WEDNESDAY
25 November 2026

Volume: 17
Issue No: 228
Pages: 08
Price: ₹2

Kashmir Thunder

SCAN TO VISIT

This newspaper is the sister concern of news agency Kashmir News Observer (KNO)

www.kashmirthunder.in | epaper.kashmirthunder.in | twitter.com / kashmirthunder | facebook.com/kashmirthundernews | Regd. No. JKENG/2010/39938

Come forward to make farming more productive, profitable: LG Manoj Sinha to youth

Calls for transforming agriculture through technology, entrepreneurship, scientific practices

Pays tributes to Baba Jitto; terms Jhiri Mela as living symbol of faith, cultural heritage

Yogesh

Jammu, Nov 24: Asserting that Jammu Kashmir's agricultural landscape offers immense opportunities for innovation and employment, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said that youth must play a leading role in making farming more productive, profitable and future-ready.

Paying homage to Baba Jitto and Bua Kaudi at the annual Jhiri Mela, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "Youth need to transform agriculture through technology, entrepreneurship and scientific practices. They should view farming and allied sectors as dynamic engines of growth."



He said, "Jammu Kashmir's agricultural landscape offers immense opportunities and youth must play a leading role in making farming more productive, profitable and future-ready."

He also commended the growing participation of women in the rural economy. "Women farmers, self-help groups and rural entrepreneurs are playing a pivotal role in driving economic self-reliance across Jammu Kashmir."

LG Sinha called for expanding opportunities in education, skill development and entrepreneurship for women in rural areas.

"Many self-help groups are now working alongside women farmers to give a new direction to the rural economy. The women in villages are setting new examples of economic self-reliance through local products, handicrafts, food processing, and small enterprises. In the agriculture and allied sectors, our daughters are setting new benchmarks of innovation and entrepreneurship," the Lieutenant Governor said.

'JHIRI MELA LIVING SYMBOL OF FAITH, CULTURAL HERITAGE'

LG Sinha said that the annual Jhiri Mela is a living symbol of faith, | More on P6



Jammu and Kashmir Teachers Forum (JKTF) staged a peaceful sit-in at Sher-e-Kashmir Park, Srinagar, demanding the resolution of long-pending service and welfare issues of teachers
Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

Police sanction Rs 5.5 lakh relief for families of martyred SPOs in Kishtwar

SSP directed to process ex-gratia, insurance, additional death cover

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Kishtwar, Nov 24: Jammu and Kashmir Police have sanctioned special relief for the families of two Special Police Officers (SPOs) who were killed in Kishtwar district on November 11.

The order no. 3190 of 26 which is in possession of the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), reads: "Sanction is accorded for the grant of Special Relief of Rs 5,50,000 each out of the Contributory Welfare Fund of SPOs to the dependents / legal heirs of SPO Rachpal Kumar (Belt No. 65 SPO) and SPO Bhabi Chand (Belt No. 920 SPO) of District Police Kishtwar.

Both were residents of Kiyar, Tehsil Dachhan. | More on P6

Children leaving private institutions, joining govt schools: Education Minister

Says infrastructure upgrade priority; kids facing problems due to cold weather

Naveed Ul Haq Ganaiee

Budgam, Nov 24: Stating that many children have left private schools and joined government schools, Education Minister Shamima Firdous on Tuesday said the government is committed to strengthen educational infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir.

Talking to media persons on the sidelines of an event at Narbal here in Central Kashmir, the Minister as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "We have many children here who have left private schools and joined government schools. We should all work towards realising the dream of a prosperous Jammu and Kashmir."

Emphasising the need to improve basic facilities in government schools, the Minister said her focus would be on providing better infrastructure, including proper classrooms and washrooms, particularly in underdeveloped schools.

"Unless we pay attention to infrastructure and provide children with a | More on P6

J&K Waqf Board's performance exceeds expectations: Rijiju

Says Hajj, Umrah quota for Waqf imams under consideration

Waris Fayaz

Tangmarg, Nov 24: Union Minister for Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju on Tuesday lauded the functioning of the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board, describing its work in religious, educational and social sectors as among the best in the country.

Speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of a project at Babareshi, Rijiju, per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said the work undertaken by the J&K Waqf Board had exceeded his expectations and set an example for other Waqf boards across the country.



He said the achievements of the J&K Waqf Board in various sectors were outstanding and other boards should take lessons from | More on P6

Mercury plummets further, Kashmir freezes

Srinagar records minus 1.6°C, Pahalgam minus 4.6°C

Weather to remain dry till Nov 30



Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Nov 24: Cold conditions intensified across Kashmir as night temperatures plummeted further, with Srinagar and the popular tourist destination of Pahalgam recording their lowest minimum temperatures of the ongoing winter season.

A MeT official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that Pahalgam in south Kashmir emerged as the coldest place in the Valley, recording a minimum temperature of minus 4.6 degrees Celsius, while Shopian followed closely at minus 4.1 degrees Celsius.

Srinagar recorded a minimum of minus 1.6 degrees Celsius, down from minus 0.4 degrees Celsius the previous night and 1.3 degrees below the seasonal average. Pahalgam's temperature was 2.5 degrees below normal, the Meteorological Department said.

The cold spell pushed several parts of the Valley below the freezing point. Pulwama recorded minus 3.4 degrees Celsius, Anantnag minus 2.6 degrees | More on P6

'No compromise on care, no tolerance for negligence': Health Minister

Sakina Itoo reviews winter preparedness, warns hospitals of strict action for patient care lapses

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Nov 24: Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo on Tuesday said that accountability in the healthcare system would be "non-negotiable" and warned that any negligence, dereliction of duty or avoidable delay in patient care would invite strict action.

In a post on X, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the Minister said she chaired a meeting with key stakeholders to review winter preparedness across healthcare institutions and ensure uninterrupted, people-centric healthcare services during the winter season.



She said all hospitals have been directed to maintain adequate stocks of medicines, oxygen and other essential supplies, ensure sufficient manpower, keep emergency services fully functional and put in place reliable referral arrangements, particularly for vulnerable patients.

The Minister said regular inspections, deployment of designated nodal officers and time-bound corrective measures have been ordered to strengthen service delivery across healthcare institutions.

Stressing that responsibility would be fixed at every level, Sakina Itoo said any lapse affecting patient care would be dealt with firmly.

"Patient safety comes first. No compromise on care, no tolerance for negligence," she said. (KNO)

J&K celebrates 557th Gurpurab with fervour

LG Sinha, CM Omar extend greetings; devotees throng Gurdwaras; special prayers, Gurbani kirtan, langars mark Parkash Purab

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Nov 24: The 557th Parkash Purab of Guru Nanak Dev Ji was celebrated across Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday with religious fervour and enthusiasm, as devotees in large numbers thronged Gurdwaras to offer prayers and participate in special religious programmes.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and other prominent leaders extended greetings to the Sikh community on the sacred occasion.

According to the details collected by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) celebrations brought together members of the Sikh community and people from different faiths, reflecting Jammu and Kashmir's tradition of communal harmony and peaceful coexistence.

The occasion was marked by special prayers, Gurbani Kirtan, religious discourses and community langars at Gurudwaras across Jammu and Kashmir.

Devotees thronged Gurdwaras, including Chhati Padshahi in Srinagar in Jammu, Poonch, Karnah and other parts of the Union Territory.

They remembered Guru Nanak Dev Ji's universal message of equality, compassion, truth, brotherhood and selfless service.

LG PAYS OBEISANCE IN JAMMU; CM OMAR, DR FAROOQ EXTEND GREETINGS

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha paid obeisance at Gurdwara Sahib, Chand Nagar, Jammu, on the auspicious occasion. He offered prayers for peace, prosperity, happiness and the well-being of all, interacted with devotees and extended greetings.



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also extended greetings to the Sikh community, saying Guru Nanak Dev Ji's timeless teachings of compassion, equality, unity and selfless service continue to inspire humanity and promote harmony among communities.

National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah also greeted the Sikh community, recalling Guru Nanak Dev Ji's message of humanity, nonviolence, brotherhood and communal harmony.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg futher extended warm greetings to the Sikh community on Guru Nanak Jayanti. In his message, he highlighted the timeless teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, particularly truth, equality, compassion, humility and selfless service to humanity, and prayed for peace, prosperity and harmony in the region.

Celebrations in Srinagar

In Srinagar, the main religious observances were centred at the historic Gurdwara Chhati Padshahi in Rainawari, where devotees gathered in large numbers to pay obeisance and participate in prayers and Gurbani Kirtan.

Celebrations were also held at Gurdwaras in Jawahar Nagar, Allochi Bagh, Barzulla and other parts of the Valley, with families visiting the shrines to seek blessings. Community langars and religious gatherings formed an important part of the celebrations.

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Akshay Labroo, DIG Central Kashmir Rajiv Omprakash Pandey and SSP Srinagar Dr G V Sandeep Chakravarthy also visited Gurdwara Chhati Padshahi, paid obeisance and extended greetings to the Sikh community.

POONCH, KARNAH

In Poonch, the 557th Parkash Purab was celebrated with devotion and enthusiasm at Gurdwara Singh Sabha, with Sikh devotees, officials and members of other communities participating in the religious observances. A Nagar Kirtan was | More on P6

Prakash Purab of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji

DC Srinagar, SSP visit Gurdwara Chhati Padshahi, extend greetings

KT News Desk



SRINAGAR NOVEMBER 24: On the occasion of Prakash Diwas, marking the 557th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo along with Senior Superintendent of Police, Dr GV Sandeep Chakraborty Tuesday paid visit to Gurdwara Chhati Padshahi in Rainawari area of the District to extend warm greetings on the occasion. On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner and SSP, as per an official statement, accompanied by members of Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee paid their obeisance at the Historic Gurudwara.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, highlighted contributions and universal teachings of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. He said that the teachings of the Sikh Guru promoted noble social institutions such as Langar, Sangat, and Kirtan teaching the spirit of equality and selfless service. SSP Srinagar also underscored the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and extended his warm greetings to all.

During the visit, the DC also took stock of the arrangements and facilities being extended to the devotees.

Meanwhile, District Administration Srinagar had made all essential arrangements through several line Departments in advance at Chattipadshahi Gurudwara to facilitate devotees on the Prakash Diwas.

IAS Probationer, Aakash Garg, SP North, Tehsildar Khanyar and other Officers accompanied the DC during the visit.

557th Prakash Purab of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji celebrated with religious fervour in Poonch



KT News Desk

POONCH, NOVEMBER 24: The 557th Prakash Purab of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was celebrated with great religious fervour, devotion and enthusiasm across all Gurudwaras of District Poonch.

The main congregation, as per an official statement, was organised by the District Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (DGPC) at Gurudwara Singh Sabha, where a large number of devotees gathered to pay obeisance and seek blessings.

As part of the celebrations, Shri Akhand Path Sahib commenced on November 22, which culminated Tuesday with the Bhog sacrament, followed by a special Shabad Kirtan Diwan.

CProminent preacher Giani Biant Singh Ji from Mohali- Punjab delivered a religious discourse highlighting the life, philosophy and timeless teachings of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. He urged the devotees to follow the principles of Sikhism, uphold Sikh Rehat Maryada and adopt the Guru Ji's teachings of truth, equality, humility, selfless service and humanity in their daily lives.

The proceedings of the programme were conducted by General Secretary, DGPC Harcharan Singh.

Deputy Commissioner Ashok Kumar Sharma; SSP Vaibhav Meena; Additional Deputy Commissioner Tahir Mustafa Malik; Assistant Commissioner Revenue Muhammad Sayeed; Tehsildar Haveli Azhar Majid, along with other officers from the civil and police Administration visited Gurudwara Singh Sabha, paid obeisance and participated in the religious celebrations. On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Poonch extended warm greetings to the Sikh community and all devotees on the auspicious occasion of the 557th Prakash Purab of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. He encouraged everyone to follow the timeless teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and promote the values of peace, harmony, equality and brotherhood in society.

SSP Vaibhav Meena also extended his heartfelt greetings to the devotees and wished everyone peace, prosperity and happiness on the sacred occasion. At the conclusion of the programme, President DGPC, Narinder Singh, expressed gratitude to all the devotees, religious personalities and guests for their participation and support.

