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SCAN TO VISIT

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WINTER WATCH

Regulator bars shutdown on J&K's 400kV network till March

Urges J&K SLDC to present winter preparedness plan

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Nov 23: With peak winter approaching, the regulator has imposed a strict 'no-shutdown' rule on Jammu & Kashmir's 400kV transmission network from December to March, asking POWERGRID and Indigrid to finish maintenance by November end and ensure backup equipment is in place to avoid last year's restoration delays.

According to the official documents available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), The regulator has said, "During last winter, while charging Kashmir valley after partial blackout, it was observed that power could not be extended due to non-availability of synchronising trolley at Amargarh end."

Accordingly, the authorities advised all transmission licensees in Kashmir valley to ensure



availability of synchronising trolley facility at substations in Jammu and Kashmir for early restoration.

"J&K SLDC should take up the matter with Baglihar HEP to provide flexible ramping support by providing high generation during morning and evening hours and minimal generation during solar hours," it reads.

The regulatory authority also urged J&K SLDC to present its winter preparedness plan to the forum. "The plan should cover the status of capacitor banks and other reactive compensation in the valley."

It also should cover measures to reduce Megavolt Ampere reactive (MVAr) drawl from the Inter-State Transmission System (ISTS). "The plan should cover expected hydro generation for the winter including peaking support from Baglihar HEP."

"POWERGRID and Indigrid may confirm that no shutdown is planned during the next 3 months and that synchronising trolley facility is available at all substations in the valley," it reads.

POWERGRID is a state-owned utility that transmits bulk electricity across India, while IndiGrid is a privately sponsored Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) listed on Indian stock exchanges that owns and operates power transmission lines and renewable energy assets.

As already reported by KNO that even as Jammu and Kashmir | More on P6

J&K's future 'very bright', says Rijiju, cites progress since 2014

Union Minister hails J&K Waqf Board as model for others | Promises support for genuine Waqf registration cases

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Nov 23: Recalling visits to Jammu and Kashmir in 2014 that were largely focused on security assessments in remote and border areas, Union Minister for Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju on Monday said the region had made considerable progress and that its future—and that of the country—was "very bright".

Addressing the first-ever Waqf Day 2026 celebrations at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), Rijiju said public



programmes and gatherings had been rare during his earlier visits, contrasting that period with the large audience at Monday's event.

"Given the situation in Jammu and Kashmir today and the pace at which it is progressing, I believe the future of Jammu and Kashmir and our country is very bright," he said, as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News | More on P6

'9 lakh waqf properties can transform Muslim community if utilised for welfare'

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju on Monday inaugurated a series of development projects in Srinagar, praised the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board's initiatives and highlighted the potential of Waqf properties to improve the socio-economic condition of the Muslim community. Speaking to reporters, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Rijiju said India had witnessed significant progress over | More on P6

Chill tightens grip across Kashmir

Pahalgam coldest at minus 3.8 degrees

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Nov 23: Cold conditions intensified across Kashmir on Monday, with several places recording sub-zero minimum temperatures. Pahalgam was the coldest place in Jammu and Kashmir at minus 3.8 degrees Celsius, according to the Meteorological Department.

Srinagar recorded a minimum temperature of minus 0.4 degrees Celsius, while Qazigund registered minus 1.6 degrees Celsius. Kupwara recorded minus 1.4 degrees Celsius and the ski resort of Gulmarg minus 2 degrees Celsius.

According to details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Kokernag was comparatively warmer at 1.5 degrees Celsius.

In the Jammu region, night temperatures remained significantly higher. Jammu recorded a minimum of 10.2 degrees Celsius, followed by Katra at 10.4 degrees Celsius, Banihal at 9.1 degrees Celsius, Batote at 8.3 degrees Celsius and Bhaderwah at 1.9 degrees Celsius.

The maximum temperature in Srinagar settled at 16.6 degrees Celsius, 2.7 degrees above the | More on P6

IGP Kmr chairs high-level security review meeting

'Maintain operational readiness in vulnerable areas, inter-agency coordination'

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Nov 23: Senior Police, security and intelligence officials on Monday called for strengthening coordination between agencies and maintaining operational readiness in vulnerable areas across Kashmir.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Zone, Sujit Kumar, chaired a high-level security review meeting at the Police Control Room (PCR), Kashmir, here and discussed key issues with the representatives of various security and intelligence agencies. "The meeting discussed overall security



situation and existing security grid across the Valley were assessed," said an official.

"The discussions covered security arrangements in the plains as well as mountainous and higher-altitude areas, with officials stressing the need for effective coordination and preparedness across different terrains," he added.

"Particular attention was given to intelligence sharing, area domination and operational preparedness to ensure a coordinated response to emerging security challenges," the official said.

IGP Kumar stressed the importance of maintaining close coordination among all agencies and strengthening the existing security arrangements, the official said, adding that the meeting also reviewed measures to ensure a robust and proactive security grid across the Valley, particularly in areas where difficult terrain and seasonal conditions pose operational challenges.

He said the participating agencies were urged to maintain close | More on P6

LG, CM extend greetings on Prakash Parv of Guru Nanak

KT News Desk

Jammu, Nov 23: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah have greeted the people on the eve of Prakash Parv of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

In a message, the Lieutenant Governor said, "On the auspicious occasion of Prakash Parv of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, I convey my heartiest greetings and good wishes to all. Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's timeless message of love, truth, compassion, equality of all human beings and selfless service continues to guide us. Let us pledge to walk the path shown by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and dedicate ourselves to the service and upliftment of humanity."

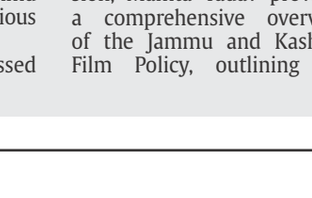
CM Abdullah, | More on P6

SKIMS introduces advanced cancer diagnostic, brain surgery facilities

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Nov 23: The Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura, has introduced advanced facilities, including a Prostate-Specific Membrane Antigen Positron Emission Tomography (PSMA PET) scan for prostate cancer patients and a Neuro-Navigation system for brain surgeries.

The facilities were inaugurated by SKIMS Director Prof. (Dr.) M. Ashraf Ganie as part of a series of equipment and infrastructure projects worth approximately Rs 4 crore aimed at strengthening diagnostic and treatment capabilities at the



institute.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Ganie, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the PSMA PET facility would significantly improve the diagnosis and management of prostate cancer, while the Neuro-Navigation system would enhance the precision and safety of neurosurgical procedures.

"Today, we introduced PSMA PET for prostate cancer patients and Neuro-Navigation in the Neurosurgery Department, eliminating the need for patients to travel outside Jammu and Kashmir for these services. We are continuously upgrading hospital facilities to improve patient care," he said.

He also urged attendants to cooperate with hospital authorities and adhere to prescribed visiting hours to ensure smooth patient management and uninterrupted | More on P6

Mehbooba seeks postponement of Nov 28 exam, Lone calls for JKSSB closure

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Nov 23: Amid the controversy over an alleged examination paper leak, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Monday demanded the postponement of the November 28 examination and a fair, time-bound probe into the allegations, while Peoples Conference president Sajad Lone called for the closure of the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB), citing recurrent irregularities and delays.

Addressing a press conference, Mehbooba, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the controversy had put the future of thousands of job aspirants at stake and that the examination should not be held until the allegations were thoroughly investigated.

Alleging the involvement of influential figures, she said those responsible must be identified and held accountable. She urged the Centre and the Union Home Minister to intervene in the matter.

Mehbooba said repeated recruitment controversies had weakened young people's faith in the system and warned that denying them fair opportunities could deepen their sense of alienation. | More on P6

Govt considering Dec 1 winter break for elementary classes: Edu Min

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Nov 23: Education Minister Shameema Firdous on Monday said that the government is considering announcing winter vacation from December 01 for the elementary level classes.

Speaking to reporters, the minister as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Our primary focus is the health of the children. Keeping in view the cold weather conditions, we are considering vacation of elementary level classes from nursery to 5th standard from December-01."

She also said that the government was receiving different feedback from the parents regarding the winter vacation.

"We are getting two different responses from the parents, some parents are in favor of the vacation and some are saying that it is early to announce the vacation," the minister said.

Earlier the minister had said that the winter vacations for elementary-level classes will be announced as per the weather conditions. "The government is monitoring the weather conditions constantly and we will take the decision of winter vacation at the appropriate time. The health of our children is a top priority." (KNO)

J&K rolls out red carpet for filmmakers at IFFI Goa

Showcases film policy, incentives, highlights region's scenic locations

KT News Desk

Goa, Nov 23: Highlighting Jammu and Kashmir's growing potential as a preferred destination for film production, a panel discussion titled "Jammu and Kashmir: An Emerging Destination for Cinema" was organised at the 57th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), Goa, as part of the participation of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Jammu and Kashmir, at the prestigious international film festival.

The discussion witnessed the participation of Director, DIPR, Jammu and Kashmir, Mamta Yadav, alongside noted actor Mir Sarwar and filmmakers Rahat Kazmi and Kapil Mattu, who shared their perspectives on the region's evolving film ecosystem, its cinematic potential and the opportunities available for promoting Jammu and Kashmir as a prominent filmmaking destination.

Speaking on the occasion, Mamta Yadav provided a comprehensive overview of the Jammu and Kashmir Film Policy, outlining the



Government's vision, policy framework and various initiatives aimed at facilitating film production, encouraging investment in the film sector and strengthening the region's overall cinematic ecosystem.

She highlighted the proactive measures being undertaken by the Government to create a filmmaker-friendly environment, facilitate shooting permissions, promote film tourism and encourage filmmakers from across the country and abroad to explore the diverse locations of Jammu and Kashmir.

Emphasising the region's immense natural and cultural wealth, she noted that Jammu and Kashmir offers an exceptional range of filming locations, from picturesque valleys, snow-clad mountains and pristine lakes to historic monuments, heritage sites and culturally vibrant landscapes. These varied locations provide filmmakers with diverse cinematic settings and considerable creative possibilities.

Mamta Yadav also underscored the importance of developing a sustainable film ecosystem by strengthening coordination among various government departments, local stakeholders, production houses, artists and technical professionals. She highlighted the need to generate greater employment opportunities for local talent and create avenues for the | More on P6

DC Srinagar visits Gurdwara Chhati Padshahi

Reviews arrangements for Prakash Diwas of Guru Nanak Dev Ji

KT News Desk



SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 23: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, visited the Gurdwara Chhati Padshahi at Rainawari to review and finalize the arrangements for the smooth and peaceful observance of Prakash Diwas, marking the 557th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

The DC, as per an official statement, also inspected the ongoing renovation and restoration works being carried out at the Gurdwara under the Heritage Conservation Scheme.

During the visit, the DC was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, SP North, Showkat Ahmad, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending Engineer North, Shabir Ahmad, Tehsildar Khanyar, Syed Shahid, Executive Engineer R&B, Arif Hazari, Executive Engineer KPDCL, Nasir Ahmad, District Health Officer, Dr Rubeena and other Officers were also present on the occasion. On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner chaired a meeting with the representative of Gurudwara Chattipadshahi and Officers of line Departments to take stock of the preparations being put in place to facilitate the devotees on the religious occasion on November 24 and ensure all essential arrangements are made well in advance through several line Departments.

The DC emphasized the need to ensure adequate sanitation and cleanliness, uninterrupted drinking water and power supply, effective traffic management, proper medical facilities, fire safety services, and other essential amenities for the convenience and safety of devotees visiting the Gurudwara to pay their obeisance. He directed the concerned Departments to work in close coordination and ensure that all necessary arrangements are completed well in advance for the smooth conduct of the religious event.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner also inspected the ongoing renovation and restoration works at Gurudwara under the Heritage Conservation Scheme.

During the inspection, he reviewed the progress of the works and took stock of the measures being undertaken to preserve and restore the historical and architectural significance of the revered religious site.

He stressed the importance of maintaining quality standards and ensuring timely completion of the renovation works while preserving the heritage character and historical essence of the Gurdwara.

World Heritage Week 2026

Eminent Speakers highlight responsibility of younger generation towards heritage preservation

Students from various schools, colleges participated and interacted with speakers

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 23: As part of World Heritage Week 2026 (19th - 25th November), the Department of Archives, Archaeology & Museums, J&K (DAAM) organized a lecture programme on the theme "Tradition of Ancient Kashmir: Preservation of Rich Heritage and Culture of J&K" at Conference Hall, Lal Mandi, Srinagar Monday.

Eminent speakers, Zareef Ahmad Zareef, a noted historian, Saleem Beg, Convener, INTACH J&K Chapter and Dr. Hakim Sameer Hamdani, Design Director, INTACH Kashmir Chapter, delivered lectures on Kashmir's historical, architectural and cultural legacy. The speakers, as per an official statement, stressed on safeguarding tangible and intangible heritage along with Natural Heritage and creating awareness among younger generations about their cultural roots and responsibility towards heritage preservation.

