areas. The White House had not responded to the amended lawsuit as of Thursday morning.

"Every news organisation now faces the risk of similar punishment for coverage the President deems insufficiently favourable," the outlets wrote in their filing, "and the public is deprived of current and complete information about its government."

The filing comes about two weeks after Kelly ruled that CNN, MS NOW and Politico are likely to succeed in the extraordinary case pitting the president against the news outlets that cover him.

In a victory for the journalists, Kelly expanded a previous, temporary ruling that the administration had violated the news outlets' Fifth Amendment right to due process. On October 13, Kelly also sided with a second argument by the outlets: that Trump's ban breached their First Amendment right to free speech.

Kelly rejected Trump's reasoning that the ban was driven by policy goals, such as protecting national security. He argued the ban was the result of Trump's stated belief that the outlets' reporting was inaccurate and biased.

"Simply put," Kelly wrote in the opinion, "That is unlawful viewpoint discrimination" — the government taking action against types of speech or coverage it does not like.

South Africa picks Durban as preferred city for 2036 or 2040 Olympic bid

AP

Johannesburg, Oct 29 : Durban is South Africa's preferred candidate to host the first Olympics in Africa.

South Africa is bidding to host the 2036 or 2040 Summer Olympics and Paralympics. The International Olympic Committee will choose the host city for 2036 in mid-2029.

The country's choice to put forward Durban, South Africa's third biggest city, was announced by South African Olympic committee acting president Lwandile Simelane on Thursday. She said Durban would be the main candidate city for South Africa's bid, but it would likely be a "multi-city bid" that would propose some events are held in other cities.

South Africa's economic hub of Johannesburg and Cape Town were also considered as the candidate city. Durban, a city of around 4 million on the subtropical Indian Ocean coast, was touted as a possible Olympic host city more than a decade ago following South Africa's staging of the 2010 soccer



World Cup, the first in Africa. But an official bid didn't materialize then, largely due to concerns over costs.

The city was stripped of hosting the 2022 Commonwealth Games because it couldn't make financial or other guarantees required for that event.

Officials said on Thursday they were not yet able to provide any estimates regarding how much it might cost South Africa to stage the Olympics if its bid was successful. They said Durban's bid would be centered on the 56,000-seat Moses Mabhida Stadium, which was built for the 2010 World Cup.

South Africa is among seven countries bidding for the 2036 Games. The others are India, Qatar, South Korea, Germany, Hungary

and Turkey.

The IOC gave Oct. 31 as the deadline for national Olympic committees to formally declare their interest in bidding for the 2036 Games.

Candidates have an opportunity to make virtual presentations to the IOC next month to start the official bidding process. A key date is in March, the IOC has said, when its board will approve a shortlist of candidates.

South Africa would be a first African host of the Summer Games since the modern Olympics was created in 1896 if it wins. Africa's biggest economy previously failed with a bid to stage the 2004 Games in Cape Town.

US military denies claim that Iran captured American drone



AP

Dubai, Oct 29 :The US military is denying Iran's claim that it seized control of an American surveillance drone and captured it intact near the Strait of Hormuz.

Iranian state television reported Thursday that the Revolutionary Guard, in an "electronic warfare operation," detected and identified the MQM-170 Outlaw drone, and took control of its control systems before landing it in Iranian territory. It did not say when the drone was allegedly seized.

US Central Command said the report was false. "In the past weeks and months, the IRGC has repeatedly lied out of desperation, and today is no different," Tim Hawkins, a spokesman for the Central Command, said in an email. He did not provide more details.

Iran made a similar claim in 2011, when it was not at war with the US. It said at the time that it brought down an RQ-170 Sentinel drone with an "electronic ambush." US officials said the drone malfunctioned.

RKFC to face Nagaland United in IFL opener

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Oct 29: Real Kashmir Football Club (RKFC) will take on Nagaland United FC in the opening match of the Indian Football League (IFL) 2026-27 season at TRC Ground, Srinagar, on Friday (October 30).

The match will kick off at 6:30 pm and will be played under floodlights. The host club has made the necessary arrangements with support from the administration, particularly the J&K Sports Council, J&K Police and other departments. RKFC will be looking to begin its campaign on a positive note in the league, formerly known as the I-League. The squad comprises local, national and international players, with Ishfaq Ahmad serving as head coach.

Speaking at the pre-match press conference, Ishfaq described Nagaland United FC as a good opponent despite the team's first appearance in the IFL. He said RKFC was ready for the challenge and expressed hope that the home side would secure a favourable result. Arshad Nizam Shawl, owner of Real Kashmir FC, said the club's vision extended beyond football, with a focus on creating opportunities for young people and showcasing local talent. "Real Kashmir FC has always stood for something bigger than football. Our vision is to create opportunities for the youth of Kashmir, showcase their extraordinary talent and demonstrate to the world the potential of our people. We want the world to see Kashmir through the lens of football — a story of hope, resilience and aspiration.

DYSS Poonch organises district-level National Youth Festival, Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2027

KT News Desk

Poonch, Oct 29: The District Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) department Poonch on Thursday organised a District-Level National Youth Festival – Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2027 (Cultural Track) here in the Auditorium Hall, Government Degree College, witnessing participation of young talent from different zones of the district.

Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Amarjeet Singh was the Chief Guest, while Principal, Government Degree College Prof. Dr. Jasbir Singh attended as the Guest of Honour. Their presence added significance to the occasion and encouraged the participating youth to pursue excellence in cultural, creative and leadership activities.

The programme aimed to provide youth a platform to showcase their



artistic abilities, cultural heritage, creative expression and leadership potential. The event featured varied cultural and literary activities, including Painting Competition, Poetry Competition, Folk Song, Folk Dance and Nukkad Natak, reflecting the rich cultural diversity, creativity and

artistic talent of the youth of Poonch.

As many as 150 male and female individuals, in the form of Seven teams and representing different zones of the district, competed in different disciplines, showcasing their talent, confidence, teamwork and dedication. To ensure a fair, transparent and professional evaluation of the performances, experienced and competent judges were appointed for each individual activity. The judges assessed the participants on the basis of relevant criteria, including creativity, originality, presentation, artistic skills, performance quality and overall impact.

Through activities such as painting, poetry, folk performances and street theatre, the event also promoted awareness, social responsibility, cultural understanding and the spirit of active youth engagement in nation-building.