DC Anantnag visits historic Guru Nanak Dev Ji Gurdwara at Mattan



KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, NOVEMBER 24: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, Tuesday visited the historic Guru Nanak Dev Ji Gurdwara at Mattan to extend warm greetings to the Sikh community on the auspicious occasion of Gurpurab, commemorating the birth anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

Addressing on the occasion, the DC, as per an official statement, said that the teachings of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, based on the principles of equality, compassion, selfless service and brotherhood, continue to inspire generations and provide a strong foundation for a peaceful and harmonious society.

He also took stock of arrangements made for smooth celebrations of the Guru Purab.

During the visit, members of the Sikh community apprised the Deputy Commissioner of various community-related demands and sought his intervention for their early redressal.

The Deputy Commissioner also took stock of the arrangements put in place for the smooth and peaceful celebration of Gurpurab at the Gurdwara.

He directed the concerned officers to remain available at the venue throughout the celebrations and ensure that all necessary arrangements are maintained for the convenience of devotees and participants.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by Additional District Development Commissioner, Tehsildar Mattan, Block Medical Officer (BMO) Mattan and other concerned officers.

DC Kathua joins Gurpurab congregation at Gurudwara Singh Sabha Dashmesh Nagar

KT News Desk

KATHUA, NOVEMBER 24: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma Tuesday visited Gurudwara Singh Sabha-Dashmesh Nagar and paid obeisance on the auspicious occasion of Gurpurab of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner said that the timeless teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and other revered Sikh Gurus inspire humanity to follow the path of truth, selfless service, equality and compassion. He emphasised that these teachings hold enduring relevance in promoting unity, brotherhood and communal harmony in society.

On the occasion, the Gurudwara Management Committee honoured the Deputy Commissioner with a Siropa. The committee members also felicitated newly appointed District Information Officer Gurpreet Singh, with a Siropa.

Member District Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (DGPC) Sourav Singh and President Daljeet Singh, Secretary Manmohan Singh, Member Harmohinder Singh, Damanjeet Singh along with other committee members were present on the occasion.



On the occasion, the Gurudwara Management Committee honoured the Deputy Commissioner with a Siropa. The committee members also felicitated newly appointed District Information Officer Gurpreet Singh, with a Siropa.

Agriculture department conducts enforcement drive in RS Pura Sub-Division



KT News Desk

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 24: The Enforcement Wing of the Agriculture Department Tuesday conducted an extensive enforcement drive across Tehsil R.S. Pura, Bishnah, Chak Hasel and Arnia to check compliance with the provisions of the Insecticides Act, 1968, the Seeds Act, 1966 and the Fertiliser Control Order (FCO), 1985 by the agricultural input sale outlets.

A team led by Assistant Director Law Enforcement Kuldeep Singh along with Enforcement Inspector Nazir Altaf, thoroughly scrutinised the stock registers and other relevant records of the agricultural input dealers operating in these areas.

Random telephone calls, as per an official statement, were also made to farmers to verify whether subsidised fertilisers were being supplied to them at government-prescribed rates. While no instances of overcharging were detected among the inspected dealers, a complaint of alleged overcharging was received from Arnia. Taking cognisance of the complaint, the Enforcement Wing issued a show-cause notice to the firm, seeking its explanation. Further action shall be taken as per the applicable legal provisions.

The field assessment, as per an official statement, also revealed that there was no shortage of government-subsidised fertilisers, particularly DAP, in the inspected areas and the overall availability of fertilisers was found to be satisfactory.

The dealers were further directed to ensure distribution of subsidised fertilisers through the prescribed QR-code-based verification system. However, it was clarified that genuine farmers should not be deprived of fertilisers due to technical glitches during QR-code generation or scanning. In such cases, dealers were instructed to obtain the requisite farmer details and provide fertilisers after proper verification, ensuring that no genuine farmer is turned away without receiving the required fertiliser.

The Enforcement Wing also issued a stern warning to dealers against overcharging or forcibly tagging additional products with government-subsidised fertilisers. It was categorically conveyed that any such violation would invite stringent legal action under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and other applicable statutory provisions.

FDA seizes 850 Kg Paneer worth Rs 1.70 Lakh during late night inspection at Jammu Bus Stand



KT News Desk

JAMMU, NOVEMBER 24: The FDA Team, Jammu, under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner Food Safety, conducted a late-night enforcement inspection at Jammu Bus Stand and seized 850 kg of paneer, valued at around Rs 1.70 lakh, which was purportedly being transported from Punjab, as revealed by the documents recovered by the enforcement team.

During the inspection, the consignment, as per an official statement, was found to be transported without adequate temperature-control arrangements and in violation of the prescribed labelling requirements applicable to perishable food commodities under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the regulations made there under. Taking cognizance of the observed violations, the Food Safety Team seized the consignment.

Necessary investigation into the matter has been initiated to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the transportation of the consignment and to identify the persons responsible for the violations.

Further legal action shall be taken in accordance with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the regulations made there under.

The FDA J&K has reiterated that all perishable food commodities, including paneer, mutton and fish, shall be transported, stored and handled under prescribed temperature-controlled conditions and in compliance with the

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.in

CS assures GMC staff recruitment rules in a month

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Nov 24: Chief Secretary Dr Sajjan Singh Yadav on Tuesday assured protesting non-gazetted employees of Government Medical College (GMC) Rajouri that their long-pending service recruitment rules would be notified within a month, following an intervention after employees stopped his cavalcade during his maiden visit to the district.

The employees, who have been on an indefinite protest for the ninth consecutive day, confronted the Chief Secretary and sought his personal intervention in resolving an issue that has remained pending for nearly seven years since the establishment of five new Government Medical Colleges across Jammu and Kashmir.

The employees said that despite repeated representations, meetings and assurances from successive authorities, the recruitment rules have not been formally notified, leaving hundreds of non-gazetted employees working in these institutions without a clearly defined service framework. They apprised the Chief Secretary of the difficulties being faced due to the prolonged delay, particularly the uncertainty surrounding promotions, career advancement, service conditions and future prospects.



The Chief Secretary informed the employees that the Health and Medical Education Department had already forwarded the draft recruitment rules to the Finance Department for examination.

The proposal would subsequently require clearance from the Finance Department and the Administrative Reforms, Inspections and Trainings Department before being submitted to the Lieutenant Governor for final approval.

Dr Yadav assured the employees that he would personally intervene and convene a meeting with all concerned departments within the next 24 hours to expedite the process, and that the required formalities would be completed and the recruitment rules notified within one month.

He appealed to the protesting employees to suspend their agitation and resume duties.

However, the assurance has not immediately brought an end to the agitation, with employees expressing reservations over repeated commitments made by the authorities over the past several years. "We have been struggling for the notification of our service recruitment rules for nearly seven years. On several occasions, we were assured that the matter was at the final stage and that the rules would be notified shortly. However, nothing has changed on the ground. We appreciate the Chief Secretary's intervention, but this time we want to see an official notification rather than another assurance," the employees said.

They said the latest commitment would be discussed among the protesting workforce and a decision regarding the future course of action would be taken soon. For now, the agitation continues.

The employees are demanding immediate finalisation and notification of service recruitment rules for all five newly established Government Medical Colleges — GMC Rajouri, GMC Doda, GMC Kathua, GMC Handwara and GMC Baramulla — including a clearly defined service structure, promotion mechanism, designations, eligibility criteria, seniority arrangements and promotional hierarchies for various categories of staff.

They have urged the government to stop prolonging the issue through repeated assurances and complete the approval process within a definite timeframe.

They maintained that while they have continued to perform their responsibilities in hospitals and medical colleges, their professional growth and future prospects have remained uncertain due to the absence of notified rules, adding that their agitation is not against the functioning of the institutions but aimed at securing long-pending service rights and a transparent administrative structure—(KNO)

Govt approves land for modern mandis in 3 Kashmir districts

KT News Desk

Jammu, Nov 24: In a major step towards strengthening Jammu and Kashmir's horticulture and agriculture sectors, the Government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has approved the transfer of 320 Kanals and 4 marlas of land to the Agriculture Production Department for establishing modern Fruit and Vegetable Markets in three districts of the Kashmir Valley.

Approved by the Council of Ministers in the public interest, the land will be transferred free of cost at identified locations in Baramulla, Pulwama and Kulgam districts. The proposed sites include 50 kanals at village Palhallan in Tehsil Pattan of Baramulla district, 20 kanals and 4 marlas at village Nowdal in Tehsil Tral of Pulwama district, and 250 kanals at village Kulgam in Tehsil and district Kulgam.

The proposed markets will provide farmers, including small and marginal growers and women farmers, improved access to organised marketing facilities and better opportunities to secure remunerative prices for their produce. Equipped with modern infrastructure and facilities, these markets will promote transparent price discovery, standardised electronic weighing, digital payments and efficient handling of agricultural produce.

The facilities will also incorporate improved arrangements for grading, sorting, storage and transportation, helping reduce post-harvest losses, minimise marketing costs and ensure the availability of fresh produce to consumers.

The initiative is aimed at strengthening agricultural supply chains, improving market linkages and promoting value addition within the region. It is also expected to generate employment opportunities in trading, transportation, logistics and other allied activities, while contributing to higher farm incomes and sustainable rural development. The initiative underscores the Government's focus under Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on strengthening the agricultural and horticultural economy, improving market infrastructure and ensuring that

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.

Rajouri to get major sports infrastructure boost: CS

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Rajouri, Nov 24: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary Dr Sajjan Singh Yadav on Tuesday called for a major push to sports infrastructure in Rajouri, directing the Deputy Commissioner to prepare a comprehensive sports master plan and assuring adequate funding, modern facilities and professional coaching to nurture local talent.

"I want the next Dhoni to emerge from here, and the next Sachin Tendulkar should come from Rajouri. Whatever facilities our children need and whatever funds are required, we will provide them," Yadav told reporters during his maiden visit to the district after assuming office.

Yadav said the district has strong potential in athletics, badminton, volleyball, boxing and cricket. He stressed the need to involve more children in sports to promote discipline, teamwork and healthy lifestyles.

He also inspected ongoing works at the Sports Stadium, Kheora, and directed officials to expedite execution while maintaining quality standards.

Meanwhile, during his visit to Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU), Yadav inspected the ongoing construction of the auditorium, girls' hostel for nursing students and the new main gate.

Officials informed him that the hostel project, costing Rs 354.23 lakh, has completed masonry work on the ground and first floors, while plastering is underway. The Rs 59.11 lakh main gate project has completed its superstructure, with



remaining works in progress. Yadav also reviewed progress on the 180-bed Teaching District Hospital, where additional civil, electrical and mechanical works are being carried out at an approved cost of Rs 5 crore. Officials said civil works have been completed, electrical works are nearing completion, lifts have been installed and firefighting works are underway. The Chief Secretary directed authorities to complete the remaining work and make the facility operational at the earliest.

He later visited the 6.3 MVA Dedicated Receiving Station being built at Government Medical College (GMC), Rajouri, at a cost of Rs 2.89 crore. The project is scheduled for completion by March 2027.

Taking stock of damage caused by recent flash floods, the Chief Secretary visited the Bella Bus Stand, which was washed away, and assessed restoration requirements.

He emphasised early rehabilitation of the facility and, during a visit to Androlla Bridge, directed the executing agency to complete pending work to restore connectivity and ease public movement.

At the historic Chingus Sarai, a Mughal-era transit camp on the route to Kashmir, Yadav reviewed a proposed restoration and preservation project estimated at Rs 175.75 lakh.

The Chief Secretary also visited the Dr Raj Kumar Thapa Memorial, Museum and Library and paid floral tributes to the officer who lost his life during Operation Sindoor while performing official duties—(KNO)

Preserving Kashmir's communal harmony a shared responsibility: SSP Sgr



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Nov 24: Calling Kashmir's tradition of communal harmony a legacy that must be preserved collectively, SC, on Tuesday urged people to uphold mutual respect and peaceful coexistence, while assuring that police would continue to maintain peace and security across the city.

Speaking to reporters during his visit to Durgeshwari Temple in Srinagar, the SSP Chakravarthy said Kashmir had always stood as an example of communal harmony and that preserving this tradition was a shared responsibility.

"Kashmir has always been an example of communal harmony. It is our responsibility to keep this beautiful tradition alive," he said.