Students from various schools and colleges participated and interacted with the speakers during a Q&A session. Moreover, officers of the Department briefed the students on the objectives and significance of the Exhibition and the preservation of archival heritage.

The programme reaffirmed the Department's commitment to heritage awareness and public participation in preservation of J&K's rich cultural legacy.

968.5 litres of non-standard bio-stimulant seized at Drussu Pulwama

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 23: In a major enforcement action against the sale and distribution of non-standard agricultural inputs, the Fertilizer Inspector, Pulwama, along with the concerned team, seized 968.5 litres of non-standard bio-stimulant from the premises of M/s Saraswati Agro at Drussu, Pulwama.

During the inspection, the team, as per an official statement, seized the bio-stimulant product Ascophyllum Nodosum 22% for contravention of Clause 19(a) of the relevant provisions. The seized stock comprised 610 litres bearing Batch No. SAGBL26003 and another 358.5 litres bearing Batch No. SAGBL26002.

The enforcement action was aimed at curbing the sale and distribution of substandard agricultural inputs and safeguarding farmers' interests. The Agriculture Department reiterated its commitment to ensuring the availability of quality agricultural inputs and maintaining strict regulatory oversight to protect farmers from the adverse effects of non-standard products.

The department also urged farmers to remain vigilant and purchase agricultural inputs only from authorised dealers, while reporting any suspected sale of substandard products to the concerned authorities.

Ongoing construction of approach road from District Hospital Shopian to NH-444 inspected

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 23: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh, Monday conducted an on-site inspection of the ongoing construction and upgradation work of the 1.73 kilometre approach road connecting District Hospital Shopian with National Highway-444.

The project is being executed at an estimated cost of Rs 5.79 crore, with a stipulated completion period of 18 months.

During the field visit, the Deputy Commissioner inspected the ongoing works, assessed the pace of execution and took first-hand feedback from the concerned officers regarding the progress of the project.

He directed the concerned authorities to remove encroachments along the road stretch, particularly near District Hospital Shopian, and ensure that all impediments affecting the execution of the project are addressed promptly.

Emphasising the importance of the road in strengthening connectivity to the District Hospital, the DC directed the executing agency to expedite the work and maintain strict adherence to prescribed quality standards and timelines.

Child Protection Services Bandipora conducts awareness programmes

Speakers highlighted importance of protecting children from abuse, exploitation, neglect, child marriage

KT News Desk



BANDIPORA, NOVEMBER 23: Continuing its efforts to reach every corner of the community, Mission Vatsalya organised awareness programmes at Sumlar, Cuntimulla and Kaloosa in District Bandipora to sensitise the public about various child protection laws, legal safeguards and welfare schemes. The programme, as per an official statement, aimed to create awareness among community members about the provisions of the POCSO Act, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, Adoption Regulations, Child Marriage Prohibition Act and COTPA, along with various schemes and initiatives being implemented under Mission Vatsalya.

During the programme, speakers highlighted the importance of protecting children from abuse, exploitation, neglect and child marriage. They elaborated on the legal provisions and mechanisms available for safeguarding children's rights and ensuring their safety, care and rehabilitation. Special emphasis was laid on the Child Helpline 1098, with participants being informed about its role as an important support mechanism for children in distress and those in need of care and protection.

4th National Lok-Adalat to be held on December 12 in Ganderbal

KT News Desk

GANDERBAL, NOVEMBER 23: The District Legal Services Authority, Ganderbal, has informed that the 4th National Lok-Adalat, is scheduled to be held on December 12, 2026 (Saturday) at the District Court Complex Ganderbal and Munsiff Court Complex, Kangan, from 10:30 A.M. onwards. This initiative, as per an official statement, aims to provide a platform for the amicable settlement of all types of civil and criminal compoundable cases and the appeals arising out of such cases.The primary objective of the Lok-Adalat is to ensure speedy disposal of pending cases, and provide an opportunity for parties to settle their disputes amicably. The Lok-Adalat provides a platform for litigants to negotiate and settle their disputes through the assistance of judges, advocates, and experts.The Lok-Adalat offers numerous benefits, including, speedy disposal of cases, Amicable settlement of disputes, Refund of court fees paid, Final and binding award, with no appeal to any court, Reduction in litigation costs, Preservation of relationships and win-win situation to both the parties.

During the Lok-Adalat, various types of Pre-litigation cases as well as all types of Civil and Criminal Compoundable cases, as may be permissible under the Act/Regulations and pending Cases before courts including civil and criminal compoundable cases, NI Act cases under Section 138, Money Recovery cases, Motor Accident Claim cases, Labour dispute cases, Disputes related to Public Utility services (excluding non-compoundable), Matrimonial disputes (except divorce), Family disputes, including execution petitions, Land Acquisition cases, Service matters including pension cases, Revenue and other ancillary matters, IPR matters, Consumer rights matters especially insurance claims and also other matters pending before any other quasi-judicial authority and other cases before revenue authorities.

The District Legal Services Authority, Ganderbal, invites all litigants, advocates, and the general public to avail this opportunity and settle their disputes amicably and urge everyone to participate in this initiative and contribute in promoting a culture of peace, harmony, and reconciliation. All the public in general and litigants in particular who are desirous of settling their matters through the process of the National Lok-Adalat are informed to approach District Legal Services Authority Ganderbal, Tehsil Legal Services Committee Ganderbal/Kangan or concerned court, by or before 5th December 2026 for referring their pending or Pre-Litigation cases to the National Lok-Adalat for settlement. For more information, interested parties can contact office of District Legal Services Authority, Ganderbal, 2nd Floor, District Court Complex, Ganderbal or on Ph. No. +91 1942950922, Email— dlsaganderbal@gmail.com, Toll Free Helpline Number—15100.

SWD Budgam organises awareness programme on maintenance rights, inheritance rights, free legal aid



KT News Desk

BUDGAM, NOVEMBER 23: Social Welfare Department (SWD), Budgam, through SANKALP – Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW), under Mission Shakti, organised an awareness programme on "Maintenance Rights, Inheritance Rights and Free Legal Aid" at Government Degree College (GDC), Beerwah.

The programme aimed at creating awareness about the legal rights of women, particularly their rights to maintenance and inheritance, besides familiarising participants with the provisions and procedures for accessing free legal aid and available legal support mechanisms.

The programme, as per an official statement, witnessed participation from Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) and representatives of the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), along with other participants. Their participation provided an opportunity to strengthen awareness and disseminate information about women's legal rights at the grassroots level.

Afroza Ahad, District Mission Coordinator, SANKALP-HEW, in her welcome address, highlighted the importance of legal awareness and collective efforts towards promoting women's empowerment and ensuring that women are aware of their legal entitlements.

During the technical session, Asiya Farooq, Assistant Public Prosecutor, ASMM Court, Beerwah, deliberated on various aspects of maintenance rights, inheritance rights and free legal aid. She sensitised the participants about the legal entitlements of women and the importance of seeking appropriate legal remedies to safeguard their rights.

A representative from the Police Department also spoke on the role of police in protecting women's rights, addressing grievances and extending necessary assistance in cases involving women.

The programme provided an important platform for interaction and awareness regarding legal safeguards, access to justice and institutional support available to women.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR UT

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER FLOOD SPILL CHANNEL DIVISION NARBAL

Fax/Phone: 01951-260223 PIN No.193401 Email: javidahmakur.80821@jk.gov.in

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

E- NIT NO. 21 OF 2026-27 DATED: 23/11/2026

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, e-tenders (in Single Cover System) on item rate (percentile) basis are invited from approved and eligible contractors for the following works to be received by the Executive Engineer Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal.

S.No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (₹. In Lacs)	Earnest Money (₹.)	Cost of T/Doc. (₹.)	Time of completion	Class of Contractor	M.H Account
01	Providing, supply, fixing, testing and commissioning of 03 ton capacity manually operated gate winch machines for Mirgund Flood Gates	₹.2.82 Lacs	5640/-	200/-	15days	DEE	M&R
02	Laying of crate protection of toe wall on the left side of Tulbran Nallah at village Awanpora RD 6500 m	₹.2.75 Lacs	5500/-	200/-	15days	DEE	M&R

Position of AAA =Accorded, Position of TS = sanctioned ,Position of funds: (100% Budgetary provision 2026-27& 2027-28)
The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www .jktenders. gov .in as per schedule of date given below:-

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	23-11-2026
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	23-11-2026 from 1700 Hrs
3.	Bid submission Start Date	23-11-2026 from 1700 Hrs
4.	Bid Submission End Date	14-12-2026 upto 1400 Hrs
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids	15-12-2026 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal.
6	Submission of Performance Security (PS)	The bidder has to provide 3% of contract Cost as Performance Security & Addl. performance security as per circular issued by the J&K Finance Department vide No. FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 dt:08/08/2025 within 3 days after opening of Financial Bid.

Note:
1. The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT carefully before uploaded softcopy any short fall if any found in the soft copy the tender shall be rejected
2. As per Circular issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Sectt. Finance department vide No.OM No.A/24(2017)-651 dtd. 07-06-2018 which reads as under :-
A. Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission of E-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who's declared Ist Lowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids .
B. The Cost of tenders should be collected by uploading a copy of necessary Treasury Challan/Receipt.
1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/Receipt (Debited to M.H.0701 –Rev. Misc) and Earnest Money in the shape of CDR/FDR in favour of Executive Engineer Flood Spill Channel Division Narbal failing which the tender will be rejected out rightly. The issuing date of CDR/FDR uploaded must be between issuing date to Bid Submission end date of NIT. CDR/FDR (Earnest money/Bid security) and relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of contract.
32. All Other terms and conditions same as laid down in the GFR Manual for Procurement of works 2022 with upto date amendments, PWD Form-25 Double shall also remain in force.

No. FSCDN/CS/ 4465-86
Dated: 23/11/2026

DIPK-7922/26
DATED: 23-11-2026

Sd/-
Er. javaid Ahmad Kurpal
Executive Engineer
Flood Spill Channel Division
Narbal.

Govt approves 5 Kanals land for CwSN School in Baramulla



KT News Desk

Jammu, Nov 23: The Jammu and Kashmir Government, led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, has approved the transfer of five Kanals of land at Estate Hadipora, Tehsil Watergam, Baramulla, to the Social Welfare Department for establishing a dedicated school for children with special needs.

The proposed institution will provide specialised educational facilities, therapeutic support and skill development opportunities to children with special needs, enabling them to access education in an inclusive and supportive environment. The initiative is aimed at promoting their independence, confidence, empowerment and meaningful participation in society. The initiative reflects the Government's focus on extending the benefits of development and social welfare to all sections of society, particularly those who require additional care, support and institutional assistance.

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, the Government has continued to emphasise the welfare and social security of senior citizens, persons with disabilities and economically weaker sections.

Particular attention is being given to strengthening social welfare infrastructure, improving access to essential services and ensuring that eligible beneficiaries receive the assistance and support they are entitled to.

The Chief Minister has consistently stressed the need for a more inclusive and compassionate society in which every citizen, irrespective of economic or physical limitations, has the opportunity to live with dignity, access essential services and realise their potential.

The establishment of the proposed school in Baramulla is another step towards strengthening the support system for children with special needs and expanding opportunities for their education, rehabilitation and social integration.

SSP Budgam flags off Bharat Darshan tour for 25 youth



Naveed Ul Haq Ganaiee

Budgam, Nov 23: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Budgam Hariprasad K.K. on Monday flagged off a nine-day Bharat Darshan tour for 25 Kashmiri youths, organised by the 14th Battalion of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), Nagam.

Speaking to the media, the SSP said the annual initiative aims to provide deserving students, particularly those from economically weaker backgrounds, an opportunity to explore the country. He praised the SSB and expressed hope that similar programmes would be held in the future.

The tour will take participants to Udaipur and Jaipur, where they will visit cultural and heritage sites, as well as Delhi, including the National Museum, Science Museum and Science Planetarium.

Most participants are undergraduate students from government degree colleges in Khansahib, Chadoora and Charar-i-Sharief. Organisers said students were selected for the opportunity, including those who had not previously visited the destinations.

The students thanked the SSB and their colleges, saying the tour would let them learn about India's cultural diversity and heritage. They hoped similar opportunities would be extended to more young people, especially those from economically disadvantaged families.

Advocate Syed Juanid Sadaat, chairman of the NGO Saving the Future, said the tour would give students a chance to experience life beyond Jammu and Kashmir, learn about different cultures and explore career and employment opportunities. He said some participants had never travelled by air or outside the Union Territory, and thanked the SSB for organising the programme.

Participants said such initiatives broaden young people's horizons and can help steer them away from drug abuse and other social evils.

The tour, running from November 23 to December 1, will cover Srinagar, Udaipur, Jaipur and Delhi. The 25 students will be accompanied by three SSB officials—(KNO)

Young Leaders Conclave concludes at NIFT Srinagar

Naveed Ul Haq Ganaiee

Budgam, Nov 23: The two-day Young Leaders Conclave 2026 concluded at the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Ompora, Budgam, with delegates stressing the importance of youth participation in policymaking, democratic processes and nation-building.

Organised by the Young Generation Forum, the national-level Youth Parliament brought together delegates from across the country to discuss public policy, learn about parliamentary proceedings and exchange views on national issues.

Advocate Abhishek Acharya, a delegate from Jaipur who represented the Union Home Minister's portfolio, said the event encouraged young people interested in public affairs to raise issues concerning the country. He said his visit also helped him better understand Kashmir's cultural diversity and ground realities.

Acharya said that perceptions formed through television and international media can differ from people's experiences on the ground. He also discussed issues such as Articles 370 and 35A and the Pulwama attack during the event.

Parveen Singh, a delegate from Bihar, said discussions

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

SSP Srinagar reviews crime, security scenario

Calls for crackdown on drug networks, OGWs

KNO



Srinagar, Nov 23: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar, Dr G.V. Sundeep Chakravarthy, on Monday reviewed the district's crime and security situation, directing officers to intensify preventive policing, expedite pending investigations and maintain round-the-clock operational preparedness.

Chairing a Crime and Security Review Meeting at Police Control Room (PCR) Kashmir, the SSP took stock of the crime scenario, progress of investigations and overall security preparedness across Srinagar district.

The meeting was attended by Zonal SPs, SP Headquarters, SDPOs, SHOs and other supervisory officers of District Police Srinagar.

During the meeting, a detailed review of cases registered under UAPA, NDPS, POCSO, crimes against women, murder, theft, burglary and other offences was conducted. Stress was laid on the quality of investigations, timely disposal of cases, prosecution outcomes and effective implementation of the new criminal laws. The SSP directed officers to expedite pending investigations, strengthen scientific evidence collection and address shortcomings that lead to acquittals, while improving conviction rates.

He also stressed dismantling drug trafficking networks by investigating their financial and criminal linkages and attaching proceeds of crime in accordance with law.

On the security front, officers were directed to sustain day-and-night area domination, conduct dynamic nakas and surprise checking, maintain heightened vigilance around sensitive locations and intensify action against overground worker (OGW) networks.

The SSP also called for better coordination with Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and other security agencies to ensure operational readiness.

All SHOs were instructed to regularly review investigations, adhere to statutory timelines and strengthen preventive policing and public grievance redressal.

Reiterating the importance of accountability, the SSP said performance and measurable results would be closely monitored, warning that any laxity or negligence would invite strict action.

He urged officers to maintain professionalism, vigilance and proactive policing to ensure a safe and peaceful Srinagar—(KNO)

Doctors' stipend protest spreads to district hospitals

Sakeena Itoo meets protesters, urges to resume work



Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Nov 23: The protest by postgraduate (PG) and Senior Resident doctors seeking a stipend hike and parity with counterparts elsewhere in the country spread to several district hospitals on Monday, as Health and Medical Education Minister Sakeena Itoo met demonstrators at Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar and said their demands would be examined on priority.

The minister listened to the doctors' concerns and assured them of the government's support. She urged them to return to work, stressing that patient care and healthcare services should not be affected.

The doctors, however, continued their protest, saying they would not call it off without concrete steps to address their demands. The agitation entered its fifth day at GMC Srinagar and sixth day at GMC Jammu.

The doctors are seeking a substantial increase in monthly stipends, parity with resident doctors in other States and Union Territories, and appropriate maternity leave. They say their current remuneration does not reflect their workload, working hours and responsibilities.

On Monday, doctors at several district hospitals joined the agitation in solidarity. Dr Ravi of JLNM Hospital, Rainawari, announced a peaceful protest and highlighted the financial difficulties faced by DNB doctors, who, he said, receive a monthly stipend of Rs 48,000. He urged the government to ensure fair remuneration across healthcare institutions.

Dr Yamin of District Hospital Pulwama also announced a peaceful protest in support of the doctors' demands.

The agitation has received support from political representatives. The All India Medical Students Association (AIMSA), J&K, welcomed Iltija Mufti's visit to GMC Srinagar, where she met protesting PG residents. The association also thanked Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi for sending members of his office to meet the doctors and extend support.

AIMSA said support from representatives across party lines was welcome, describing the protest as a peaceful movement focused on the welfare and professional dignity of resident doctors.

AIMSA J&K President Dr Mohammad Momin Khan welcomed Minister Itoo's interaction with the protesters and expressed hope that the government would take concrete steps to resolve their concerns, as it had done previously for MBBS and BDS interns.

He urged the administration to address the demands of PG and Senior Resident doctors without further delay and called for meaningful dialogue. AIMSA, he said, would continue to support Resident Doctors' Associations across Jammu and Kashmir in their peaceful campaign for stipend parity and fair treatment.

The doctors have said a timely government decision is necessary to end the agitation and restore normalcy in healthcare institutions across the Union Territory—(KNO)

GMC employees' protest enters eighth day

AIRNF leaders begin hunger strike

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Nov 23: Non-gazetted employees of five newly established Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) in Jammu and Kashmir continued their protest for an eighth day on Monday, as two employee representatives began a hunger strike demanding the immediate notification of Service Recruitment Rules (SRRs).

Vishav Sharma, State President of the All India Registered Nurses Federation (AIRNF), and Somesh Sudan, Matron at GMC Rajouri, began their 24-hour hunger strike at 9 am. They said the protest could be extended if the administration failed to provide a concrete assurance on the long-pending rules.

The agitation is taking place at GMCs in Rajouri, Doda, Kathua, Baramulla and Anantnag. Employees have been protesting since November 16, seeking the framing, finalisation and notification of service rules for their institutions.

The staff said repeated representations and assurances had produced no results, leaving hundreds of employees without a clear framework for their service conditions. They said the delay had affected seniority, promotions, career progression and other service benefits.

Besides notification of the SRRs, employees are demanding that pending Departmental Promotion Committee proceedings be initiated and a structured career-advancement mechanism be established.

The employees said Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo had previously set September 30 as the deadline for finalising the rules. After that date passed without notification, they resumed their protest.

They also raised concerns over the lack of fresh recruitment to non-gazetted posts, saying no recruitment advertisement for such positions had been issued since the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board's first notification in 2019.

The protesters alleged that gazetted employees at the colleges had received promotions, while non-gazetted staff continued to work without a defined service structure.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

BWJA constitutes advisory panel, executive body following elections

KNO



Baramulla, Nov 23: A day after the elections, the Baramulla Working Journalists Association (BWJA) on Monday constituted its advisory panel and executive body, formalising its organisational structure and expanding representation across various areas of the district.

In a statement, a BWJA spokesman said that Aabid Nabi has been appointed Patron of the association, while Syed Rizwan Geelani has been named Advisor to the Chairman, Arawat Mehraj. Waris Fayaz has been appointed Advisor to President Suhail Khan.

Including the Patron, Chairman, Chairman's Advisor, President, President's Advisor, General Secretary, Spokesperson and Treasurer, the association's listed organisational structure comprises 47 members, it said, adding that that a dedicated legal panel will be enlisted in the coming days to provide legal assistance and address matters concerning the professional interests and rights of working journalists.

The executive body has been constituted with representation from Baramulla, Uri, Sopore, Rafiabad, Tangmarg, Kreeri and Pattan, ensuring participation of journalists from different areas of the district in the association's organisational affairs.

The formation of the executive body follows the recently concluded elections, in which 103 of the 126 registered voters exercised their franchise, reflecting participation from across the district, the statement said. It said the expanded organisational structure would help strengthen coordination among journalists, address professional concerns and ensure effective representation of the media fraternity across Baramulla.

The BWJA reiterated its commitment to professional journalism, impartiality, unity among media persons and constructive engagement with all stakeholders.

It said the association would ensure coverage of events and media-related programmes across the district without discrimination or boycotts, upholding the principles of fairness and professional responsibility—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

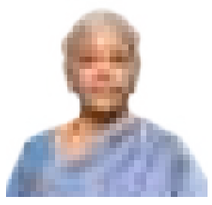
Wetlands Are Not Wastelands

The National Green Tribunal's direction to the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee is a small but important step. It has asked for a fresh report on the status of wetlands in the Union Territory, including a comparison between their recorded revenue area and their actual existing area. That comparison is the heart of the matter. For too long, our official records have shown wetlands that no longer exist on the ground. The details already before the tribunal are disturbing. The Rakh-i-Dastipora wetland in Baramulla is reportedly no longer existing at the site, with its land being used for paddy cultivation. Water quality in several wetlands fails to meet the Class-B primary criteria prescribed for organised outdoor bathing. In Jammu district, all three samples failed. In Kupwara, four of six failed. In Samba, only two of nine met the standards. Elevated Biochemical Oxygen Demand and low Dissolved Oxygen tell their own story — these are waters choking under pollution. And this is not a new problem. The Comptroller and Auditor General reported earlier this year that 518 of 697 lakes in Jammu and Kashmir had either vanished or shrunk. If that figure is correct, then what remains is not a wetland ecosystem but a series of fragments. The tribunal has asked for a fresh report before the next hearing on February 26, 2027. That is three months away. It must be submitted honestly, and it must be acted upon. The PCC has said it is asking its regional directors to identify those responsible for violations so that corrective and punitive action can follow. This must not remain a paper exercise. Wetlands are not wastelands. They absorb floods, recharge groundwater, support birds and fish, and protect the Valley from the consequences of its own development. Losing them is not a loss of scenery. It is a loss of safety. The tribunal has done its duty. Now the administration must do its own — and fast.

The Decade India Stopped Managing Poverty And Started Ending It

For six decades, mass poverty was treated as a permanent condition to be relieved. Then, between 2011 and 2023, nearly 50 crore Indians moved out of poverty and extreme destitution was almost eradicated. This is the story of how the approach shifted from handouts to removing the barriers that kept families poor.

The old prescription was simple: put money in the hands of the poor and poverty would take care of itself. The last decade overturned that belief, choosing the harder path of addressing deprivations one by one—health, sanitation, housing, finance—until the barriers that perpetuate poverty began to fall.



Nirmala Sitharaman

A year ago, during my visit to Kiphire, an aspirational district in the remote hills of Nagaland, I interacted with tribal women from local self-help groups. Among them was Esther, a Lakhpati Didi, who proudly spoke of her millet-based products reaching customers online, far beyond Nagaland. What stayed with me was their confidence in a better future. I encouraged them to dream bigger and become Crorepati Didis. Their stories reflected a transformation reaching India's remotest corners, where geographical and economic challenges have long constrained opportunities, yet aspirations for a better tomorrow are growing.

When the World Bank released its Poverty & Equity Brief on India last month, my interaction in Kiphire came back to me. The report showed that nearly 50 crore Indians had moved out of poverty between 2011 and 2023, while extreme poverty has been almost eradicated. These figures captured the transformation I had witnessed firsthand.

It was not always so. For over six decades after Independence, eradicating mass poverty remained an unfulfilled promise. Even in the early 2010s, India was portrayed abroad as a home of enduring destitution, lagging in sanitation, nutrition, clean cooking fuel and banking. The prevailing prescription was simply to put money into the hands of the poor, and poverty would take care of itself.

The last decade has overturned that belief. Under PM Narendra Modi's leadership, India has witnessed a fundamental shift from temporary relief to removing the barriers that perpetuate poverty. Guided by Antyodaya, the welfare of the last person in the line, our Government chose the harder path of addressing deprivations, household by household, ensuring development reached those who needed it most.

Targeted, Focused and Tailored

Garibi is not merely a shortage of income or wages. A household without a secure roof, safe water, sanitation or healthcare remains vulnerable even when its income rises. One illness can wipe out savings and push a family back into poverty. Our Government, therefore, made every intervention targeted at those who needed it, focused on measurable outcomes and tailored to the deprivation it was meant to remove.

There was no magic wand. Each scheme required careful identification of beneficiaries, effective delivery and follow-up until the last household was reached. PM Modi has personally and painstakingly monitored implementation, intervened at critical junctures to resolve bottlenecks, ensured follow-ups and encouraged the use of technology to track delivery. This sustained attention has helped translate policy into tangible improvements in people's lives.

Health and Dignity Begin at Home

A family cannot climb out of poverty while illness and the daily burden of fetching water keep pulling it back. Under Swachh Bharat, access to household toilets has improved sanitation and helped avert an estimated 60,000-70,000 infant deaths a year. Jal Jeevan Mission has expanded rural tap-water connections from about 3 crore households in 2019 to nearly 16 crore, sparing women and girls the long walk for water and reducing exposure to waterborne diseases. Ujjwala Yojana has enabled cleaner, smokeless kitchens, while PM Awas Yojana has provided the security and dignity of pucca homes. Ayushman Bharat, offering cashless hospital care, has strengthened financial protection against medical expenses. Together, they act as insurance against the shocks that once pushed families back into poverty, while lowering household expenditure and freeing time for work.