Reiterating the police commitment towards public safety, the SSP said, "Srinagar Police is always there to serve and protect people. It is our responsibility to maintain peace and security in the city."

Extending his message on Gurpurab, Dr Chakravarthy highlighted the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, particularly the principles of truth, selfless service and communal harmony. "Waheguru Ji's message is always about service, selfless service, truth and communal harmony. On this auspicious day, we must carry forward that message," he said.

He stressed that these values must be reflected in everyday life and that preserving Kashmir's tradition of coexistence was a responsibility shared by all.

Meanwhile, responding to a question about the sale and distribution of rotten meat, the SSP assured that a major initiative would be undertaken to address the issue. "I have already said that there will be a major initiative on rotten meat," Dr Chakravarthy said—(KNO)

Govt approves 32 Kanals of land for grid station at Hajin



KT News Desk

Jammu, Nov 24: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has approved the transfer of 32 kanals and 05 marlas of land in Naidkhai and Poshwari villages of Tehsil Hajin, Bandipora district, to the Power Development Department for construction of a grid station at Hajin.

The land, comprising 10 kanals and 05 marlas in Naidkhai and 22 kanals in Poshwari, will be transferred free of cost on account of the public purpose involved.

The proposed grid station is expected to significantly strengthen the power transmission and distribution network in Hajin and adjoining areas, improve voltage stability, reduce power outages and fluctuations, and enhance the reliability and quality of electricity supply.

The project will also help meet the growing electricity demand in the area and improve the overall power infrastructure, benefiting local residents.

The Jammu and Kashmir Power Transmission Corporation Limited (JKPTCL), has already conveyed the feasibility of the site for the project. Administrative approval for construction of the grid station along with a 132 KV D/C transmission line had earlier been accorded by the Government.

PG, Senior Resident doctors' agitation intensifies

Demand pay parity with SKIMS, AIIMS



Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Nov 24: The ongoing agitation by Postgraduate (PG) and Senior Resident doctors demanding enhancement of stipends and pay parity with premier medical institutions has intensified across Jammu and Kashmir, with resident doctors from several Government Medical Colleges and district hospitals joining the protest.

The agitation entered its fifth consecutive day at Government Medical College Srinagar and sixth day at GMC Jammu on Tuesday, as protesting doctors continued to press for revision of their existing pay structure, removal of disparities and a uniform policy across medical institutions in the Union Territory. The Association of Indian Medical Students and Resident Doctors, along with Resident Doctors' Associations, reiterated that the demands are aimed at securing financial parity for PG and Senior Resident doctors with their counterparts at SKIMS Srinagar, AIIMS Jammu and other premier central medical institutions.

At GMC Jammu, AIMSA Chief Advisors Dr Sanah and Dr Abhishek Mittal said the immediate enhancement of stipends remains the central demand of the agitation. RDA Vice President Dr Abhimanyu Manhas also extended support. As part of the peaceful agitation, resident doctors in Jammu announced a silent protest on Tuesday, wearing white aprons, black bands and face masks to symbolise solidarity and express disappointment over the delay in addressing their demands.

Resident doctors at Sub-District Hospital Sopore also staged a protest, seeking equal pay and recognition.

AIMSA placed a series of demands before the government, including abolition of the existing 6th Pay Commission-based structure and implementation of 7th CPC Level 10 for PG residents, along with Dearness Allowance and House Rent Allowance; enhancement of the basic pay of Senior Residents to 67,700, bringing it at par with Senior Residents at SKIMS Srinagar and other central medical institutions; grant of 20 per cent Non-Practising Allowance to PG residents and Senior Residents; regular revision of Dearness Allowance; and a uniform pay structure across all Government Medical Colleges and SKIMS in Jammu and Kashmir.

AIMSA President J&K Dr Mohammad Momin Khan said the association was hopeful of a positive response from the government and urged the authorities to resolve the issue without further delay. He welcomed Health Minister Sakina Itoo's interaction with the protesting doctors and expressed hope that the government would take concrete steps, as it had previously done in the case of MBBS and BDS interns.

The agitation has also received support from several district-level healthcare institutions. Dr Yaser Fayaz from District Hospital Kulgam said resident doctors there had joined the indefinite strike commencing November 23 over the disparity in stipends, adding that elective services would remain suspended while emergency services would continue as usual. At JLNM Hospital, Dr Ravi and Dr Zoha Suzain highlighted the disparity faced by DNB residents, pointing out that they were currently receiving a stipend of only 48,000. Dr Yamin from District Hospital Pulwama also joined the agitation, while PG residents from GMC Anantnag, GMC Baramulla and GMC Doda extended their participation.

The protesting doctors maintained that their movement was peaceful and aimed solely at securing fair remuneration, financial parity and a uniform policy, urging the government to initiate meaningful dialogue and take a time-bound decision, warning that continued delays would deepen resentment among resident doctors—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

J&K Rolls Out Red Carpet, Now It Must Build Stage

For decades, Jammu and Kashmir was a backdrop in Indian cinema — a beautiful place to film a song, and then leave. The industry used our mountains, our lakes and our meadows, but it rarely came back to build anything here. That is now beginning to change, and the presence of the Department of Information and Public Relations at the 57th International Film Festival of India is a sign that the government intends to change it faster. At a panel discussion titled "Jammu and Kashmir: An Emerging Destination for Cinema," officials, actors and filmmakers spoke about the region's potential, the new film policy and the incentives on offer. This is welcome. A clear policy matters. A filmmaker who knows what permissions he needs, how long they will take and what support he will get is far more likely to come here than one who is left to fight his way through offices. But the real prize is not the shooting. It is the ecosystem. If a film comes to Kashmir and hires only a cook and a driver from outside, we have gained little. The Director's emphasis on employment for local artists, technicians and service providers is the right one. Our young people should be working on sets, learning lighting, sound, editing and production, not just watching from a distance. Film tourism can also bring benefits beyond the industry itself — hotels, transport, homestays, food. But it must be managed carefully, so that our fragile locations are not damaged by the very productions that come to celebrate them. The opportunity is real. The policy is in place. What is needed now is follow-through: fast permissions, honest coordination and a genuine partnership with local talent. If that happens, the cameras will not just pass through Kashmir. They will stay.

Blooming Beyond Borders

The Rise Of India's Floriculture Economy

The sector's expanding footprint, from traditional flowers to exotic varieties and value-added applications, also opens avenues for regional specialization and new entrepreneurial opportunities. As India looks towards a more diversified and technology-enabled agricultural economy, the future of floriculture holds the promise of growing both value and livelihoods- "one bloom at a time".

Press Information Bureau

India is a land of remarkable natural diversity, stretching from snow-bound mountains and fertile plains to arid deserts and long coastlines. These varied agro-climatic conditions support the cultivation of an extraordinary variety of flowers that bloom across regions and seasons. Coupled with the deep cultural, spiritual, and emotional significance of flowers in India, these natural advantages have fostered a thriving floriculture sector.

Recognising its economic and aesthetic potential, the government has identified floriculture as a "sunrise industry". What was once a relatively niche segment within Indian agriculture has evolved into a dynamic component of the horticulture sector. The sector contributes to farmer incomes, agricultural exports, and rural enterprise development while increasingly adopting modern cultivation practices and technologies. Today, floriculture encompasses a diverse range of products, production systems, and value-added applications. Rising consumer demand, widening market opportunities, policy support, and technological advancements are driving its continued growth.

Inside India's Floral Economy

Floriculture is the art and science of growing flowers to achieve high standards of flower quality and aesthetic appeal. As an integral branch of horticulture, it includes the cultivation of flowers and ornamental crops from planting to harvesting. The sector also involves the production of planting material through seeds, cuttings, budding, and grafting. It further includes the marketing of flowers and flower-based products.

Floriculture Product Categories

Loose flowers are harvested and marketed without long stems. These are generally sold by weight and are commonly used for garlands and gajras. Examples include marigolds and jasmine.

Retail Shop selling loose flowers as Garlands

Cut Flowers are harvested and marketed with stems. These are commonly used in bouquets and vase arrangements. Examples include roses, gerberas, carnations, orchids, and lilies.

Cut flowers sold in bunches as bouquets

In addition to flowers, floriculture includes cut foliage, potted and bedding plants, and ornamental planting materials like seeds for propagation and landscaping.

Flowers that Shape the Market

India cultivates a variety of flowers tailored to domestic and international demand. Key varieties include:

Roses: Widely grown in Karnataka and Maharashtra; high in export value.

Marigolds: Popular in religious ceremonies; extensively grown in Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh.

Carnations, Chrysanthemums, Gerberas: Grown in controlled environments for export.

Lilies and Orchids: High-end flowers grown in select regions like Sikkim and Mizoram.

The demand for exotic flowers has increased, with orchids and anthuriums becoming commercially viable in the north-eastern region. These flowers are also gaining traction in urban landscaping, event decor, and the wellness industry.

From Open Fields to Protected Farms

Cultivation of flowers in India takes place through both open-field and protected systems like greenhouses, depending on crop requirements. Open-field cultivation is commonly used for crops such as Chrysanthemum, Rose, Gaillardia, Lily, Marigold, Aster, and Tuberose.

Rising demand for quality flowers and year-round availability have encouraged greater adoption of protected cultivation such as greenhouses. Greenhouses are particularly important for export-oriented crops such as Gerberas and Carnations. This ensures better control over temperature, humidity, and other growing conditions. This helps ensure uniform quality, improved productivity, and compliance with international market standards.

Beyond Bouquets: The Many Uses of Floriculture

Flowers play an important role in everyday life in India and are closely linked with cultural, social, and religious practices. Beyond these traditional uses, floriculture has evolved into a diversified sector with expanding applications in perfumery, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals.

Key domestic uses:

Religious and social practices- Flowers such as Jasmine, Marigold, and Crossandra are commonly used in worship, social ceremonies, and personal decoration.

Lifestyle and decorative uses- Increasing urbanisation and rising disposable incomes have driven demand for bouquet gifting, venue decoration and beautification of residential and commercial spaces.

Perfumery and cosmetics- Flowers, including Jasmine, Lavender, and Rose petals, are used as raw material in fragrance and cosmetic products.

Pharmaceutical applications- Floricultural crops such as Calendula, Hibiscus, and Chamomile are utilised in pharmaceutical preparations.

Dye and colour extraction- Marigold and Hibiscus are used for natural dyeing and colour extraction.

Mapping India's Flower Belt

Supported by favourable climatic conditions and expanding market demand, floriculture cultivation has expanded across several regions of the country. According to the Third Advance Estimates for 2025-26, the total area under floriculture cultivation stood at 410 thousand hectares. During the same period, production included 3,653 thousand metric tonnes of loose flowers and 1,229 thousand metric tonnes of cut flowers. Total floriculture output amounted to 4,882 thousand metric tonnes, reflecting the scale and commercial significance of floriculture cultivation in India.

The States Driving Floral Production

Floriculture production in India is concentrated in a few leading states. According to the Third Advance Estimates for 2025-26, Andhra Pradesh accounted for about 31 percent of the country's total flower production. It is followed by Tamil Nadu (14 percent), Madhya Pradesh (11 percent), Karnataka (10 percent), and West Bengal (8 percent). Other major producers included Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Telangana.

The Northeastern states together accounted for about 4 percent of India's total flower production, with Assam contributing substantially through both loose and cut flowers. This was followed by Nagaland, particularly in cut flowers. This distribution reflects the diverse geographical spread of floriculture across the country.

A strong production base and diversified cultivation systems have also supported India's growing presence in the international flower trade.

India's Growing Footprint in Global Flower Markets

Floriculture forms part of value-added agricultural exports and provides additional income opportunities beyond traditional crop cultivation. India's floriculture exports have followed a clear upward trend over the past few years, signalling increasing international demand for Indian floral products. Exports of floriculture, including fruits and vegetable seeds, rose from USD 216.74 million in FY 2021-22 to USD 258.26 million in FY 2025-26. This growth reflects rising international demand for Indian floral products and strengthening export competitiveness.