From a Bank Account to an Enterprise

Protection keeps families from slipping back into poverty; to rise further, they need opportunities to earn. For crores of people, that journey began with a bank account. Once, it was accepted that only fifteen paise of every rupee sent from the exchequer reached the intended citizen. Direct Benefit Transfer has changed that. Over 59 crore Jan Dhan accounts enable benefits to reach recipients directly, without middlemen. Technology has made this possible at an unprecedented scale.

A bank account also provides a safe place for savings and helps establish a financial record, opening doors to formal credit. For those without property, access to the first loan can be life-changing.

Two months ago, during an interaction with MUDRA beneficiaries, I met Sushmita Gharai from West Bengal. She lost her father during the pandemic, and her family's printing business subsequently collapsed. With no land or gold as security, a collateral-free MUDRA loan helped her restart the press. Today, she employs 8 people, twice her initial workforce, and plans to expand into digital printing. What stayed with me was her determination to rebuild and grow. Her story reflects the aspirations of countless young Indians whose ambition exceeds their financial means. Under MUDRA, 60 crore loan accounts have been sanctioned, about two-thirds to women, while PM SVANidhi and PM Vishwakarma support street vendors and traditional artisans.

Women have led this transformation. Ten crore rural women participate in SHGs that, through the DAY-NRLM and other programmes, have become platforms for savings, skills, credit and entrepreneurship. Over 3.7 crore women have become Lakhpati Didis, with some going further to become Crorepati Didis. Others, trained as Namo Drone Didis, now provide drone-spraying services to farmers. Women once excluded from economic opportunity are building enterprises and livelihoods of their own.

The Sankalp for Viksit Bharat

For generations, poverty was treated as something India could manage but never end. What appeared unimaginable a decade ago has now been achieved through years of steady work on the ground.

Yet this is no time to rest; the road to Viksit Bharat by 2047 brings its own challenges. The next phase builds on this progress to lift the few people still at the bottom of the ladder out of poverty, while ensuring those who have already risen keep advancing and never slip back. The protection offered via various measures must now be complemented by even wider access to finance, markets and the digital economy. Government is building closer links between academia and industry through employment-linked incentives, internships and apprenticeships, while investment in infrastructure is connecting the country as never before. Opportunity cannot remain the preserve of a few.

The Prime Minister has said that Viksit Bharat, like freedom, is a commitment that every Indian must live. Having achieved in ten years what remained unfulfilled for six decades, India can face the next twenty with confidence. With the resolve of 140 crore Indians, Viksit Bharat by 2047 is within our reach, and we together will get there.

The author is Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs

India's Television Broadcasting Shift

Tracing The Transition From Analogue To Digital TV Broadcasting

Press Information Bureau



Broadcasting is the systematic transmission of audio and video content to a large audience through electronic communication networks. In India, television has transformed communication by connecting diverse communities across geographical and linguistic boundaries, supporting socio-economic development through educational programmes, agricultural information, health awareness and public service campaigns, while also emerging as a major source of entertainment and promoting the country's cultural and linguistic diversity.

Recognising television's growing influence on public opinion, global communication and cultural exchange, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 November as World Television Day in 1996.

The Early Broadcast Era: Terrestrial Television (1959–1975)

India's television journey began with an experimental broadcast in Delhi on 15 September 1959, launched by All India Radio under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting through a small transmitter reaching a limited area. The experiment evolved into a regular television service in 1965, with Doordarshan beginning daily Hindi news bulletins on 15 August 1965. By 1972, services were extended to Mumbai and Amritsar and to seven other cities by 1975, all under All India Radio. On 1 April 1976, television became a separate department in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Broadcasting during this period relied primarily on analogue terrestrial transmission, using ground-based transmitters to send signals through radio waves, received by household sets through indoor or outdoor antennas. However, terrestrial broadcasting had geographical and technical limitations — signal reception depended on distance from transmitters, and hills, buildings and other obstructions could weaken or block signals. Analogue transmission also had limited channel capacity, with each assigned frequency carrying generally one programme, requiring additional frequencies and transmitters to expand services.

Satellite and Colour Broadcasting: Expanding Television's Reach (1975–1988)

By 1976, India's terrestrial network had eight stations covering 45 million people across 75,000 square kilometres. Two major developments accelerated expansion. The first was the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment, conducted between August 1975 and July 1976, which used satellite technology to broadcast educational programmes directly to villages across six States, demonstrating how satellite technology could overcome geographical barriers and establishing television's potential as an instrument of education and public communication.

The second came with the Indian National Satellite system. INSAT-1A, launched in April 1982, was India's first-generation operational domestic communications satellite, enabling a common programme feed from Delhi to regional stations, though it was abandoned in 1983. INSAT-1B, launched in August 1983 and achieving full operational capability in October 1983, supported television broadcasting and other communication services and helped consolidate satellite-based connectivity across Doordarshan's regional stations.

Alongside satellite expansion, colour broadcasting transformed the viewing experience. Doordarshan's first colour telecast took place on 15 August 1982, coinciding with the launch of its National Programme, and later that year colour television gained wider visibility through live coverage of the Asian Games in New Delhi in November 1982.

Unlike terrestrial broadcasting, satellite communication enables television signals to reach much wider areas, with a single satellite serving multiple regions through its footprint. This combination of satellite connectivity and colour broadcasting transformed India's television landscape, expanding geographical reach and enhancing the viewing experience.

The Multi-Channel Era: Cable and Satellite Television (1990–2005)

This period witnessed a major transformation, with international satellite channels beginning to reach Indian audiences, starting with CNN. The launch of Star TV and Zee TV further accelerated growth, and domestic broadcasters including Sun TV entered the emerging multi-channel market. The arrival of satellite channels gave cable television a major boost, with broadcasters transmitting programme signals to satellites through uplinks, satellites retransmitting them towards Earth where local cable operators received them using dish antennas at their head ends before distributing them to households through cable networks. This combination brought a wider range of news, entertainment, sports and regional-language programming into Indian homes. However, cable television depended on physical infrastructure, and extending networks to remote areas was difficult, paving the way for Direct-to-Home broadcasting.

Direct-to-Home and Digital Broadcasting (2003–2017)

Dish TV launched India's first commercial DTH service in October 2003, and in December 2004, Prasar Bharati launched Doordarshan's DD Direct Plus, now DD Free Dish, a free-to-air DTH platform that did not require a monthly subscription. DTH broadcasting delivers television signals directly from satellites to individual households, with broadcasters converting content into digital signals, compressing them for transmission to satellites generally in the Ku-band, and small dish antennas at subscribers' premises receiving these signals, processed by digital set-top boxes. Subscription-based services use encryption to restrict viewing to subscribed channels, while free-to-air services such as DD Free Dish do not require a monthly subscription.

Modern Broadcasting: Emerging Technologies and New Frontiers (2018–Present)

Since 2018, India's broadcasting landscape has transformed with expanding internet connectivity, digital platforms and connected devices. Viewing is no longer limited to conventional television sets or scheduled programmes, with viewers accessing content through smartphones, computers and Smart TVs. Over-the-top platforms have enabled on-demand viewing across devices and locations. In November 2024, Prasar Bharati launched WAVES, its OTT digital streaming platform, which by November 2026 had recorded about 1.6 crore registered users.

Another emerging technology is Direct-to-Mobile broadcasting, which uses terrestrial infrastructure to transmit video, audio and data directly to compatible mobile devices, without requiring a SIM card or mobile data connection. Prasar Bharati signed an MoU with IIT Kanpur to develop a next-generation broadcasting roadmap, and a proof of concept for D2M was subsequently completed, with trials examining hybrid transmission and test results covering telecom interference and thermal impact published in November 2025.

Shaping the Future of Broadcasting

India's television ecosystem has grown from a single experimental service into a diverse, multi-platform network. Doordarshan now runs 35 channels, up from 17 in 2010, while DD Free Dish carries 482 channels, up from 59. Private satellite television has expanded from 603 channels in 2010–11 to 917 permitted channels as of March 2026, of which 908 were available for downlinking, comprising 342 pay channels and 566 free-to-air channels. Private pay DTH serves 49.05 million active subscribers as on 31 March 2026, and Doordarshan's DTH service provides 100 per cent geographical and population coverage across the country.

Collectively, terrestrial, satellite, cable, DTH and digital platforms bring television to urban, rural and remote homes. The future of broadcasting will increasingly be shaped by technological convergence and expanding digital access, with high-definition transmission, digital delivery and internet-based platforms transforming how audiences access and experience content, shaping a more accessible, connected and future-ready broadcasting landscape.

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

Sakeena Itoo stresses on robust referral mechanism, uninterrupted healthcare services during winter

Reviews winter preparedness of GMCs in Kashmir Division | Directs advance survey of expecting mothers in snowbound areas | Asks hospitals to display doctors' names, duty schedules, contact numbers

Jahangeer Ganaie



Srinagar Nov 23: Health and Medical Education Minister Sakeena Itoo on Monday directed officials to identify expecting mothers living in remote and snowbound areas well in advance and make necessary arrangements for their safe relocation to healthcare facilities wherever required.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) Health Minister passed slew of directions while reviewing winter preparedness across Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) in Kashmir division.

During a high-level meeting, the Minister assessed the availability of essential medicines, medical equipment, manpower, emergency services, ambulances, oxygen supplies and other critical facilities at GMCs and their associated hospitals to ensure that healthcare delivery remains unaffected during the winter months.

Stressing the need for advance planning, Itoo called for a comprehensive survey of expecting mothers in far-flung and snowbound areas, particularly those nearing their delivery dates or requiring specialised medical attention. She directed the concerned authorities to prepare and regularly update a district-wise database of such women so that necessary medical arrangements could be made before heavy snowfall and road closures disrupt connectivity.

She said vulnerable pregnant women should be medically assessed in advance and, wherever necessary, shifted to safer locations closer to hospitals equipped with maternity and emergency care facilities.

"No pregnant woman from a snowbound or remote area should be left without timely medical assistance because of weather-related disruptions. We must identify such cases beforehand, assess their requirements and put necessary arrangements in place so that no emergency is allowed to turn into a crisis due to lack of preparedness," she said.

The Minister also called for better coordination between GMC administrations, district administrations, Chief Medical Officers, peripheral health institutions, SDRF and traffic authorities to facilitate the timely transportation and admission of patients during weather-related emergencies.

She directed the concerned institutions to constitute teams for regularly monitoring weather advisories and initiating timely action in case of any exigency.

Emphasising the importance of an efficient referral mechanism, Sakeena said patients referred from District Hospitals and Sub-District Hospitals to tertiary care institutions must be managed through a clearly defined and coordinated protocol.

She stressed that referrals should be made after proper clinical assessment, documentation and stabilisation of patients, with prior communication between the referring and receiving hospitals to avoid unnecessary delays.

The Minister further directed that an experienced medical professional accompany every critically ill patient being shifted to a tertiary care hospital to ensure continuous medical supervision during transportation.

"District and Sub-District Hospitals are the first critical points of healthcare delivery. Their role in assessing, stabilising and appropriately referring patients is extremely important. Every referral must follow a proper protocol, ensuring that patients receive the required treatment at the right institution without unnecessary movement or delay," she said.

During the meeting, the Minister also reviewed the availability of essential and emergency medicines, blood components, oxygen supplies, heating arrangements, backup power systems, ambulances and functional medical equipment.

She directed hospital administrations to assess their infrastructure and equipment requirements and address shortcomings well before the onset of severe winter conditions, with particular focus on emergency departments, maternity and neonatal units, intensive care facilities and operation theatres.

The Minister also stressed adequate deployment of doctors, nurses, paramedics and other supporting staff, particularly in emergency and critical-care departments, to ensure that patient services are not affected by heavy snowfall, road blockades or other weather-related disruptions.

She asked heads of institutions to identify possible gaps in healthcare arrangements beforehand and take corrective measures instead of waiting for emergencies to arise.

Taking up issues related to patient facilitation and transparency, Sakeena directed hospitals to prominently display the rates of diagnostic tests, clearly specifying which investigations are available free of cost and which require payment.

She also instructed Medical Superintendents of District Hospitals to display the names of consultants and doctors, their OPD schedules and duty timings for both day and night shifts, along with their contact numbers, so that patients and attendants can easily access the required information.

The hospital administrations were further asked to strengthen their grievance redressal mechanisms and maintain complaint registers at every hospital to enable patients and the general public to record their grievances on the spot.

Javed Rana inaugurates driving test facility at Mendhar

Flags off first batch of LMV applicants



KT News Desk

MENDHAR, NOVEMBER 23: Minister for Tribal Affairs, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs and Transport, Javed Ahmed Rana, Monday, inaugurated a driving test facility in Mendhar and flagged off the first batch of applicants.

He also fagged off the first batch of applicants for the driving tests, formally marking the commencement of operations at the facility. A total of 23 candidates appeared for Light Motor Vehicle (LMV) driving tests on the occasion.

Driving tests will be conducted regularly at the facility, enabling residents of border Sub-Division Mendhar to access the service locally without travelling to the district headquarters, saving time and expenses.

"Access to essential public services should not be determined by geographical distance," Rana said, highlighting the initiative's benefits for youth seeking employment and livelihood opportunities.

The Minister, as per an official statement, directed officials to ensure transparent and efficient testing, strict adherence to prescribed norms and due emphasis on driving competence and road safety. Vehicle inspection and fitness certification services will also be made available at Mendhar.

ARTO Poonch, Nawaz Sharief, senior officers of the local administration, Transport Department staff, public representatives and prominent citizens attended the inauguration.

JKLA Speaker extends Gurpurab greetings



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 23: Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, has extended warm greetings to the Sikh community and people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Gurpurab (Guru Nanak Jayanti), which celebrates the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism.

In his felicitation message, Rather highlighted the timeless teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, particularly his message of peace, brotherhood, equality, compassion and selfless service to humanity. He said that the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji hold universal relevance and inspire people to promote communal harmony, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. His teachings inspire us to Choose humility over pride and service over self, he asserted. The Speaker wished the people happiness, prosperity and well-being, expressing hope that the sacred occasion would further strengthen the bonds of unity and brotherhood and would prove harbinger of peace and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir.

Govt committed towards strengthening educational infrastructure: Shamim Firdous

Inaugurates renovated Hostel at Amar Singh College, announces State-of-the-Art Girls' Hostel

KT News Desk



SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 23: Minister for Education, Shamim Firdous, Monday inaugurated the renovated Hostel Block at Amar Singh College Srinagar and announced construction of a state-of-the-art Girls' Hostel at the College, designed in traditional heritage architectural style.

The Minister, as per an official statement, was the chief guest at the annual day 2026 celebration of the College, held under the theme "Dream, Discover, Create: Celebrating the Spirit of Amar Singh College." She was accompanied by Sheikh Ahsan Pardesi, MLA, Lal Chowk Constituency.

Addressing a large gathering of students, faculty, alumni and parents at the College auditorium, Shamim Firdous appreciated the students for their talent and achievements. She lauded Amar Singh College for its academic excellence and contribution to higher education in Jammu and Kashmir.

Highlighting the Government's commitment towards strengthening the educational infrastructure, the Minister said providing better facilities and opportunities to students, especially girls, remains a top priority. She said the new Girls' Hostel will provide safe, modern and comfortable accommodation to girl students while preserving the heritage character of the historic institution.

On the occasion, the Minister felicitated meritorious students Aayat, Mir Muhtar Ahmad, Arbeen Nazir Dar and Saif Ullah Bhat for their achievements in academics, arts and sports. She also felicitated faculty members and non-teaching staff for their dedicated service, including Prof. Nusrat Sayed from teaching faculty, Prof. Momina Nazir as best researcher, Rehana Nazir from non-teaching staff, Dr. Javid Darzi and Gardener Abdul Aziz for his 28 years of dedicated service to the College.

Shamim Firdous also released the College Newsletter and Magazine and unveiled the books authored by various faculty members.

Earlier, Principal, Amar Singh College, Prof. Tehmina Yousuf, reaffirmed the College's commitment to academic excellence, innovation and holistic student development. She highlighted its academic achievements and developmental initiatives.

Dr. Shahnawaz Muntazir presented the comprehensive College Report.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji's message of equality, brotherhood, selfless service continues to inspire humanity: Javid Dar

KT News Desk

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 23: Minister for Agriculture Production, Finance, Mining and Cooperative Departments, Javid Ahmad Dar, has extended warm greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly the Sikh community, on the auspicious occasion of 557th Parkash Purab (birth anniversary) of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, being celebrated on November 24, 2026.

In his felicitation message, the Minister, as per an official statement, said that the life and teachings of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji represent an eternal source of wisdom, spiritual enlightenment and guidance for humanity. He said that Guru Ji's universal message of 'Ik Onkar' (oneness of the Supreme Being) promotes the ideals of equality, compassion, humility, tolerance and universal brotherhood, transcending all barriers of caste, creed and religion.

Emphasising the relevance of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's three cardinal principle of remembering and meditating on the Almighty, earning an honest livelihood through sincere hard work and sharing one's earnings and resources with the needy, the Minister called upon the people to follow these timeless teachings in their daily lives and contribute towards building a just, compassionate and harmonious society.

The Minister highlighted Guru Nanak Dev Ji's profound respect for honest labour, agriculture and the dignity of the farming community.

Referring to Guru Ji's life at Kartarpur, where he practised and promoted the values of hard work, self-reliance and sharing, Javid Dar said that his teachings accord immense importance to farmers and those engaged in agricultural pursuits.

Javid Dar said that Guru Nanak Dev Ji's teachings remain equally relevant in contemporary times and provide a strong foundation for strengthening the bonds of peace, mutual respect and brotherhood in society.

The Minister prayed that the sacred occasion brings peace, prosperity and happiness to Jammu and Kashmir and inspires people to strengthen the spirit of unity, compassion and brotherhood across all communities.

MLA Anantnag, Director Agriculture Kashmir inspects site for establishment of Centre of Excellence at Anantnag

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 23: MLA Anantnag West, Abdul Majid Larmi and Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah, Monday inspected the site for the establishment of centre of Excellence at Gund, Fatehpora Anantnag.

The centre of Excellence for district Anantnag is being established under NABARD.

The Centres of Excellence (CoE) are being established under the schemes, RKVY-DPR, SASCI and NABARD and these specialized hubs will bridge agricultural research and farming by demonstration of modern technologies, training farmers, and production of high-quality planting material.

These centres, as per an official statement, will also showcase precision farming, protected cultivation and sustainable crop management practices, so that farmers adopt the same technologies at their farms. Besides providing skilling and extension support to farmers, rural youth, entrepreneurs, and field officers to raise productivity and lower costs, one of the objectives of such centres is to supply disease-resistant, genetically superior seeds, seedlings, and propagation material under standardized quality controls.

DC calls for collective commitment to keep Shopian clean

Launches 'Swachh Shopian Janbhagidari Abhiyan' from his official residence

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 23: District Administration Shopian Monday launched the 'Swachh Shopian Janbhagidari Abhiyan' from the official residence of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Charandeep Singh, calling for active public participation in promoting scientific waste management and making cleanliness a shared responsibility.

The Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, also led by example by adopting sustainable waste management practices at his official residence.

Launched under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) 2.0, the campaign aims to promote responsible waste disposal, source segregation, home composting and the elimination of single-use plastics, with a focus on ensuring a cleaner and healthier Shopian.

The launch programme was attended by ADDC Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone; Suhail Ahmad Malik, Executive Officer, Municipal Council Shopian; members of civil society, Traders Association and sanitation workers.

During the programme, a live demonstration of the four-bin source segregation system was conducted, explaining the separation of household waste into wet waste, dry waste, sanitary waste and special-care waste, including domestic hazardous items such as batteries, expired medicines and chemical containers.

Safai Mitras demonstrated the door-to-door waste collection process, showcasing the collection and transportation of segregated waste in designated compartments of the municipal collection vehicle. The demonstration highlighted the importance of proper waste segregation and the vital role of sanitation workers in maintaining cleanliness across the town.

Reinforcing the importance of decentralised waste management, the Deputy Commissioner deposited wet waste into the compost pit at his official residence, demonstrating how kitchen and garden waste can be converted into organic manure through home composting.

In another significant initiative, the Deputy Commissioner unveiled SUP-Free signage and declared his official residence a Single-Use Plastic-Free Premises, setting an example for government offices, institutions, commercial establishments and households to adopt environmentally responsible practices.

A collective pledge was also administered to the participants, who resolved to uphold the commitment "Shopian Ko Saaf Rakhna Hai" and work collectively towards maintaining cleanliness, practising waste segregation, ensuring responsible waste disposal and reducing the use of single-use plastics.

BRO dismisses social media claims over Amarnath Yatra track widening



Calls reports misleading, says works are confined to existing tracks, follow prescribed safety, environmental norms

KT News Desk

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 23: The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) Monday said that the organisation is carrying out post-Amarnath ji Yatra works in compliance with all applicable safety norms and environmental safeguards.

BRO takes all measures to ensure safe disposal of excavated material , protect natural drainage and minimise disturbance to surrounding terrain .

The BRO, as per an official statement, said that that the recently circulating video on social media claims about new works , is incorrect. Based on experience of previous Yatra and requirement highlighted for wider road for Shri Amarnath ji yatra, BRO has started widening of tracks focusing on stabilising vulnerable stretches and widening the tracks as prescribed to ease congestion and allow safer passage.

The works are confined to the existing tracks. BRO's primary objective is to safeguard pilgrims throughout the Yatra. By making these tracks safer and more accessible for pilgrims, Yatra personnel and everyone else who uses it, the works serve the larger public interest.

MLA Zainapora reviews Agriculture Sector Functioning, Progress under Various Schemes in Shopian

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, NOVEMBER 23: Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Zainapora, Showkat Hussain Ganie Monday convened a review meeting with the Agriculture Department, Shopian, to assess the overall functioning of the department and the progress achieved under various agricultural schemes and initiatives.

During the meeting, the MLA, as per an official statement, took stock of the implementation of different schemes, ongoing activities, field-level interventions and the progress made in extending benefits to farmers. He stressed the need for effective follow-up, regular field monitoring and result-oriented implementation of all agriculture-related initiatives to ensure that the intended benefits reach the farming community.

Emphasising the need to make agriculture a viable and attractive livelihood option for the younger generation, the MLA underscored the importance of identifying, documenting and replicating successful initiatives and farmer success stories across the district. He observed that showcasing successful farmers and innovative agricultural practices would inspire local youth to take up agriculture and allied activities as entrepreneurial ventures.

He further stressed the adoption of modern farming technologies, innovative practices, scientific cultivation methods and diversified agricultural activities to enhance productivity, profitability and employment opportunities in the agriculture sector.

The officers briefed the MLA about the progress of various schemes, achievements at the field level, farmer-centric interventions and the initiatives being undertaken to strengthen the agriculture sector in the district.

PM Modi announces dev package of 24,000 cr Nepalese rupees for Nepal

PTI

New Delhi, Nov 23: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday announced a development package of 24,000 crore Nepalese rupees for Nepal after holding wide-ranging talks with his Nepalese counterpart Balendra Shah that produced many key outcomes to further solidify the bilateral ties.

The two leaders virtually laid the foundation of several India-assisted projects in Nepal and flagged off a cross-border passenger rail link between Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh and Janakpur Dham in Nepal.

Shah landed in New Delhi on a two-day visit on Sunday with an aim to inject new momentum in the bilateral ties that came under some strain in May following Shah's remarks seeking involvement of China and the United Kingdom to address the long-standing border dispute between India and Nepal.

"The relations between India and Nepal stand as firm as the Himalayas and as vast as the oceans," the Nepalese leader said in his media statement.

"As a dependable and trusted neighbour, India consistently stood as the first responder in times of natural disasters and difficult times in Nepal," he said, adding that mutual respect, steadfast trust and unbroken goodwill are the bedrock of the relations.



In his remarks, Modi also highlighted the strength of India-Nepal ties and how New Delhi is committed to extend all possible support for development and prosperity of the neighbouring nation.

"The relationship between India and Nepal is not merely that of neighbours, but it is about kinship and unbreakable trust. We share our joys and challenges," he said. "We are partners in each other's progress and a source of support for one another in difficult times," he said.

The prime minister expressed India's deep condolences over the loss of lives caused by the devastating floods in Nepal in August.

"And today, to give renewed strength to Nepal's reconstruction and long-term development, we announced a development cooperation package of 24,000 crore Nepalese rupees," he said.

PM Modi also made a mention of India's assistance to Nepal in the energy sector. "India has been a reliable supplier of petroleum products and other essential goods to Nepal for many years. In keeping with the spirit of our Neighbourhood First policy, despite serious challenges related to oil supply this year, we have maintained the supply of fuel, fertilisers and other essential goods to Nepal," he said.

The two sides inked several agreements to expand cooperation in specific sectors, including health and education.

In his comments, Shah said his talks with PM Modi were aimed at further strengthening and modernising the centuries-old Nepal-India relations.

"The need of the hour is to stand on the sturdy foundation of this enduring bond of friendship and build strong pillars of cooperation for the future," the Nepalese leader said.

"I am confident that the outcomes we reached today will elevate Nepal-India ties to new heights," he said.