India's Top Global Destinations

In FY 2025-26, India's floriculture and seeds recorded strong demand across key international markets. The United States emerged as the top destination, with exports worth USD 45.94 million. It was followed by the Netherlands, a significant base of the international flower trade, with USD 42.18 million. Bangladesh accounted for floriculture imports worth USD 16.51 million. The United Arab Emirates and Italy imported products valued at USD 16.35 million and USD 9.69 million, respectively. This highlights India's expanding footprint in traditional and emerging markets for floriculture exports.

A Diverse Floral Export Portfolio

This export performance is supported by a diverse range of floricultural crops that are commercially relevant in the global cut flower trade. Prominent export crops from India include Rose, Carnation, Chrysanthemum, Gerbera, Gladiolus, Gypsophila, Liatris, Nerine, Orchids, Achillea, Anthurium, Tulip, and Lilies, enabling the country to cater to varied market preferences and quality requirements worldwide.

Further, floriculture exports from India comprise multiple product categories, each catering to specific international markets:

Fresh cut flowers are exported mainly to Europe, Japan, Australia, the Middle East, and the United States of America

Loose flowers are supplied largely to markets serving expatriate Indian communities in the Gulf region

Cut foliage is exported primarily to European countries

Dry flowers are exported to a wide range of destinations, including the United States of America, Europe, Japan, Australia, the Far East, and Russia

Potted plants are exported to a limited number of countries.

Among these export segments, dry flowers constitute a major share of India's total floriculture exports, owing to their longer shelf life and wider market reach.

Export Breakthrough from the North East

In February 2025, the first-ever export consignment of Anthurium flowers from Mizoram to Singapore was flagged off. This marked a significant milestone for floriculture exports from India's North Eastern Region. The consignment contained 1,024 Anthurium cut flowers (weighing 70 kg) packed in 50 corrugated boxes. The initiative was led by APEDA in collaboration with the Department of Horticulture, Government of Mizoram. It highlights new overseas market linkages and emerging trade opportunities for floriculture growers in the region.

Enabling Growth Through Policy Support

The government has initiated a range of developmental programmes to promote floriculture across the country. These efforts focus on production, infrastructure, research, capacity building, and export facilitation.

Key areas of government support include:

Policy and Institutional Support- Developmental initiatives are implemented primarily through the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), including the National Horticulture Mission (NHM), the Horticulture Mission for North East and Himalayan States, and the National Horticulture Board.

Financial assistance and credit support - The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) provides financial assistance to farmers to adopt protected cultivation and precision farming practices, thereby improving productivity and quality.

Seed production and planting material - To meet growing demand for flower seeds, several seed companies have established production units in major flower-growing states. Thus, supporting the availability of quality planting material.

Incentives and concessions - Concessions are provided on seeds, planting materials, equipment, and air freight to support floriculture exports and improve competitiveness in international markets.

Export Promotion - Export-related support is provided through the Ministry of Commerce, mainly via the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

Training and capacity building- The Government has introduced various training programmes for farmers and entrepreneurs. These programmes are strengthening farmers' technical skills, promoting the adoption of modern practices, and enterprise development in floriculture.

Research and development - Floriculture research is carried out at multiple institutions under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). The research is also conducted in the horticulture departments of State Agricultural Universities, and under the All India Coordinated Floriculture Improvement Project.

The sector continues to benefit from policy support, financial assistance, and institutional backing. Improved frameworks and targeted interventions will further enhance India's competitiveness in the floriculture trade.

Cultivating Innovation: From Scientific Research to High-Value Floriculture

As floriculture becomes increasingly market-oriented, advances in research and technology are improving productivity, quality, and product diversification.

CSIR Floriculture Mission

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has developed two flagship programmes to strengthen India's flower and aroma sectors through science-driven interventions.

The CSIR Floriculture Mission, launched in 2021, seeks to enhance farmers' incomes, support entrepreneurship, and promote technology-led development in the floriculture industry.

As of December 2025, under this mission, more than 2,208 hectares have been brought under floricultural cultivation.

This has benefitted16,220 individuals across 399 clusters in 26 states and union territories of the country.

The programme has also developed and transferred multiple technologies to entrepreneurs and conducted numerous training and capacity-building initiatives.

The CSIR Aroma Mission, launched in 2017, focuses on improving rural livelihoods through the cultivation and processing of aromatic crops. Thesecrops provide quality raw materials for the aroma and essential oil industry.

As of December 2025, aromatic crop cultivation had expanded to more than 51,000 hectares.

The mission had also established over 4,500 aroma clusters across 28 States, including 20 clusters in tribal areas.

The mission prioritised skill development, with 2,096 training and awareness programmes training 1.22 lakh persons. These included10,000 women and supported more than 110 entrepreneurs in developing value-added products.

In total, these interventions have generated around 1 crore rural employment opportunities and enabled the production of over 6,000 tonnes of essential oils. The output valued at aboutRs.600 crore supplied key inputs to the aroma and allied industries.

These research initiatives highlight the importance of scientific support in strengthening India's floriculture sector.

From Laboratory to Field: The Story of India's Exotic Flowers

Tulips in the Himalayas: A Garden of Possibilities

In the Himalayan region (Palampur), scientific research under the CSIR - Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (IHBT)-Floriculture Mission, has helped convert natural climatic advantage into structured floriculture opportunity. Leveraging cool temperatures and suitable agro-ecological conditions, tulip cultivation has been supported through research-driven interventions. The work has focussed on planting material selection, flowering cycles and crop management practices. These efforts have enabled the successful growth of tulips meeting international quality parameters. They have also strengthened the region's position in premium ornamental flower segments. As of May 2026, the Tulip Garden at Palampur attracted more than 1.5 lakh visitors, highlighting its potential to support floriculture-based tourism.

The Himalayan tulip initiative demonstrates how targeted technological interventions can support crop diversification. It also highlights the potential for strengthening regional specialisation in high-value floriculture.

Tulip Garden at CSIR-IHBT Palampur, Himachal Pradesh

Eustoma in Odisha: A New Bloom of Hope

In contrast to the cool Himalayan landscape, another CSIR laboratory has created floral history. The successful cultivation of Eustoma in parts of Odisha (Sambalpur) represents a breakthrough in adapting exotic flowers to non-traditional environments. Once considered unsuitable for warmer regions, the crop was grown with scientific guidance on temperature management, disease control and cultivation practices. The outcome demonstrated that innovation can overcome climatic constraints, opening new income avenues for farmers. The Odisha experience highlight show science-led cultivation can connect farmers with high-value markets.

First Bloom of Eustoma in Odisha

For visitors walking through the tulip fields of Palampur or admiring the pastel blooms of Eustoma in Sambalpur, the experience extends beyond visual appeal. It represents the quiet yet impactful transformation of laboratory knowledge into practical field-level success. Here, innovation takes root and strengthens India's evolving floriculture landscape.

A Sector Poised for Sustainable Growth

India's floriculture sector has moved beyond a niche segment of horticulture to become a diversified and commercially significant agricultural activity. Its growth is anchored in the country's rich agro-climatic diversity, expanding domestic demand, stronger market linkages, and growing export opportunities. The sector's future lies in moving from cultivation to value creation. Greater adoption of protected cultivation, precision technologies, improved planting material, post-harvest management, and quality standards can strengthen productivity and market competitiveness. With continued policy support, stronger institutions, and better market linkages, floriculture can boost farm incomes, rural enterprises, and agricultural exports.

The sector's expanding footprint, from traditional flowers to exotic varieties and value-added applications, also opens avenues for regional specialization and new entrepreneurial opportunities. As India looks towards a more diversified and technology-enabled agricultural economy, the future of floriculture holds the promise of growing both value and livelihoods- "one bloom at a time".

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

Owner & Editor, Printer, Publisher: **Nasir Azam Khan**, Published From **Srinagar,** Printed at **K.T Press Pvt. Ltd 120-Electronic Complex, Industries Estate, Rangreth**,
RNI NO:-**JKENG-2010/39938**, Email:- **Kashmirthunder123@gmail.com**, Website: **Kashmirthunder.com**, Mobile: **9906797575, 9419006285**
Owner & Editor-In-Chief of Kashmir News Observer (KNO), a leading news agency in Jammu & Kashmir. Website: www.kashmirnewsobserver.com, Mail: info@kashmirnewsobserver.com

Naxal-Free India

Integrated Strategies Defeated Left-Wing Extremism

Press Information Bureau

India has achieved the historic milestone of becoming effectively free from Left-Wing Extremism (LWE), with no district in the country remaining LWE-affected. This transformation was driven by an integrated strategy combining security operations, infrastructure expansion, rehabilitation of surrendered cadres, tribal welfare, and improved governance. The coordinated approach sharply reduced violence, restored state presence in remote regions, and accelerated inclusive development, creating a lasting foundation for peace and prosperity.

New Era of Peace and Security

For nearly six decades, India grappled with Left-Wing Extremism (LWE). It was not a distant or abstract challenge, but a lived reality for millions of tribal families, villages cut off from roads, schools, and the broader promise of inclusive development. Violence was persistent, and uncertainty defined everyday life.

On 31 March 2026, this changed, marking a historic milestone in India's internal security journey as the country became effectively free from Naxalism. When the current government assumed office in May 2014, the Red Corridor remained one of the most serious internal security challenges. Earlier approaches were largely fragmented and incident-driven, managing symptoms rather than addressing the structural roots of the problem. A more comprehensive and integrated strategy was subsequently pursued to resolve it.

Over the last twelve years, the transformation was guided by three mutually reinforcing strands of action. Restoring trust and faith in the State involved strengthened security operations, improved inter-agency coordination, structured surrender and rehabilitation frameworks, and sustained community outreach. Expanding infrastructure meant improving physical and digital connectivity, extending governance presence into remote areas, and creating durable economic opportunities. Delivering welfare focused on dignity, inclusive service delivery, cultural inclusion, and the mainstreaming of affected communities into the national development process.

Each of these strands reinforced the other. Security created space for development. Development deepened trust. Trust accelerated welfare delivery. It was not a sequence; it was an inseparable chain of progress.

Restoring Faith in the State

This effort focused on rebuilding trust and faith through sustained state presence in vulnerable and remote regions. It strengthened coordination between security agencies and governance institutions to ensure effective responsiveness. The approach bridged long-standing gaps between communities and the state system.

Peak of Violence Before 2014

LWE grew from the Naxalbari uprising of West Bengal in 1967, inspired by Maoist ideology and the doctrine of armed revolution. Its guiding principle was simple and violent: power flows from the barrel of the gun. Nearly 92 per cent of Naxalites' weapons were looted directly from police armouries. Over time, several extremist organisations merged under CPI (Maoist) in 2004, making it India's biggest internal security challenge.

The decade from 2004 to 2014 was among the most violent in LWE history. Violence peaked in 2010 with 1,936 incidents and 720 civilian deaths in a single year. The full decade recorded 17,542 violent incidents, 1,913 security force deaths, and 5,019 civilian deaths.

There was no consistent national policy. State governments operated in silos. Even then government publicly acknowledged in 2009 that Naxalism was the biggest internal security challenge facing India, one that exceeded even Kashmir and the Northeast in geographic spread.

Policy Shift: From Scattered Response to Unified Strategy

The first decisive action came in 2015 with the approval of the National Policy and Action Plan to address LWE. This replaced the earlier, ad hoc approach with a structured, whole-of-government framework. Security measures focused on strengthening the State security apparatus, filling security gaps in remote areas and improving coordination between State Police and CAPFs. It deployed Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), provided specialised training, and allocated funds through the Security Related Expenditure, Special Infrastructure Scheme, and Special Central Assistance (SCA) schemes, while addressing socio-economic root causes alongside security. Till now, approximately 4318.52 crore have been released since the inception of SCA Scheme in 2017.

Under the Special Infrastructure Scheme (SIS), projects worth 1,761 crore have been sanctioned for erstwhile LWE-affected States to strengthen Special Forces, Special Intelligence Branches, District Police and the construction of Fortified Police Stations.

Since 2014-15, 3,877.98 crore has been released under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme to support operational needs, capacity building and training of security forces, rehabilitation of surrendered Left Wing Extremism cadres, and ex gratia assistance to families of martyred security personnel and civilians.



For the first time, India implemented a structured and comprehensive approach based on four-pronged strategy against LWE-Strengthening the Security Apparatus, Rapid Development, Ensuring Rights & Entitlements and Managing Perception. The government's response was guided through a more centrally coordinated framework under the Ministry of Home Affairs, bringing greater coherence to policy implementation.