Saurabh Bhagat orders faster winter food-grain stocking, prioritises border areas

KT News Desk



Srinagar, Nov 23: Commissioner Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), Saurabh Bhagat, on Monday chaired a meeting to review the status of winter and border dumping of food grains in Kashmir Division.

The meeting was attended by Nazim Zai Khan, Director FCS&CA Kashmir, Special Secretary FCS&CA, Additional Secretary FCS&CA and other senior officers of the Department, along with officers of the Food Corporation of India (FCI), J&K Road Transport Corporation (JKRTC) and Assistant Directors, FCS&CA Kashmir. The out-stationed officers joined through virtual mode.

The Commissioner Secretary directed the FCI to maintain sufficient stocks at its stations and ensure loading of all trucks sent to FCI stations without delay. He directed the JKRTC to provide the exact number of trucks requisitioned by the Department so that lifting of food grains is completed within the stipulated timeframe.

He took a serious view of the problems noticed in the working of FCI and JKRTC and directed for their immediate resolution without any further delay. He directed all the Assistant Directors, FCS&CA Kashmir, to increase storage capacity through renovation or any other means, so that stocks are received and stored safely before the onset of heavy snowfall.

The Commissioner Secretary appreciated that 80 percent of the lifting and supply of food grains has been completed in Kashmir Division. He directed FCI, JKRTC and all Assistant Directors to speed up the remaining 20 percent of lifting and supply work and clear the entire pendency well before the stipulated timeline, so that no area is left without adequate stocks.

He directed close coordination among FCI, JKRTC and field officers, regular monitoring of lifting and dumping and daily reporting of progress. He asked the Directorate to submit proposals for any additional vehicles or other infrastructure required for timely completion of the work, so that food security is safeguarded and the entire process remains under proper supervision and check.

The Commissioner Secretary stressed that remote, snow-bound and border areas must get top priority and quality and quantity of stocks must be ensured at every stage. He cautioned that no laxity will be tolerated on this account to ensure that essential commodities remain available to consumers without interruption throughout the winter months.

In a separate meeting, Saurabh Bhagat reviewed the progress of the pilot project for the use of CBDC in the Public Distribution System under PMGKAY.

The meeting was joined by the Director General, FCS&CA Jammu, officials of Punjab National Bank and representatives of UIDAI and NIC. He directed for early completion of whitelisting of Jammu and Srinagar districts in close coordination with NIC, Punjab National Bank and UIDAI.

FDA suspends two FSSAI registrations over hygiene violations

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Nov 23: The Food and Drugs Administration (FDA), J&K, continued its enforcement drive across all the districts to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and the regulations framed there under, with a focus on ensuring food safety, maintaining hygienic practices and safeguarding public health.

During the drive, 281 inspections of hotels, restaurants, cafés and other food establishments were conducted to assess compliance with the prescribed food safety, sanitation and hygiene requirements.

Additionally, 51 food samples, comprising meat, meat products and other food commodities, were lifted for laboratory analysis to ascertain their conformity with the prescribed standards of food safety and quality. As part of the enforcement action, the FSSAI registrations of M/s Zaika Chicken Biryani, Khayam, Srinagar, and M/s Royal 99 Café, Shalimar, Srinagar, were suspended for violations of the prescribed food safety, sanitation and hygiene requirements.

Further, six cases were initiated under Section 56 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, for contraventions relating to insanitary and unhygienic conditions in food establishments, which attract a penalty of up to 1 lakh. Additionally, three cases were initiated under Section 58 of the Act for other contraventions, attracting penalties of up to 2 lakh.

As part of measures aimed at ensuring transparency, traceability and informed consumer choice, Food Business Operators (FBOs) dealing in non-vegetarian food preparations were directed to prominently display clear and accurate information regarding the type of meat used, including mutton, beef or chicken; whether the meat used is fresh or frozen; and the ingredients used in the preparation of non-vegetarian food items.

The FBOs were further instructed to ensure that such information is accurately stated, prominently displayed on menus and Food Safety Display Boards, and readily accessible to consumers to enable them to make informed choices.

Consumers are also urged to remain vigilant and report any instance of the sale or distribution of unsafe or adulterated food through the official email at cfsjandk.fnd@jk.gov.in.

El Nino may trigger floods, landslides, avalanches in Hindu Kush Himalaya: Report

PTI

Kathmandu, Nov 23: A strong El Nino could bring above-normal precipitation to parts of the Hindu Kush Himalaya region, increasing the risk of floods, landslides and avalanches in Nepal during the winter season, according to a report.

The Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) Winter Outlook 2026, jointly prepared by the Kathmandu-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Beijing Normal University and the Institute of Atmospheric Physics of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, forecasts wetter conditions in countries including Nepal, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

The report warns that heavy precipitation could trigger localised floods, landslides and avalanches in the western Himalaya, while some parts of the region may experience dry spells and an increased risk of forest fires.

The outlook comes as the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports a strong-to-very-strong El Nino, with around a 60 per cent chance of it becoming the strongest since records began in 1950.

ICIMOD scientists said the weather phenomenon could bring more rain to the Himalayan foothills and increased snowfall at higher elevations.

The report follows a particularly destructive monsoon season in Nepal and Bhutan, marked by disasters linked to changes in high-mountain glaciers and permafrost.

The devastating Bhotekoshi floods that struck the Himalayan nation in August, killing at least 1,500 people and leaving over 5,000 missing, are estimated to have cost the country USD 4.7 billion in relief and reconstruction.

The outlook also forecasts deeper-than-normal snow in parts of Afghanistan, Pakistan, northern India and Nepal, while shallower snow levels are expected in parts of Bhutan and eastern Xizang in China.

Snow depth plays a crucial role in sustaining river flows and determining water availability for the coming year. Lower snow levels could affect irrigation, hydropower generation and spring flows, the report said.

"A wetter winter does not rule out the risk of fire, as other regions in the HKH are expected to face dry spells, leaving grass and other vegetation dry enough to burn," the report warned.

It also projected a high to very high likelihood of forest and grassland fires in south-eastern Xizang and parts of Myanmar.

"Preparedness cannot end with the monsoon. As rainfall becomes more erratic and intense, local authorities need seasonal outlooks to plan and short-range local forecasts to decide when and where to act," said Manish Shrestha, a hydrologist at ICIMOD.

ICIMOD will discuss the findings at an international conference titled Advancing Science, Policy and Regional Cooperation for the HKH Cryosphere, scheduled to be held in Kathmandu from November 25 to 27.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Regulator bars

recorded a peak power demand of around 3.3 GW last year, authorities have projected a peak of just 2.8 GW for the upcoming period, prompting the electricity regulatory authority to seek an urgent review amid warnings of a 665 MW non-solar power deficit.

The official documents in this regard said that J&K has been requested to review its submitted demand forecast stating that the projected peak demand of 2.8 GW is lower than the previous year's peak of around 3.3 GW.

"Further, a peak deficit of approximately 665 MW is projected during non-solar hours from 5pm to 8am, widening after mid-month," the documents read.

It also said that in view of the absence of advance bilateral procurement, advance Round-the-Clock (RTC) and peak hour bilateral tie-ups are recommended to address the deficit and minimise dependence on the short-term market. (KNO)

J&K's future '

Observer (KNO).

"I was in the Home Ministry in 2014 and worked for five years with Rajnath Singh ji. I know well that back then, there were hardly any major public programmes. I used to visit remote areas and sometimes even go to the border to assess security situations. There were no public meetings," he said.

Rijiju also pledged support for genuine cases facing delays in Waqf property registration and announced potential funding for skill-development projects proposed by the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board.

The Union Minister said the government had already granted a six-month extension for registering Waqf properties. The government, he added, would ask its counsel to support genuine requests for further relief before tribunals and the Supreme Court, so that legitimate properties were not affected by documentation delays.

Defending the amended Waqf law, renamed the UMEED Act, Rijiju said it was intended to promote transparency, accountability and systematic management—not to harass Muslims or take over their assets.

He said many Waqf properties across the country had remained unregistered, encroached upon or mismanaged for decades, making proper measurement and documentation essential. The properties, he said, should benefit the poor, orphans, widows and other people in need.

Funding for Waqf Board projects

Rijiju said the Ministry of Minority Affairs could provide dedicated funding for skill-development programmes run by the J&K Waqf Board, particularly those aimed at educated unemployed youth.

He invited the Board to submit a comprehensive proposal, saying projects worth Rs 15 crore, Rs 20 crore or even Rs 50 crore could be considered. The initiatives, he said, should support local arts and culture and create employment opportunities.

Praising the Board's work over the past three to four years, Rijiju called it the country's top Waqf Board and said he had cited its work as a model for other state boards, including Uttar Pradesh's.

He also praised the restoration of the Hazratbal Shrine, saying the work fulfilled the spiritual aspirations of devotees. He commended the Board's initiatives in education and healthcare and congratulated Chairperson Dr Darakhshan Andrabi and her team. Rijiju said a documentary screened at the event effectively highlighted the Board's achievements.

Recalls sports and legal outreach initiatives

Rijiju also recalled his tenure as Union Sports Minister, saying the Khelo India Winter Games, conceived in Gulmarg in 2019, had grown into an event that athletes now look forward to each February and March.

He said water-sports initiatives at Dal Lake and adventure-sports programmes across the Valley had helped create opportunities for young people to demonstrate their abilities.

Referring to his time as Union Law Minister, Rijiju recalled the inauguration of the new Jammu and Kashmir High Court building and legal outreach programmes in remote areas, including Lolab Valley and locations beyond Baramulla. He said he had travelled with Supreme Court judges and the Chief Justice of the J&K High Court to hold legal-awareness camps and Lok Adalats, bringing affordable and accessible justice closer to residents.

He said development projects in Jammu and Kashmir were being advanced through coordination among ministries under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.

Calls for inclusive development

Emphasising the Prime Minister's "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" vision, Rijiju said it was an inclusive roadmap for achieving Viksit Bharat by 2047 and ensuring that no religion, caste or community was left behind.

Those present included Member of Parliament Mian Altaf Ahmad Larvi, BJP National General Secretary and J&K in-charge Dr Satish Poonia, SKUAST-K Vice-Chancellor Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai, religious scholars, Waqf Board members, academicians and public representatives. (KNO)

'9 lakh waqf

the past 12 years under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

"India has changed now; our leadership is strong. India has moved far ahead," he said.

The Union Minister said more than nine lakh Waqf properties across the country could become a powerful instrument of welfare if managed effectively.

"If utilised properly, these properties can transform the socio-economic condition of the Muslim community, particularly the poor and underprivileged," he said.

Rijiju praised the J&K Waqf Board under its Chairperson, Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi, saying its initiatives demonstrated how Waqf assets could be managed for public welfare.

Earlier in the day, he inaugurated the Bibi Halima College of Nursing and Medical Technology at Kathi Darwaza, Rainawari. He also inaugurated several facilities at Dargah Hazratbal, including the Waqf Revival Photo Museum, a ladies' prayer hall and a guest house.

During his interaction with the media at Hazratbal, Rijiju also spoke about the BJP's election preparedness, saying the party remained ready irrespective of when elections are announced.

"BJP is always ready. Whether there is an election or not, we are in working mode 24 hours. BJP never rests," he said. (KNO)

LG, CM extend greetings

in his message, said that the timeless teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, centred on compassion, equality, unity and selfless service, continue to inspire humanity and promote harmony across communities.

He emphasised the importance of upholding the values of mutual respect, brotherhood and inclusivity to build a peaceful and harmonious society.

The Chief Minister extended his best wishes to all celebrating the occasion and expressed hope that the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji would continue to guide society towards peace, prosperity and communal harmony in Jammu and Kashmir.

IGP Kmr chairs

coordination and vigilance to ensure effective security management across Kashmir. (KNO)

Chill tightens grip

seasonal normal of 13.9 degrees Celsius.

The Meteorological Department has forecast mainly dry weather across Jammu and Kashmir until November 30. Shallow to moderate fog is likely at several places, particularly during morning and night hours.

The department has advised commuters to exercise caution while travelling, especially on highways and other major roads during foggy conditions. (KNO)

SKIMS introduces

healthcare services.

The newly inaugurated equipment also includes a high-end X-ray system for the maternity hospital, penta-head and tri-head microscopes, and a Forced Oscillation Technique (FOT) machine for impulse oscillometry.

Officials said the new facilities would strengthen specialised diagnostic and surgical services and reduce the need for patients to seek advanced treatment outside the Union Territory.

According to SKIMS officials, projects worth nearly Rs 45 crore have been commissioned at the institute during 2026 as part of efforts to modernise healthcare infrastructure and improve service delivery.

The institute has also developed several patient-centric facilities, including paying wards, upgraded private wards, a Bone Marrow Transport Unit, a transport yard, a sports ground, lifts for private wards and attendant inns.