The goal of making India free from the fear and violence of Naxalism was achieved through focused planning and coordinated action. On 24th August 2024, the Government of India set a target to make the country Naxal-free by 31 March 2026. The target was achieved on schedule through intensified security operations, stronger coordination, infrastructure expansion, and accelerated development outreach.

Building the Security Grid

The Government systematically filled the security vacuum in Naxal-affected areas through infrastructure expansion, specialised forces, and improved operational coordination. This integrated approach enhanced state presence, mobility, intelligence sharing, and counter-insurgency capabilities across the Red Corridor.

668 new security camps were constructed, compared to just 169 before 2014. Additionally, 615 Fortified Police Stations (FPS) have been established to tighten the security grid, improve area domination, and sustain continuous operations in remote forest zones. 68 night-landing helipads were built for rapid deployment in remote areas, enabling troop movement, casualty evacuation, and surveillance. Security forces received 400 bullet-proof and blast-proof vehicles, and 5 hospitals were constructed for their welfare and medical support.

Integration of Elite Forces: CoBRA, DRG, STF and Greyhounds

A layered, specialised security architecture was developed, bringing together CoBRA (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action), CRPF, District Reserve Guard (DRG), and elite state units such as Jharkhand Jaguar, Chhattisgarh Police units, and Andhra Pradesh's Greyhounds. Joint training across DRG, STF, CRPF, and CoBRA created an integrated, interoperable force with a clear command structure.

Technology: The Game Changer

After 2014, the Central Government transformed counter-Naxal operations through the extensive use of modern technology. Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), drones, satellite imagery, and AI-based data analysis enabled real-time monitoring and precise surveillance. Advanced location-tracking systems, scientific call-log analysis, mobile data analytics, and social media monitoring were operationalised. The Ministry of Home Affairs used technology-driven inputs to track movements, analyse communication patterns, and sharpen operational efficiency.

Landmark Operations to Trace, Target, Neutralise

The Government's "Trace, Target, Neutralise" doctrine delivered remarkable results. Through sustained security operations and focused intelligence-based strategies, the Government reclaimed areas that had been under LWE influence for over three decades.

A series of coordinated operations, including Operation Black Forest, Operation Octopus, Operation Double Bull, Operation Thunderstorm, Operation Bhimbandh, and Operation Chakrabandha, significantly weakened Maoist networks across affected regions. Among them, Operation Black Forest emerged as a major breakthrough, dismantling a key Maoist stronghold, leading to the elimination of over 30 Maoists, and triggering a sharp rise in arrests and surrenders. Operation Double Bull resulted in Gumla, Lohardaga, and Latehar districts becoming Naxal-free. Collectively, these operations restored state presence in long-affected areas, reduced extremist influence, and created conditions for improved security, governance, and development outreach.

All Polit Bureau Members (PBM)/Central Committee Members (CCM) of CPI (Maoist) have been neutralised. Since 2014, a total of 41 PBM/CCM have been neutralised.

Choking the Support System

The Union Government adopted a comprehensive All-Agency approach, targeting not just armed cadres, but the entire ecosystem supporting them. For development, this meant a Whole-of-Government approach. For security operations, it meant a Whole-of-Agency strategy. A dedicated vertical was established within the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to disrupt Naxal financing networks. As of December 2025, the NIA had seized assets worth over 40 crore. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) attached assets worth 12 crore, while State agencies confiscated an additional 40 crore. As of June 2026, the total number of Left Wing Extremism (LWE) cases by the NIA reached 112, with 100 charge sheets filed.



Red Carpet for Surrender

The Government's firm security response has been complemented by a rehabilitation-focused approach, with a clear message: "For those who lay down their arms, there is a red carpet." Surrendering cadres receive an immediate grant of 5 lakh for higher-ranked cadres and 2.5 lakh for others, along with a monthly stipend of 10,000 for 36 months. An additional incentive of 50,000 is provided for surrender, which is doubled in cases of group surrenders, along with extra compensation for depositing weapons.

The rehabilitation policy has contributed to a steady rise in surrenders. Till November 2026, approximately 8,526 Naxalites laid down their arms. These efforts have been strengthened by civil society members, journalists, community leaders and public representatives, who have helped build confidence in rehabilitation measures and encouraged affected individuals to return to the mainstream.

Recent developments have further demonstrated the effectiveness of this combined strategy of sustained security operations and rehabilitation. On 28 July 2026, under 'Nayi Disha, Nayi Pahal' anti-Naxal campaign, 16 active Maoists from the Kolhan and Latehar regions surrendered in Ranchi. The surrendered cadres included one Regional Commander, three Zonal Commanders, three Sub-Zonal Commanders, six Area Commanders and three cadre-level members. They surrendered with 11 sophisticated firearms, 38 magazines and 1,562 rounds of ammunition.

Additionally, on 29 July 2026, eight more Maoists carrying a combined reward of 49 lakh surrendered before the Bijapur Police, marking another significant success in the campaign against Left Wing Extremism. On the same day, security forces also arrested top Maoist leader and Politburo member, carrying a reward of 1 crore, from the Dhanbad-Giridih border. During the intelligence-based joint operation, a Regional Committee Member carrying a reward of 15 lakh, one Maoist cadre, and two villagers were also apprehended.

These security achievements extended well beyond restoring order. They created the foundation for long-term development. Every fortified police station, every CAPF camp, and every surrendered cadre expanded the reach of governance into previously inaccessible areas. Security opened the door for roads, schools, healthcare facilities, banking services, and digital connectivity to reach tribal communities. It was this restoration of stability and trust that laid the groundwork for the infrastructure transformation that followed.

Building a New Future: Infrastructure and Connectivity

The resolve to end Naxalism was never merely about eliminating Naxalites. It was about ensuring that every facility available in big cities reaches the poor tribals of the region, so their children, too, can have a bright future. This Phase focused on expanding infrastructure, connectivity, and governance outreach in remote regions. It improved access to essential services, roads, and digital networks. These efforts helped integrate previously underserved areas with mainstream development and governance systems.

Road Connectivity

A total of 15,189 kilometres of roads have been constructed under the two LWE-specific schemes, the Road Requirement Plan (RRP) and the Road Connectivity Project for LWE Affected Areas (RCPLWEA), to strengthen road connectivity in affected regions.

Several infrastructure projects in erstwhile LWE-affected areas had remained stalled due to Maoist threats and security-related challenges, with contractors often reluctant to participate in bidding for such works. Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has been tasked to undertake construction of such critical roads and bridges in these areas.

Digital & Mobile Connectivity

Telecom connectivity has emerged as the foundational bedrock of progress in modern societies. It's even more important in case of rural tribal communities as it acts as a crucial catalyst for socio-economic development, bridging the digital divide, providing access to education and health, and fostering economic opportunities. Keeping this in mind, 9,561 towers have been commissioned. In the areas that were most LWE affected, 96% of villages (44,728 out of 46592 villages) now have mobile connectivity, opening doors to education, online delivery of services & economic growth.

Rail Connectivity

Rail connectivity has emerged as a major driver of economic integration in erstwhile LWE areas. A 95-km railway line between Dalli Rajhara and Rowghat has already been completed, while the 140-km Rowghat–Jagdalpur phase has been approved. Additionally, a 153-km railway line between Dantewada and Manuguru has also been sanctioned. The 150-km Kirandul–Jagdalpur doubling project has made significant progress, with the Jagdalpur–Kamalur and Bacheli–Kirandul sections (totalling 130 km) already commissioned and the project nearing completion.

Financial Inclusion

The Central Government significantly expanded financial inclusion in LWE-affected districts over the last twelve years. During April 2015 to March 2026, 1,804 bank branches opened, 1,321 ATMs installed, 74,720 banking correspondents appointed, and 6,025 post offices established.

Responsive and Inclusive Governance

The Government recognised that implementation challenges in tribal regions required flexibility and local adaptation rather than rigid adherence to standard procedures. Special campaigns were organised with UIDAI and the postal department to ensure Aadhaar coverage in remote tribal areas. In Bastar division of Chhattisgarh, 294 post offices were opened following physical surveys that accounted for the area's unique geographical and terrain conditions. Due to weak internet connectivity and banking infrastructure, cash wage payments and offline attendance systems were permitted in certain LWE areas under the earlier version of the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G-RAM G) scheme. Under the Swachh Bharat Mission, toilet construction funds were routed through Village Sanitation Committees in areas with inadequate banking access. An offline application was also introduced to enable officials to issue Ayushman Bharat cards in remote villages.

These examples demonstrate the importance of adaptive governance in ensuring last-mile delivery of welfare schemes.

Health Facility

The Bastar region of Chhattisgarh has long faced challenges in healthcare access due to its remoteness and LWE violence. To address this issue, the Government sanctioned a 240-bed Super Specialty Hospital at Government Medical College, Jagdalpur under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY). The hospital is operational and it was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Union Home Minister on 18th May 2026. Further, 11 CAPF field hospitals established for security personnel have also been opened to local tribal communities, thereby extending access to healthcare facilities to the local population.

Education & Skill Development

During the last twelve years, 259 Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) have been sanctioned by the Government of India. Also, 179 EMRS Schools have been made functional. Additionally, 47 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), and 49 Skill Development Centres (SDCs) were also developed in these areas. Altogether with an investment of nearly 800 crore. These expanded education, vocational training, and employment opportunities for tribal youth, helping integrate remote communities with the mainstream economy. Skill training was provided to over 90,000 youth and women.

Under the Tribal Youth Exchange Programme (TYEP), tribal youth from erstwhile LWE-affected areas are taken on exposure visits across the country to promote national integration, cultural awareness and developmental exposure. Since 2014, a total of 37,655 tribal youth have participated in the programme.

Civic Action Programmes

Under the Civic Action Programme, the Government of India provides financial assistance to the CAPFs to undertake welfare-oriented activities in their operational areas. These include organising medical camps, sports competitions and distributing essential items among local communities. Since 2014, 221.88 crore has been released under the programme, helping strengthen trust and bridge the gap between the security forces and local communities.

This infrastructure, roads connecting villages, mobile towers enabling communication, banks facilitating economic participation, and schools opening doors for tribal youth, translated directly into welfare on the ground. It created the physical and institutional platform upon which genuine welfare, dignity, and cultural renaissance could finally be delivered.

Overall infrastructure development in the affected region strengthens regional integration through sustained infrastructure development. Improved connectivity drives economic opportunity and mobility. Long-term investments ensure durable and inclusive growth pathways.

Did you know?

Presently, 38 districts in India have been categorised as Legacy and Thrust Districts, where continued security and developmental support is being provided.

People's Welfare & Dignity

This final strand of the strategy emphasises welfare delivery with dignity and inclusivity. It strengthens last-mile service delivery for marginalised communities. The approach ensures equitable access to essential public services.

Strengthening Tribal Livelihoods

A sustained focus on tribal welfare has played a vital role in reducing LWE's influence, by expanding development, improving access to opportunity, and strengthening the connection between tribal communities and democratic institutions. Alongside security measures, the Government has ensured that development reaches remote tribal regions through better education, infrastructure, healthcare, housing, and livelihood support.

The rehabilitation framework for surrendered cadres has encouraged their integration into mainstream society through skill development, livelihood assistance, housing support under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, and financial assistance for self-employment. Development grants were provided to villages that eliminated Naxal influence and established democratically elected panchayats. Children of surrendered cadres received free education up to Class XII, helping families build a more secure future.

Read full article on PIB website

India hands over USD 2.5 mn to UNRWA for Palestinian refugees' welfare

PTI

Ramallah, Nov 24: India on Tuesday handed over USD 2.5 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) as part of its annual USD 5 million contribution.

The funding will support UNRWA's core programmes and services, including education, healthcare and relief efforts provided to Palestinian refugees, the Representative Office of India to the State of Palestine said in a post on X.

The funding was given to Khaled Hindeyyeh, Senior Finance Assistant at UNRWA, by Mahima Sikand, India's Representative to Palestine.

Sikand underlined the Indian government's continued support for UNRWA's services and provision of humanitarian assistance and medicines to help it meet its responsibilities towards the welfare of Palestinian refugees in the region.

Hindeyyeh expressed appreciation for the Government of India's continued and long-standing political and financial support to the Agency, it said.

UNRWA, a United Nations agency established by the UN General Assembly 1949, began operations in 1950.

It is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions from UN member states.

It is mandated to provide assistance and protection to Palestine Refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip, and West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

Congress, SP hold seat-by-seat deliberations; Akhilesh stresses 'winnability'

PTI

New Delhi/Lucknow, Nov 24: The Congress and the Samajwadi Party had detailed discussions on all 403 seats during the second round of talks on seat sharing in Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls on Tuesday and a deal would be clinched over two more such meetings, party leaders said.

While the SP has offered 26 seats and the Congress handed a list of about 130 seats, Tuesday's meeting in Delhi saw the leaders from both parties hold deliberations seat-by-seat.

Separately, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav said it was too early to comment on the outcome of the negotiations and stressed that winnability would be the key consideration in deciding the allocation of seats. He said the two parties need to "accommodate one another" to ensure electoral success.

Speaking with reporters after the talks in Delhi, Samajwadi Party general secretary Ram Gopal Yadav said, "Look, we have discussed every seat individually, and the discussions have been very positive. However, 403 seats are a very large number, aren't they? So, the discussions have not yet been completed."

"But you can rest assured that we will finalise everything in the next two meetings," he said.

AICC Uttar Pradesh in-charge Rajendra Pal Gautam said, "We had a detailed discussion on all 403 seats, and there were no demands made, as we want to fight unitedly."

Before the meeting on Tuesday, Ram Gopal Yadav stated that his party had proposed allocating 26 seats to the Congress, with further discussions to follow.

"We have proposed offering two seats that the Congress won in the 2022 Assembly elections. Additionally, there



are four seats where the Congress finished in second place, and 20 other seats where the SP secured between 60,000 and 70,000 votes, while the Congress received only about 2,000 votes," he told reporters.

In a meeting held on Monday, the Congress had submitted a list of 130 seats to the SP leadership, identifying them as their priority constituencies for fielding candidates. The SP leaders had agreed to study the list and continue the dialogue.

The meeting on Tuesday, held at the residence of senior Congress leader Pramod Tiwari, was attended by Gautam, state president Aradhana Misra-Mona, working president Imran Masood, and Congress Legislative Party leader Virendra Chaudhary.

Representing the Samajwadi Party were Ram Gopal Yadav, state president Shyam Lal Pal, MP Rajiv Rai, Awadhesh Prasad, and MP Iqra Hasan.

Responding to party leader Ram Gopal Yadav's statement that the SP has offered 26 seats, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav told reporters in Lucknow that it was too early to comment on the outcome of the negotiations.

He said senior leaders authorised by the party were holding discussions with alliance partners on the electoral prospects of candidates in different constituencies.

Emphasising that the primary objective of an alliance was to defeat the political opponent, the SP chief said all partners needed to work together and accommodate one another to ensure electoral success.

"Alliances are formed so that we can win. The purpose of an alliance is to ensure victory. We must work together and make such adjustments and accommodate one another in a manner that enables us to defeat our opponents. This is the biggest responsibility of political parties," he said.

Asked whether winnability would be the sole criterion for determining the number of seats to be contested by each party, Yadav said the issue of forming alliances and the selection of candidates were two separate aspects.

"There are two different issues. I have told you that alliances are formed to win elections. Winnability is about finding a way to victory, understanding the electoral equations and deciding who should be fielded as a candidate," he said.

Yadav said the Samajwadi Party was willing to make adjustments and accommodate its alliance partners, given the magnitude of the electoral challenge.

"The fight is a big one, and when we are fighting such a major battle, our objective is clear -- winnability. We have to win," he said.

During the first round of talks on Monday, both parties agreed to contest the Assembly elections together. They also indicated that the seat-sharing arrangement would be finalised within the next two to four days.

Following the first day's meeting, Ram Gopal Yadav described the discussions as cordial, noting that both sides had listened to each other's perspectives and that the alliance would be finalised soon.

The talks lasted just "20 minutes" on Monday, and the Congress said the quick wrap-up on opening day became possible as both parties arrived at the negotiating table with a positive mindset.

Reacting to the SP-Congress seat-sharing talks, Uttar Pradesh minister Dayashankar Singh accused Akhilesh Yadav of forming an alliance with the Congress for the sake of political expediency and said that the two parties share neither an ideological common ground nor any collective vision for the nation or society.

Speaking to reporters in Ballia, Singh also accused Akhilesh Yadav of compromising the ideals of his father and SP founder Mulayam Singh Yadav, noting that Mulayam Singh had, in fact, established the Samajwadi Party in opposition to the Congress.

Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh are expected to be held in February-March next year.

The BJP has won two back-to-back terms in UP since 2017, an outcome the SP is desperate to change this time.

The SP and Congress fought the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls independently. The two contested together as part of the INDIA bloc in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and the alliance won 43 of the state's 80 seats.

Hasina plans return to Bangladesh on Dec 16

Asks govt to arrange Biman flight from New Delhi

PTI

Dhaka, Nov 24: Ousted Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina plans to return home on December 16, the day the country celebrates its victory over Pakistan in the 1971 Liberation War, her spokesperson Syed Mozammel Ali said on Tuesday.

Hasina, 79, has also asked the Bangladesh government to arrange her air travel from New Delhi on the national carrier, her spokesperson said in a statement.

The statement has triggered strong reactions in Dhaka with the government saying that she would be brought back "in handcuffs" and treated under the same laws applicable to any other convicted fugitive staying abroad.

Hasina's spokesperson Ali said she had requested the necessary travel documents from the Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi through communications sent by her lawyer on November 9 and 19.

"She has further indicated that her return will be on Bangladesh's Victory Day on December 16th, coinciding with the end of the Liberation War in 1971. Sheikh Hasina has insisted that she would return on the flag carrier of Bangladesh, Biman Airlines," Ali said in the statement shared with PTI.

"Since Sheikh Hasina was flown to India on a Bangladesh aircraft on August 5, 2024, she now calls upon the Government to arrange for her air transport from Delhi back to Dhaka," he said.

Ali said the government had a responsibility to facilitate her return, alleging that she had been exiled in violation of the Constitution.

"Having exiled her contrary to the Constitution under such circumstances, it is now the responsibility of the Government to make possible her return to Bangladesh on Victory Day on December 16," he said.

Hasina has been living in India since fleeing Bangladesh on August 5, 2024, following a student-led uprising that toppled her 15-year government.

In November 2025, Hasina was sentenced to death in absentia for crimes against humanity over the 2024 crackdown on protesters.

Bangladesh has been seeking her extradition from India, while New Delhi has maintained that Dhaka's request is being examined through a legal process.

The issue has emerged as a source of tension between the two countries, with Dhaka insisting that Hasina be returned under a bilateral extradition treaty.

She has rejected the charges and said she intends to return to Bangladesh and surrender before a court.

Her lawyers had earlier approached the Bangladesh mission in New Delhi seeking a fresh passport and national identity card to facilitate her return. The Bangladesh government rejected her request for fresh travel documents earlier this month, which triggered unrest in the country.

Hasina has repeatedly expressed her desire to return to Bangladesh, while acknowledging the risks involved. "I know that they may put me in jail or they may kill me, anything may happen, but still I have to go back," she told a gathering of journalists in New Delhi through an audio link on August 5.

India had enjoyed close relations with Hasina during her 15 years in power and hoped that the formation of a new government in Bangladesh would provide an opportunity to reset ties, which deteriorated sharply after her ouster.

However, since taking office in February, Bangladesh PM Rahman is yet to visit India despite an invitation. He skipped the BRICS summit hosted by India in September.

Bangladesh's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir said on Tuesday: "She (Hasina) can only be brought back in handcuffs or under strict surveillance."

"A distinction had to be drawn between what Hasina wanted and what could happen," he was quoted as saying by the state-run BSS news agency.

Separately, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam said the government will treat Hasina in accordance with the same laws applicable to any other convicted fugitive staying abroad, BSS reported.

"The position of the Bangladesh government regarding Sheikh Hasina is the same as its position, under Bangladeshi law, regarding any other convicted person who has fled abroad," she said, adding that Hasina will be arrested wherever she enters Bangladeshi territory.

Bangladesh Prime Minister's Information and Broadcasting Advisor Zahed Ur Rahman said: "Whether Sheikh Hasina will come or not is not a matter to be discussed with her. The discussion will be with India."

"A serious criminal is in India along with her associates. She has been convicted. So, whether she will come or not, whether she will travel on Biman Bangladesh Airlines or their aircraft, or come on foot, and how she will be handed over - these matters will be discussed with India," he was quoted as saying by the Prothom Alo newspaper.

AP adds: "It is deeply symbolic that she has chosen 16 December, our Victory Day, for her planned return to Bangladesh. We firmly believe that she will celebrate this historic day among her people, honouring the great victory achieved under the leadership of her father, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman," Abu Obaidha Arin, an aide to Hasina, said.

"We are equally confident that she will definitely return and under her leadership post return, Bangladesh will once again advance towards peace, stability and prosperity," Arin said.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Come forward to

cultural heritage and collective consciousness. "The annual visit to Jhiri is a sacred pilgrimage and the deep spiritual bond associated with the place reflects centuries of devotion and reverence towards Baba Jitto."

Highlighting the legacy of Baba Jitto, the Lieutenant Governor said that his life represents an enduring message of truth, courage and justice. He noted that Baba Jitto's struggle was not merely about a crop, but about protecting the dignity, rights and self-respect of every hardworking farmer.

"His sacrifice continues to inspire society to stand against injustice and uphold respect for labour. Baba Jitto's message also transcends caste, class and community, and represents a shared national heritage," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasized that the true tribute to Baba Jitto and Bua Kaudi would be the creation of a society where no farmer is left alone in the struggle for rights and dignity. He called for a "Whole of Society Approach" to ensure inclusive development and social justice.

"We must build a society where every person receives respect, where social harmony endures, and where the benefits of development reach the last person in society. To contribute to a developed India, we must build a developed Jammu Kashmir, and three values must always remain at its foundation- truth, hard work, and mutual respect.

For this, farmers must continue their hard work. Teachers must educate the new generation in accordance with a changing world. Youth must come forward for innovation. Government officials must serve the public with complete dedication and every family must instil good values in young children. From ordinary citizens to government officials, everyone must remain honest in their actions, discharge their responsibilities with sincerity, and work together in difficult circumstances," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor underlined the contributions of farmers in sustaining the nation and enriching its traditions. He highlighted the transformative impact of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) in UT, noting progress in agriculture, horticulture and dairy sectors through modern infrastructure, diversification and market-oriented reforms. He urged farmers, particularly small and marginal cultivators, to adopt modern technology and align production with emerging market demands.

The Lieutenant Governor also encouraged greater adoption of millet cultivation. He said the millet crops are climate-resilient and income-enhancing option in the face of irregular rainfall, rising temperatures and declining groundwater levels.

Highlighting the rich legacy of Dogra culture, the Lieutenant Governor urged the youth to take pride in their language, folk traditions and regional history. He encouraged the use of digital technologies to preserve and promote cultural heritage globally.

"Sit with your elders. Learn old songs from them, listen to folk tales, and learn the history of your region. Preserve such heritage through digital means, so that future generations can also become familiar with it. I believe that technology today places in our hands a power through which we can take our culture to every corner of the country and the world. We must use this technology to introduce the world to the identity of Dogra culture," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor reiterated that the administration is making continuous efforts to ensure the smooth and efficient organization of the Jhiri Mela. The infrastructure here has seen significant improvement, and efforts will continue to expand it further as needed, he said.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor visited the exhibition stalls set up by government departments, agri-entrepreneurs, Self-Help Groups and farmers. The event also featured a short play on Baba Jitto and Bua Kaudi, and captivating performances by artists showcasing the region's rich art and cultural heritage.

Jugal Kishore Sharma, Member of Parliament; Surinder Kumar, Member of Legislative Assembly from Marh; Prof. Gharu Ram Bhagat, Member of Legislative Assembly from Suchetgarh; Chandraker Bharti, Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department; Vikas Kundal, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; Tejinder Singh, IGP, Jammu; Shridhar Patil, DIG JSK Range; Minga Sherpa, Deputy Commissioner, Jammu; Joginder Singh, SSP Jammu; Aayushi Sudan, Municipal Commissioner Jammu; senior officials, prominent citizens, progressive farmers and people from all walks of life were present. (KNO)

Police sanction

They were martyred by unknown terrorists on November 11, 2026 at Lahan Nar, Dehrna Top, Panzal Waji near Water Point of District Kishtwar during the course of their engagement."