The latest additions are part of SKIMS's ongoing efforts to expand access to advanced treatment and diagnostic services within Jammu and Kashmir. (KNO)

Mehbooba seeks

Drawing a parallel with the 1987 Assembly elections, she claimed that injustices affecting youth could have long-term consequences and stressed the need to protect their faith in democratic processes.

Meanwhile, Sajad Lone called for winding up JKSSB, alleging that the recruitment body had become synonymous with irregularities, delays and political interference.

He advocated a decentralised recruitment system under which individual departments would conduct selections through specialised agencies, particularly for computer-based examinations.

Lone also criticised delays in filling vacancies and said recruitment should be planned in advance to ensure timely appointments. He argued that both alleged irregularities and administrative inefficiency had undermined the credibility of the recruitment process and called for structural reforms to restore public confidence.

He also criticised the present government, alleging that its limited powers were largely being used for transfers rather than governance priorities—(KNO)

J&K rolls out

participation of local artists, technicians and service providers in film production activities.

Actor Mir Sarwar and filmmakers Rahat Kazmi and Kapil Mattu shared their experiences and observations regarding filmmaking in Jammu and Kashmir. They highlighted the region's cinematic appeal, availability of talented local artists and the opportunities for expanding film production activities. They also discussed the importance of continued institutional support, improved facilitation and greater collaboration between the film industry and the Government.

The interaction also provided an opportunity to deliberate on the challenges and emerging opportunities within the regional film industry, particularly in terms of attracting larger productions, nurturing local filmmaking talent and connecting Jammu and Kashmir's creative fraternity with the national and international film industry.

The panel discussion formed part of DIPR's broader participation at the 57th IFFI, aimed at showcasing Jammu and Kashmir's film policy, cinematic locations, creative talent and government initiatives before filmmakers, producers, investors and other stakeholders from across the country and abroad.

Through such engagements, the Department is seeking to strengthen Jammu and Kashmir's visibility on the national and international film map, promote film tourism and establish the region as a vibrant and attractive destination for cinema.

India 3rd most powerful in Asia, Modi second-most effective regional leader: Power Index 2026

PTI

New Delhi, Nov 23: India has retained its position as the third most powerful country in Asia, emerging as a 'major powerhouse', with Prime Minister Narendra Modi ranked as the second most effective regional leader, according to the Lowy Institute's Asia Power Index 2026.

India's power score improved by 0.5 points to 40.5 in the 2026 Index as the country played a much more influential role in Asia. India's power score gap with China has dropped to the narrowest since 2018.

According to the Index, the US and China are "superpowers in Asia for 2026" with scores of 78.9 and 73.6, respectively, out of 100.

India consolidated its "major power" status this year, growing more influential in Asia. Greater regional defence engagement and BrahMos missile sales to Southeast Asia strengthened its defence networks, while stable trade and investment ties made it one of the few countries whose economic relationships did not weaken.

"Its diplomatic influence held up as experts rated Prime



Minister Narendra Modi the second-most effective regional leader after Xi Jinping, though India's low profile during the Gulf conflict weighed on views of his global leadership," the Asia Power Index 2026 said.

In 2026, India had the greatest gains in cultural influence (+2.3). It lost the most points in economic capability (-0.7). Elsewhere, it improved in defence networks (+2.1), future resources (+1.2) and military capability (+0.5). The scores for resilience, economic relationships and diplomatic influence were unchanged this year. India's score in economic capability and cultural influence stood at 26.4 and 43.8, respectively, while its diplomatic influence score was at 70.3, as per the latest index.

"Despite a dip in relative economic capability and a year focused on internal challenges, India played a much more influential role in Asia," according to the Index findings.

The 2026 Lowy Institute Asia Power Index ranks 27 countries and territories across 131 indicators to measure who holds power in Asia.

According to the Index, the US-China power score has narrowed, with just 5.3 points now separating the US (78.9) and China (73.6). This is the narrowest gap since the Index began in 2018. The military capability gap is also at its narrowest on record.

US Diplomatic Influence fell 6 points to 76.7, its largest drop on record and the fourth straight annual decline. Drivers include the Iran war, punitive tariffs and calls to scale back military exercises with South Korea.

"Despite upheaval, the regional balance of power remains markedly bipolar. The US and China still dominate, and neither a middle power bloc nor growing authoritarian alignment is displacing them," said Hunter Marston, Director of the Southeast Asia Program and Asia Power Index.

The ruling BJP took a swipe at Congress, saying India's improved ranking had given the Congress party a reality check.

BJP national spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari said the Congress' future under Rahul Gandhi might be a "disaster", while India's future is "safe, secure and prosperous" under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"'Jhooth Ki Goonj' of Congress gets a reality check!" he added.

BJP Rajya Sabha MP Vinod Tawde also cited the index to counter the opposition's criticism of the Indian economy, saying the world recognised India's "decade of rise".

"Call it a disaster. Call it a weak economy. The world recognises India's 'decade of rise'! While the opposition paints a picture of decline on foreign soil, the 2026 Lowy Institute Index places India among Asia's top three powers. PM Narendra Modi is rated the region's second-most effective leader," he said.

"Those who run India down abroad must read the world's assessment," he added.

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"As a dependable and trusted neighbour, India consistently stood as the first responder in times of natural disasters and difficult times in Nepal," he said, adding that mutual respect, steadfast trust and unbroken goodwill are the bedrock of the relations.

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The prime minister expressed India's deep condolences over the loss of lives caused by the devastating floods in Nepal in August.

"And today, to give renewed strength to Nepal's reconstruction and long-term development, we announced a development cooperation package of 24,000 crore Nepalese rupees," he said.

Bisleri says packaged drinking water safe

Claims referral lab found bromate within prescribed limit



PTI

New Delhi, Nov 23: A day after FSSAI ordered prosecution against Bisleri International, the company on Monday asserted that its packaged drinking water is "safe" for consumption, and it will cooperate with the food regulator to address the issue.

The clarification came a day after FSSAI said it sanctioned prosecution against Bisleri International Pvt Ltd after finding its packaged drinking water sample "unsafe".

In a statement, Bisleri International said that it has not received any notice from the FSSAI. It also mentioned that a referral lab had found the presence of 'bromate' within the prescribed limit.

The company's statement follows the FSSAI's social media post on Sunday informing that it has sanctioned prosecution against the company over unsafe packaged drinking water.

Bisleri said the matter dates back about 14 months, to a batch produced in September 2025 at Bisleri's Goa manufacturing facility, one of 143 plants in our network.

On September 30, 2025, FSSAI collected six samples from the Goa facility. Initial testing found that five samples met all applicable standards. "The sixth recorded a bromate level of 12 micrograms per litre, against the prescribed limit of 10 micrograms per litre."

Following Bisleri's appeal dated November 22, 2025, FSSAI sent that sample to a referral laboratory for retesting.

"The referral laboratory found bromate of the sample within the prescribed limit and separately flagged polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in the sample," Bisleri said.

The difference between the two results raised questions.

Railways passenger numbers to touch 800 cr this fiscal, reach pre-Covid levels by 2027: Vaishnaw

PTI

New Delhi, Nov 23: Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Monday said that the total number of passengers carried by the Railways in 2026-27 may touch 800 crore by the end of the financial year.

He expressed hope that passenger numbers by the end of 2027 would reach pre-Covid levels.

Before the nationwide COVID-19 lockdown began on March 25, 2020, bringing passenger train services to a halt, the total number of passengers carried by the Railways during the financial year 2019-20 stood at around 808.6 crore.

The figure dropped to 125 crore in 2020-21, following the suspension of services and their gradual resumption.

However, the highest number of passengers carried by the Railways in its history was 843.9 crore in 2018-19.

The Railways recorded 740 crore passengers in 2025-26, which was still around 100 crore fewer than the 843.9 crore recorded in 2018-19. In 2024-25, the total number of passengers stood at 729.3 crore.

Since the ministry has not yet released the class-wise data for the 740 crore passengers recorded in 2025-26, a comparative analysis of the figures for 2018-19 (843.9 crore) and 2024-25 (729.3 crore) suggests interesting changes in passenger travel patterns during the post-Covid recovery period, railway data shows.

"The comparison shows that while upper-class passengers (all AC classes) increased by over 102 per cent and Second Class Mail/Express passengers by 8.7 per cent over these six years, suburban and Second Class Ordinary passenger numbers remained 14 per cent and 39.9 per cent below their respective 2018-19 levels," a senior official,



who analysed the data, said.

In 2018-19, the total of 843.9 crore passengers travelled by the Railways, including 478.4 crore suburban passengers, 17.9 crore upper-class passengers, 149.9 crore Second Class Mail/Express passengers and 197.7 crore Second Class Ordinary passengers.

In 2024-25, suburban passenger traffic stood at 411.2 crore, down by 67.2 crore or 14 per cent from the 2018-19 level. Similarly, Second Class Ordinary passenger numbers stood at 118.9 crore, a decline of 78.8 crore or 39.9 per cent.

Both suburban and Second Class Ordinary passenger numbers remain significantly below their pre-Covid levels.

In contrast, the other two categories registered growth. Upper-class passenger numbers exceeded their pre-Covid levels, reaching 36.2 crore, an increase of 18.3 crore or 102.2 per cent.

Second Class Mail/Express passenger numbers rose to 163 crore, up by 13.1 crore or 8.7 per cent. These figures suggest a significant shift in post-Covid travel patterns.

"The average distance travelled per passenger has also increased despite the decline in the overall number of passengers," the official said. A passenger-kilometre is a measure of the distance travelled by passengers. It represents one passenger travelling one kilometre.

He added, "This suggests that the fall in passenger numbers has not translated proportionately into a decline in passenger-kilometres, indicating a possible shift in the composition of railway traffic."

"Interestingly, while the total number of passenger journeys remained around 13.6 per cent below the 2018-19 level in 2024-25, total passenger-kilometres declined by only 2.1 per cent during the same period," he stated.

Total passenger-kilometres stood at 11,57,174 million in 2018-19, compared with 11,32,500 million in 2024-25.

A comparison of total passenger-kilometres with the number of passenger journeys shows that the average distance travelled per passenger increased from 137.1 km in 2018-19 to 155.3 km in 2024-25, indicating a shift towards longer journeys in the overall passenger traffic mix.

"It means that one passenger on average travelled 137.1 km in 2018-19 and 155.3 km in 2024-25," said the official. "This trend may also have implications for passenger revenue, which needs to be analysed separately," he added.

Children not mere chattels, nor toys for their parents: SC

PTI

New Delhi, Nov 23: The welfare of a minor is the paramount consideration for a court while appointing a guardian, the Supreme Court said on Monday, observing that children are not mere "chattels" nor toys for their parents. Dealing with a plea concerning the custody of two minors whose parents are divorced, the court said the children should not be separated from their mother, with whom they have developed a strong natural bond over the years.

Observing that the father also deserves the company of his children, who are the victims of a "fractured marriage", a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Aparesh Kumar Singh said he would be allowed to meet the minors between 10 am and 2 pm on the second Saturday and Sunday of every month. The bench said when the court is confronted with conflicting demands from



the parents, it has not only to look at the issue on a legalistic basis.

"In such matters, human factors are also relevant for deciding the issues. It is often said that children are not mere chattels nor are they toys for their parents," it said.

The court was dealing with an appeal filed by the mother of the two boys, now aged 16 and 14 years.

The woman had challenged an October 2024 order of the Madras High Court that had affirmed a family court's order granting the custody of the boys to the father.

The apex court said the issue before it is whether the custody of the children, who have lived continuously with their mother since May 2014, should be transferred to the father, who is a natural guardian.

It noted that the marriage of the minors' parents took place in August 2009 and the boys were born in Madurai in July 2010 and May 2012 respectively.

The bench said the marital dispute led to the institution of four cases and a divorce case filed by the man was decreed by dissolving the marriage on the grounds of cruelty. The top court, which interacted with the parties including the children, noted that the boys have clearly expressed their inclination to reside with their mother.

"The welfare of a minor is the paramount consideration before the court while appointing a guardian. While doing so, the court has to keep regard to the age, sex and religion of the minor and the character and capacity of the proposed guardian," it noted.

The bench said it is well-settled that a court should be guided by the sole consideration of the welfare of the minor.

It noted that the parties are living separately since 2014 and their marriage stood dissolved in 2018.

The bench said the upbringing of the minors by the mother on her own, even after the divorce, does not appear to suffer from the absence of adequate love and care, and that she is taking care of their studies by ensuring quality education for them in good schools.

"In the facts and circumstances of the case, we are of the considered opinion that the children should not be separated from their mother, with whom they have developed a strong natural bond over the years, keeping into account the predominant criterion of paramount consideration of the welfare of the child," it said.

"Having said so, we also feel that the children ought not be denied the love and affection of the respondent-father, which is also essential to their proper and balanced growth," it added.