The order further reads: "Sanction is also accorded for the reimbursement of Rs 1,00000 (Rs One lakh only) out of the contributory Welfare fund of SPOs to SSP Kishtwar on account of immediate relief which has already been paid to NoK of aforesaid Martyr SPOs@ Rs 50,000 (Rs fifty thousand only) each for performing last rites."

The SSP Kishtwar has been directed to submit the complete proforma with attested documents for further relief as per rules, i.e. ex-gratia relief of Rs 17,50,000 each, Group Personal Accidental Insurance of Rs 35,00,000 each through J&K Bank, and ex-gratia (additional death cover) of Rs 15,00,000 each.

Pertinently, earlier this month two Special Police Officers went missing in Kishtwar District and their bullet-riddled bodies were found near a Nand nullah area between Dachhan and Marwah.

The SPOs, Rashpal Kumar (45) and Bobby Chand (57), were posted at Kiyar village in the higher reaches of the Dachhan area. Killings of the two SPOs was the first such incident in the area in 26 years.

According to a senior police officer, Kumar and Chand were on their way from the village to a Temporary Operation Base (TOB) of the Rashtriya Rifles at Dharna in Marwah to accompany troops for area dominance and search operations.

Sources said that while passing through the Kiyar forests, which is known as a "shadow zone" for its lack of mobile phone connectivity, contact with the SPOs was lost.

After the SPOs did not reach the operational base by afternoon, an alert was sounded, prompting police and the troops to launch joint searches in the area following which their bodies were recovered. (KNO)

Mercury plummets

Celsius, Konibal Pampore minus 2.5 degrees Celsius and Budgam minus 2.3 degrees Celsius.

Srinagar Airport and Awantipora recorded minus 2.2 degrees Celsius each, while Qazigund settled at minus 2.0 degrees Celsius. Kupwara recorded minus 1.0 degrees Celsius, Bandipora minus 1.1 degrees Celsius, Ganderbal minus 0.3 degrees Celsius and Kukernag minus 0.1 degrees Celsius.

Gulmarg recorded a minimum of 0.2 degrees Celsius, improving from minus 2 degrees Celsius on the previous night. Kulgam also registered 0.2 degrees Celsius, while Baramulla recorded 0.1 degrees Celsius. Sonamarg, meanwhile, recorded 3.2 degrees Celsius.

The cold was more severe in Ladakh, where Leh recorded minus 7.8 degrees Celsius, followed by Kargil at minus 6.5 degrees Celsius and Nubra Valley at minus 5.9 degrees Celsius.

In the Jammu division, temperatures remained relatively higher in the plains. Jammu city recorded 9.6 degrees Celsius, while Jammu Airport registered 7 degrees Celsius. Udhampur recorded 6.5 degrees Celsius, Poonch 6.2 degrees Celsius and Rajouri 3 degrees Celsius. Bhadarwah recorded 2.8 degrees Celsius, while Katra and Batote registered 10.5 degrees Celsius each.

The Meteorological Department has forecast largely dry weather across Jammu and Kashmir over the next six days, from November 25 to November 30, with sunny to partly cloudy conditions expected.

Higher reaches and tourist destinations, including Gulmarg and Pahalgam, are likely to continue experiencing colder nights. (KNO)

J&K Waqf Board's

its functioning.

"We want Waqf institutions across the country to perform their best. The work being done in Jammu and Kashmir is beyond my thoughts and expectations," he said, while praising Waqf Board Chairperson and congratulating the entire team for their efforts.

The Union Minister assured that he would continue to encourage and support the initiatives being undertaken by the J&K Waqf Board.

Responding to a query regarding the provision of Hajj and Umrah quotas for Imams and other persons associated with Waqf institutions, Rijiju said the matter was under consideration.

He said efforts were being made to ensure that Imams and others working under Waqf institutions get an opportunity to benefit from the quota, subject to its enhancement.

"We are working on it. If the quota is enhanced, efforts will be made to provide an opportunity to Imams and others associated with Waqf institutions," he said. (KNO)

Children leaving private

good environment, good classrooms and washrooms, shortcomings in the education system will continue," she said.

She also indicated that efforts were underway to establish higher secondary schools, adding that certain hurdles had delayed the process but expressed hope that the proposal would move forward.

Asked about coaching centres and other educational institutions allegedly using children in promotional advertisements, the Minister said parents should think about allowing their children to be used for such purposes, adding that the government could not be held responsible.

YOUNG CHILDREN FACING DIFFICULTIES

On the upcoming winter vacations, the Minister said there were two different opinions regarding when the vacation should be announced, with some favouring continuation of classes for a little longer while others seeking an earlier start to winter vacations.

Acknowledging the difficulties faced by younger children, particularly those studying in Nursery, Lower KG and Upper KG, due to weather conditions, she assured that their concerns would be taken into consideration.

"I am aware of this concern. There are two opinions on the matter. Some say that classes should continue for a little longer, while others feel that vacations should be announced. Kids, particularly those in Nursery, Lower KG and Upper KG, are facing difficulties due to the weather. We will do justice to their concerns, InshaAllah," she said. (KNO)

J&K celebrates 557th

also taken out ahead of the occasion, led by the Panj Pyare and carrying the decorated Palki Sahib of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The procession passed through prominent areas of Poonch town, while Gatka performances by young members of the Sikh community added to the celebrations.

In Karnah, the occasion was celebrated with religious fervour, with Army, BSF and police personnel joining the Sikh community in the festivities.

The celebrations across Jammu and Kashmir reaffirmed the enduring relevance of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's teachings of equality, brotherhood, compassion and service to humanity, bringing people together beyond religious and social boundaries. (KNO)

Around 400 Indian pilgrims arrive in Nepal's Janakpur on new cross-border train service

PTI

Kathmandu, Nov 24: Around 400 Indian pilgrims arrived in Nepal's Janakpur on Tuesday on the newly launched direct train service from Ayodhya, as the cross-border rail link began drawing visitors between two towns associated with the Hindu epic Ramayana.

The Saryu-Kamala Express connects Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh with Janakpur Dham in Nepal. The two towns hold significance in the Ramayana, with Ayodhya regarded by Hindus as the birthplace of Lord Ram and Janakpur the birthplace of his wife, Sita.

The train service was virtually inaugurated on Monday by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Nepalese counterpart Balendra Shah during the latter's visit to India. It is expected to promote tourism and facilitate travel between the two countries.

The 604-km journey between Ayodhya Cantt and Janakpur Dham takes around 19 hours. The train runs once a week and passes through several towns in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar before entering Nepal.

The pilgrims were welcomed at Janakpurdham Railway Station on Tuesday by Nepal's Minister for Youth, Labour and Employment Ramjee Yadav and Madhesh Province Chief Minister Saroj Kumar Yadav, at a programme organised by the Nepal Railway Company, officials said.

Passengers and representatives from the Indian Railways were welcomed with traditional scarves and flower garlands. A cultural programme was also organised at the station.

Modi, Chancellor Merz review India-Germany Strategic Partnership

Hail steady momentum in ties

PTI

New Delhi, Nov 24: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz on Tuesday reviewed progress in the India-Germany Strategic Partnership and expressed satisfaction at the sustained momentum in bilateral engagements.

During the telephonic conversation, Prime Minister Modi and Chancellor Merz noted that the India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) would unlock several new opportunities for expanding bilateral trade and investment.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi received a telephone call from the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Friedrich Merz, and the two leaders reviewed progress in the India-Germany Strategic Partnership and expressed satisfaction at the sustained momentum in bilateral engagements, a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

As India and Germany celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations this year, the leaders reaffirmed their commitment



to further strengthening cooperation across key sectors, including defence and advanced technologies.

"They noted that the India-EU Free Trade Agreement would unlock several new opportunities for expanding bilateral trade and investment," the statement said.

Prime Minister Modi and Chancellor Merz also exchanged views on regional and global developments of mutual interest and agreed to continue working closely together to promote global peace, stability and a rules-based international order.

In a social media post, Modi said he had a productive conversation with Merz and they reviewed the growing momentum in the India-Germany Strategic Partnership and discussed ways to unlock new opportunities in trade and investment, defence and advanced technologies.

"India and Germany will also continue to work closely together to address global challenges and promote peace, stability and a rules-based international order," he said.

The two leaders also emphasised the importance of continued cooperation at multilateral fora in addressing contemporary global challenges, the statement said.

Chancellor Merz called Prime Minister Modi ahead of the expected signing of the India-European Union FTA in December.

The Russia-Ukraine war has also escalated in recent times.

The proposed FTA between India and the EU is expected to be signed in December. The negotiations between New Delhi and the 27-member bloc concluded in January.

Under the FTA, described as "mother of all deals", 93 per cent of Indian shipments will enjoy duty-free access to the 27-nation bloc, while imports of luxury cars and wines from the EU will become less expensive.

Taken together, India and the EU account for 25 per cent of the global GDP and one-third (about USD 11 trillion) of international trade (about USD 33 trillion). In the Russia-Ukraine war, Russia seeks to knock out Ukraine's power supply before winter through bombardments while Kyiv has sought to stun Moscow with increasingly daring attacks that have hit targets as far away as Siberia. On Sunday, Ukraine struck a Russian warship in eastern Libya.

Modi, Badal meeting in Aug gave first indication of reunion between SAD, BJP



PTI

Chandigarh, Nov 24: It was a meeting between SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in August that gave the first indication of a possible reunion between the former allies for the 2027 Punjab assembly polls.

Though both the parties sought to downplay the meeting between Modi and Badal at that time, there was buzz in political circles that both the estranged allies were on a path to a reunion.

Badal had met Modi at his office in Parliament House.

Neither of the parties publicly acknowledged talks for a possible re-stitching of an alliance that broke six years ago by the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) over the three farm laws, which were later repealed. Punjab BJP leaders consistently maintained that the party was preparing to fight all 117 assembly segments in the state.

Talks of reunion again gained prominence when Union Home Minister Amit Shah, last month in Delhi, predicted an NDA government in Punjab in 2027.

He had then said that the people of Punjab had decided that there was going to be an NDA government there this time.

His remarks again fuelled speculation in the political circles about an imminent reunion between the SAD and the BJP.

Shah, when he came to Chandigarh on November 1, again said an NDA government will be formed in the border state.

His statement came months after he had said in his party's rally in Moga that the BJP would fight the 2027 elections to form its own government. On November 2, when SAD president Badal was asked about the possibility of re-alliance, he gave a guarded response to speculation, saying, "You will come to know in a few days what will happen."

India, Netherlands looking at boosting cooperation in clean energy, shipbuilding: MEA

PTI

New Delhi, Nov 24: India and the Netherlands have agreed to strengthen cooperation in areas of shipping, shipbuilding and green hydrogen, aligning with efforts to fully realise the potential of their strategic partnership.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Dutch counterpart Tom Berendsen explored ways to deepen the overall trajectory of the bilateral relations at a meeting on Sunday.

Berendsen was in New Delhi on a two-day trip to attend the inaugural meeting of the annual Foreign Ministers' mechanism to review the Roadmap of the India-Netherlands Strategic Partnership 2026-2030.

The roadmap was unveiled during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the Netherlands in May.

Jaishankar and Berendsen reviewed ongoing engagements across key sectors, including trade and investment, technology, defence and security, mobility, culture and people-to-people ties, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Tuesday. "They welcomed the recent initiatives to enhance collaboration in areas of semiconductors, renewable energy and green hydrogen, and reaffirmed their commitment to realising the full potential of the strategic partnership," it said in a statement.

The MEA said both sides underscored the importance of deepening cooperation in priority sectors of water, agriculture and health.

"They discussed deepening cooperation in maritime and shipping, particularly green shipping, port development and shipbuilding," it noted.

The ministers also highlighted trade and economic ties as a key pillar of the partnership and emphasised the importance of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement in creating new opportunities.