IN THE COURT OF I/C ADDITIONAL SPECIAL MOBILE MAGISTRATE GANDERBAL

Present: Ms. Rameen Rashid Khan
JO Code: JK00316
In the Case of:
Zareena Bano D/o Altaf Ahmad Khawaja Kakru
R/o Anderwan District Ganderbal
Applicant
V/S
bile Magis
Registrar, Births and Deaths, Block Lar
Responde

In the matter of: Application for issuance of appropriate directions for delayed registration of birth u/s 13(3A) of the Registration of Births and Deaths, Act, 1969 as amended.

To,
The General Public
PROCLAMATION

1) The instant application came to be filed before this court on under Section 13 (3A) of Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir Registration of Births & Death Rules 2000 by the applicant seeking the issuance of direction on Registrar Births and Deaths, for registering Date of Birth of the applicant namely Zareena Bano D/o Altaf Ahmad

2) Whereas this court has ordered that the objection from the general public be called for **issuance of birth certificate in favour of the** above named person.

3) Therefore, this proclamation is issued through this newspaper **calling upon the general public to file objections, if any, within a period of seven days, to the issuance of such certificate failing which this** court this court shall proceed in accordance with law.

Announced
I/C ADDITIONAL SPECIAL MOBILE MAGISTRATE
GANDERBAL

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that the correct name of my daughter is SYEDA INJILA However, owing to an inadvertent typographical error, the name of my daughter have been incorrectly recorded in her passport as Syeda Injela.

It is intended to rectify and update the aforesaid entries in the new passport records in accordance with the documentary evidence available. Therefore, if any person has any objection, claim, or grievance with regard to the proposed correction of the said entries, he/she may submit the same before the concerned passport authorities within a period of 15 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which no objection, claim, or grievance shall be entertained thereafter.

Syed Zahoor Ahmad Geelani
F/o
Syed Injila

NOTICE

I want to Transfer electricity connection from Mohd sultan payar S/o Ghulam mohd payar R/o Babapora Barthana Consumer ID 0203010024630 To Sarwa begum W/o Mohd Sultan payar R/o Babapora Barthana . If any body have any objection He/She may contact to PDD Srinagar within 7 days after date no objection will be accepted.

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Ukraine claims naval drone strike damaged Russian warship in Libya

AP

Cairo, Nov 23 : Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Monday praised his Security Services for a naval drone strike he claims has sunk one of Russia's newest warships in Libyan waters. But Libyan officials said the vessel was only heavily damaged.

Meanwhile, Iran warned that the Revolutionary Guard's missile command would give an appropriate response if the United States renewed its attacks.

A new analysis says the war in Gaza has caused an environmental catastrophe likely to impact Palestinians for decades.

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

Zelenskyy claims Ukrainian naval drones struck Russian warship in Libya

Zelenskyy claimed on X Monday that Ukrainian naval attack drones struck the Russian corvette MERKURY in Libyan waters in an operation carried out by his country's security service.

Authorities in eastern Libya said the MERKURY had been docked at the Benghazi naval base for refuelling and resupply under a cooperation agreement between Russia and the eastern-based government in Libya.

Two Libyan officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because they're not authorised to speak to the media, said the vessel was only heavily damaged.

The Ukrainian president said Sunday's operation involving seven naval drones also destroyed a Russian Ka-27 combat helicopter and struck the



Russian cargo vessel MV ANGARA that he said transported weapons.

The two Libyan officials said an initial investigation showed that two naval drones struck the MERKURY after several were launched at the warship from a base run by Ukrainian forces in western Libya.

The Libyan coast guard said a follow-up naval drone attack hit a Maltese-flagged commercial vessel sailing off Benghazi.

Ukraine's Security Service said in a statement Monday that both vessels were "legitimate military targets for Ukraine because they directly supported Russia's military capabilities."

Iran warns of retaliation if US forces attack

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei warned Monday that the Revolutionary Guard would respond to any US attack on Iranian positions.

Baghaei said General Majid Mousavi, the commander of the Revolutionary Guard's aerospace force, which operates Iran's ballistic missiles, "will certainly deliver it to them at the appropriate time, neatly and elegantly packaged. Then they will understand."

Baghaei was replying to questions about reports that the White House had requested assessments from the Pentagon and military and intelligence experts on how Iran might respond to possible US attack scenarios.

Houthis say Saudi-backed strike kills 6 in Yemen

Six people were killed and 18 others were injured in a strike in western Yemen, the Houthi-run Health Ministry said Monday.

Anees al-Asbahi, the Houthi health minister, said the strike by Saudi-backed forces apparently targeted telecommunications facilities and a residential building in Yemen's Hodeida province. He said more victims remain under the rubble.

Saudi-backed forces did not immediately comment on the strike.

Gaza war has caused environmental catastrophe, analysis says

Israel's military offensive in Gaza has unleashed an environmental catastrophe likely to impact Palestinians for decades, according to an analysis released Monday.

The military assault, launched in response to Hamas' October 7, 2023, attack, has strewn heavy metals, explosive residues, asbestos and biological contaminants across the entire territory, according to the analysis by Oxfam and the Conflict and Environment Observatory, a British nonprofit that studies the environmental impact of war.

Oxfam International Executive Director Amitabh Behar said Gaza's destruction "will have fundamentally degraded the environmental conditions necessary for human safety and survival."

With Gaza's infrastructure in ruins, mountains of trash tower over the tents. Some trash is burned, contributing to respiratory issues. Residents say they also suffer from skin diseases and pest infestations.

Nisreen Hassan, from Khan Younis, said no one is handling sanitation, leaving trash to accumulate for months. She said children are especially susceptible to stomach ailments and other health problems stemming from pests contaminating food in people's tents.

China ready to work with India to facilitate business visa arrangements



PTI

Beijing, Nov 23 : China has said it is ready to work with India to facilitate visa arrangements for business personnel from both sides, amid reports that its diplomatic missions have reduced visa issuance, including business visas, to Indian nationals.

"China issues visas for eligible foreign nationals coming to China in accordance with laws and regulations," a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said in a written reply to questions by PTI about the reported reductions in visa issuance for Indians.

"We stand ready to work with India to facilitate visa arrangements for business personnel of both sides," the spokesperson said.

The spokesperson's remarks came amid reports that Chinese diplomatic missions have reduced visa issuance to Indian nationals, including business visas.

Also, fewer Indian businessmen were reportedly given visas to attend this month's China Import Expo in Shanghai. The annual trade fair attracts businessmen from around the world to showcase their businesses to Chinese consumers.

Beijing has also stopped the service provider China Visa Application Centre from accepting visa applications, and its missions have begun handling them directly amid rising demand for Chinese visas, especially business visas.

The visa process between the two countries improved after India began issuing tourist visas to Chinese nationals in July last year after a gap of five years, amid efforts to repair bilateral ties that came under severe strain following the deadly Galwan Valley clashes in 2020.

The resumption of the visas was regarded as a significant move as the two countries started the normalisation process after a freeze in bilateral ties.

With liberalised visa processes, the two countries launched direct air services connecting several cities, including Beijing-New Delhi.

India face China in Asian Champions Trophy after Asian Games triumph

PTI

Bhopal, Nov 23 : Already through to semifinals with three wins from as many matches, defending champions India will look to extend their dominance on the continental stage when they take on higher-ranked China, the reigning Olympic silver medallists, in their fourth round-robin match of Women's Asian Champions Trophy here on Tuesday.

Asian Games gold medallists India, who defeated China 1-0 in the final, are atop the standings with nine points from three matches.

Japan too have nine points from three wins but lag behind India on goal difference. China, the highest-ranked side in the tournament, however, are placed third with four points from three games in the six-team competition.

The Indians have been on full throttle in their first three games, having registered a 4-1 win over Malaysia, followed by a 2-1 victory over South Korea in a closely contested affair before thrashing Thailand 7-0.

Young striker Mumtaz Khan has stolen the show for India, scoring three brilliant field goals to lead the chart, followed by drag-flicker Deepika, who has converted three penalty corners.

Veteran Navneet Kaur, who created ample chances for India in their last match, also has two goals to her credit from penalty strokes. Young forward Sunelita Toppo scored twice from rebounds off penalty corners.

DC Anantnag flags off 120 boys for five-day trekking expedition to Pahalgam, encourages youth to embrace adventure

KT News Desk

Anantnag, Nov 23 : Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, today flagged off a contingent of 120 boys from Sports Stadium Anantnag for a trekking expedition to the world-famous tourist destination of Pahalgam.

The flag-off ceremony was held in the presence of District Youth Services and Sports Officer (DYSSO) Anantnag, along with field staff and other officials of the department.

The trekking expedition, organised by the District Youth Services and Sports Office Anantnag, will be conducted from November 23 to November 27, 2026. Addressing the participants, the DC encouraged them to actively engage in the expedition and make the most of the enriching experience.



The DYSSO said the department has put in place the necessary arrangements for the smooth and safe conduct of the expedition, with field staff and officials accompanying the contingent throughout the programme. The initiative aims to promote adventure sports, physical fitness, discipline, teamwork, leadership qualities and a spirit of exploration among young boys.

US futures rise as Asian shares fall on AI stock sell-off

AP

Bangkok, Nov 23 : World shares were mixed and Asian markets were mostly lower Monday after a brutal sell-off of artificial intelligence stocks pulled the S&P 500 down on Friday. US stock futures climbed early Monday. The future for the S&P 500 was up 2.6% early Monday, while the future for the Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 1.8%.

In early European trading, Britain's FTSE 100 was up 0.5% to 10,394.52. France's CAC 40 rose 0.5% to 7,967.87, while Germany's DAX advanced 0.6% to 24,961.93.

Some big AI stocks weighed on Asian shares. South Korea's benchmark Kospi index fell 3.3% to 4,708.54 even as it narrowed some of its losses from earlier in the day. Shares in Samsung Electronics lost 3.1%, while memory chipmaker SK Hynix fell 2.5%.

Markets in Tokyo were closed for a holiday.

Taiwan's Taiex added 2.2%. Its leading chipmaker TSMC, or Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., was up 1.5%. In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng edged 0.1% lower to 22,383.74, while the Shanghai Composite index was 0.2% higher at 3,538.95.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 traded 0.3% lower to 8,570.60.

India's Sensex dropped 1.7%.

After Friday's decline, Wall Street's benchmark S&P 500 is now in what professional investors call a "correction," having fallen more than 10% from its Oct. 6 all-time high. The tech-heavy Nasdaq composite slumped 5.3%, pulling it into negative territory for the year. The Dow fell 1.9%.

US-traded shares of AI-related stocks including Nvidia, Micron Technology, Broadcom and Advanced Micro Devices bore the brunt of the selling, but other companies connected to the AI buildout tanked as well, including the optical products company Corning and the energy provider Bloom Energy. The AI lab Anthropic, maker of the Claude AI tool, coming off a successful IPO Thursday, tumbled 8.5%.

Ganguly questions absence of Kuldeep and Suthar after India's Wellington draw



PTI

New Delhi, Nov 23 : Former India captain Sourav Ganguly underlined the need for a frontline spinner to win Test matches on flat wickets, while questioning the absence of Manav Suthar and Kuldeep Yadav.

India struggled to dislodge the sixth-wicket pair of Glenn Phillips and Daryl Mitchell as New Zealand held on for a draw in the first Test at Wellington, batting through the fifth day.

"India has been brilliant this series .. white ball and now red ball .. the batting application looked super .. but they must understand to win Test matches away a genuine spinner is a must on pitches which get flat with time," Ganguly wrote on X.

"You have to play one in Test cricket. Washington can play as an all-rounder, but where is Kuldeep or Manav Suthar," he added.

Kuldeep was initially part of the Test squad, but the left-arm wrist spinner was replaced by Anshul Kamboj ahead of the two-match series.

Manav Suthar, who has taken 23 wickets across three Tests, was not included in the 15-member squad for the tour of New Zealand.

Washington Sundar was India's only specialist spinner in this match.

Former India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, meanwhile, said India should have tried to eke out a result by bowling the remaining 15 overs on the final day at the Basin Reserve.

"I would have loved to see the play continue for the remaining 15 overs. You need to take five wickets, and I would say you should at least try and take those wickets for another 10 overs.

"You never know what can happen suddenly in overcast conditions or maybe give a spell to Washington or something like that. I am not saying India would have won the match, but I just wanted to see that urgency to win," Ashwin said on his YouTube channel.

Former India all-rounder Irfan Pathan lauded Mitchell and Phillips for keeping the Indian bowlers at bay during their stubborn, unbeaten seventh-wicket partnership.

"More than 300 balls played by Daryl Mitchell and Glenn Phillips showed the importance of not having too big a stride.

"Contrary to the old saying of using your feet and having a bigger stride, doing that can sometimes put your head position behind your feet, forcing you to play the ball away from the major part of your body.

"Yes, the pitch helped them, no doubt, but they played exceptionally well, keeping the ball close to their body and trusting their technique," he added.