"Both sides agreed to endeavour to hold the Joint Trade and Investment Committee (JTIC) at the earliest to deepen cooperation, address trade facilitation issues and promote investment," the MEA said.

Jaishankar and Berendsen also exchanged views on regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest, it added.

Wealth creation must precede equitable distribution, says VP

PTI

New Delhi, Nov 24: Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Tuesday said the failure of communism to prioritise wealth creation and productivity, while focusing on wealth distribution, contributed to its fall.

Addressing a gathering at the exchange of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), Delhi School of Economics and the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) at his official residence here, Radhakrishnan said economic progress must combine wealth creation with equitable distribution to ensure an improvement in people's quality of life.

The vice president, who is researching the fall of communism for his doctorate, said the system failed to make production and economic growth central to its thinking.

"Communism's biggest problem is first a fall in productivity, then the production gets shrunk. They are always talking about distribution. They never worried about production. That is where communism has failed," he said.

He explained that declining productivity led to shrinking production, shortages of essential commodities and people having to wait in long queues for



rationed goods.

Attempts to address the situation through increased government employment, he said, created further administrative and economic difficulties.

Referring to India's development journey under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Radhakrishnan cited achievements in poverty alleviation, housing, rural electrification and tap water connectivity.

He said the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047 required inclusive development across all sectors, regions and sections of society.

He emphasised that economic progress should ultimately translate into an improved quality of life for people, with human development, good governance and citizens' welfare remaining central to domestic and global priorities.Describing the MoU exchange as an important milestone, the vice president said the partnership would bring together the academic excellence, research capabilities and policy experience of the three institutions to address pressing economic and social challenges.

The proposed collaboration will facilitate academic exchanges, joint research, training programmes and student-faculty exchanges.

Radhakrishnan particularly welcomed the proposal for a joint research seed fund involving the three institutions, saying it would help nurture young researchers, encourage original scholarship and generate practical policy recommendations.

The identified areas of collaboration include sustainability, artificial intelligence, public policy, geopolitics and international trade.

He also highlighted the proposed collaboration between IEG and LSE to enhance the training of Indian Economic Service officers, saying international exposure to research and policy practices would strengthen their professional capabilities.

Referring to India's growing role in the Global South, Radhakrishnan said the country's democratic institutions, diversity and development experience had much to offer the international academic community.

He stressed that the experiences of developing countries should also inform global academic and policy frameworks.

As Chancellor of Delhi University, he said he would personally monitor the progress and outcomes of the initiative and extend all necessary support.

He also encouraged other universities to draw inspiration from the partnership and pursue similar collaborations.

The ceremony was attended by N K Singh, President of the Institute of Economic Growth; Larry Kramer, President and Vice-Chancellor of LSE; Michael Debabrata Patra, Chairman of IEG; and Yogesh Singh, Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University, among others.

Embodying Guru Nanak Dev's teachings in life real essence of Prakash Purab: Rajnath

PTI

Lucknow, Nov 24: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said assimilating Guru Nanak Dev's teachings in one's life is the true essence of Prakash Purab, and it is an occasion to commemorate the sacrifice, penance, valour and martyrdom of the first Sikh guru.

He was speaking at the Yahiyaganj Gurudwara in Lucknow on the 557th Prakash Parv (birth anniversary) of Guru Nanak Dev.

Singh, who represents the Lucknow constituency in Lok Sabha, began his address with the salutation, "Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh" and extended his heartfelt greetings to everyone on the occasion.

Singh said he was present at the event not as an elected representative, but as a devotee and a servant.

"I pray at the feet of Waheguru ji that the nation may continue to progress in an atmosphere of peace, harmony and unity," he added.

The defence minister asserted that the history of Sikhs is marked by a glorious tradition of valour, courage and sacrifice, alongside service, compassion and selflessness.

"The tradition of the gurus inspires us to serve humanity, stand against injustice, and follow the path of righteousness and truth. The supreme sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, the martyrdom of the four Sahibzadas, and the indomitable courage of Guru Gobind Singh Ji constitute an invaluable heritage of Sikh history," Singh said.



IN THE COURT OF COLLECTOR (ADDL. DEPUTY COMMISSIONER) GANDERBAL.

In the case of:-
Mst. Fatima D/o Muhammad Maqsood Malik R/o Watlar, Tehsil Lar District Ganderbal
Appellant
Versus
1. Ghulam Nabi Malik 2. Ghulam Muhammad Malik 3. Ghulam Rasool Malik
4. Mst Khurshee 5. Mst Fareeda 6. Fayaz Ahmad Shah 7. Irfan Ahmad Shah
8. Sabreena 9. No. 01 to 03 sons, No. 4 widow, No. 05 daughter and 10. No. 06 to 08 grandchildren of Muhammad Maqsood Malik. 11. No 1, 3 and 4 residents of Watlar Tehsil Lar, No. 05 resident of Dangerpora Tehsil Lar, Respondents No. 05 to 08 are residents of Repora Tehsil Lar.
Respondent No. 02 is un-heard since 1990 and as per law he is presumed dead
Respondent
In the matter of:
Appeal against the order/ mutation No. 481, dated 05-08-1997 of village Benhama and mutation No. 756, dated nil of village Watlar with the prayer for setting aside the same.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, the Ld. counsel for appellant filed two appeals against the order passed on mutation No. 481, dated 05-08-1997 of village Benhama and mutation No. 756, dated nil of village Watlar and the same are pending consideration before this court,

Whereas, during proceedings the Lumberdar concerned has reported that respondent No. 02, namely Ghulam Muhammad Malik, has reportedly been absent from his place of residence for approximately thirty-six years, and his whereabouts could not be ascertained despite efforts made to trace him in the adjoining villages;

Whereas, in view of the aforesaid circumstances, service of notice upon the said respondent through ordinary modes has not been found feasible, necessitating issuance of a public proclamation for inviting his appearance and also for informing all persons who may have any interest in the subject matter of the appeals;

Now, therefore, through the medium of this public notice/proclamation, respondent No. 02, namely Ghulam Muhammad Malik, and all other persons having any right, title, interest or claim in respect of the subject matter ocounsel, on 17-12-2026 at 02:00 PM and submit their objections, if any, along with supporting documents.

Take notice that, in case of failure to appear on the aforesaid date and time, the matter shall be proceeded with and adjudicated upon in accordance with law on the basis of the material available on record, without any further notice to the absent party, subject to the satisfaction of this court regarding due service of notice.

In case no one appears on the scheduled date, the matter shall be proceeded with and decided in accordance with law on the basis of the material available on record without any further notice. Matter be listed for hearing on 17-12-2026.

Collector, (Addl. Deputy Commissioner), Ganderbal.
No. DCG/SQ/2026/F-930 & 931/213
Dated: 20/11/2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change the name on electricity Bill Bearing consumer Id NO 02050100013023 . from MUZAFFAR AHMAD MALIK TO MASNAZA AKHTER If anybody having any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the office of the Subdivision GANDERBAL PDD GANDERBAL. within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. after that no objection will be entertained. Name MASNAZA AKHTER D/O MOHD YOUSUF MALIK R/O PANDACH GANDERBAL

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change the name on electricity Bill Bearing consumer Id NO 0205010005895 . from AB GAFFAR TANTRAY TO FAROOQ AHMAD TANTRAY If anybody having any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the office of the Subdivision GANDERBAL PDD GANDERBAL. within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. after that no objection will be entertained. Name FAROOQ AHMAD TANTRAY S/O LATE ABDUL GAFFAR TANTRAY R/O DUDERHAMA GANDERBAL

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Ghulam Nabi Hajam, S/o Fetih Mohd Hajam, R/o Waskura, Wakura, District Ganderbal, do hereby notify the general public that my father's name has been wrongly recorded in the school records of Govt. Boys Higher Secondary School Wakura as Fathe Mohd Hajam instead of his actual and correct name Fetih Mohd Hajam.

Now, I intend to rectify/correct my father's name in the school records from Fathe Mohd Hajam to Fetih Mohd Hajam. Any person having any objection in this regard may submit the same before the concerned authority within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.

Sd/-
Ghulam Nabi Hajam
S/o Fetih Mohd Hajam
R/o Waskura, Wakura, Ganderbal.

Kamboj's place under scrutiny as India weigh options for Christchurch Test

PTI

Christchurch, Nov 24 : India's hopes of reaching the World Test Championship final have suffered a setback following the drawn opening Test in Wellington, and the team management could be forced to reassess Anshul Kamboj's place in the playing XI ahead of the series decider here from Friday.

If bright sunshine and a lifeless Basin Reserve pitch made life difficult for bowlers, the Hagley Oval surface could also flatten out, with daytime temperatures in Christchurch expected to hover around 30 degrees over the next few days.

While the Basin Reserve pitch blunted India's four-pronged pace attack, Kamboj failed to make a convincing impression as a bowler, which remains his primary skill set, despite contributing a brisk 38 off 41 balls to India's record 720 for nine declared.

India needed Kamboj the bowler to deliver, but the Haryana pacer did not appear to have enough in his arsenal to seriously trouble the New Zealand batters.

Although he picked up three wickets across the two innings, there were few occasions when he looked capable of unsettling the Black Caps. He generated neither significant swing nor enough seam movement to create doubts in the batters' minds.

His short-ball strategy also lacked menace because of his limited pace, while his speed tended to drop considerably during his second and third spells.

The team management has not spelt out its plans, but it is unlikely to abandon its preference for playing four fast bowlers.

That, however, presents a selection dilemma.

Kamboj's largely restrictive, wicket-to-wicket approach could prove ineffective in Test cricket, where accomplished batters



have the patience to wear down bowlers who lack the ability to consistently create opportunities.

With several left-handers in the New Zealand batting line-up, Washington Sundar's off-spin is likely to remain ahead of Ravindra Jadeja's left-arm spin in the pecking order.

But the equation could change if the heat takes its toll and cracks develop on the surface despite the 14mm grass covering.

The Indian team management essentially has two options – stick with the same XI, as captain Shubman Gill indicated at the post-match press conference on Monday, or bring in either Jadeja or young pacer Gurnoor Brar, depending on its assessment of the surface.

Gurnoor offers a different proposition, with his ability to generate extra pace and bounce even on surfaces that do not offer much assistance to fast bowlers.

New Zealand all-rounder Daryl Mitchell, meanwhile, has suggested that the Hagley Oval pitch could offer "more bounce" than the Basin Reserve, a factor that India cannot afford to overlook while finalising its combination.

The selection call will be crucial for India, who need a victory in Christchurch to keep their series hopes alive and strengthen their position in the World Test Championship race.

UK warns companies supporting Ukraine of possible Russian sabotage

AP

London, Nov 24 : British security officials on Tuesday warned UK companies supporting Ukraine's military to brace for potential sabotage attempts by Russia.

The rare public alert came after a series of attacks and attempted attacks across Europe, amid warnings from European officials about Moscow's hybrid attacks on digital and physical infrastructure.

Estonian authorities have said Russia's security services were behind an August arson attack on a defence company that provides military vehicles to Ukraine. The UK has blamed Russia for a 2024 plot to set fire to a London warehouse that contained supplies for Kyiv, and in September a British man was charged with plotting with Russian spies to sabotage a drone factory in England. Authorities in Poland, Romania and other NATO countries also say they have disrupted Moscow-backed sabotage plots.

The National Protective Security Authority, part of Britain's MI5 domestic security service, and the Ministry of Defense told firms providing "material support" to Ukraine's armed forces that they may be a target for Moscow. Executives from the companies were briefed at a private event.

The alert says that in recent months Russia has increased sabotage attempts against European defence facilities, usually through proxies "employing low-sophistication sabotage methodologies, such as arson." It warns of other hostile activity, "including intimidation of individuals, espionage and information operations," all aimed at eroding support for Ukraine.

Two men arrested over suspected burglary at William and Kate's country home

AP

London, Nov 24 : Two men were arrested on the royal family's Sandringham estate, British police said Tuesday, after a reported break-in at the country home of Prince William and Princess Catherine.

Norfolk Police said that officers were called Monday evening to reported "suspicious activity" at an address on the estate in eastern England. After a search involving police dogs, drones and a helicopter, two men were arrested on suspicion of burglary and trespassing.

Police said that "the property was unoccupied at the time of the incident." The Sun newspaper reported that masked men made their way into Anmer Hall on Monday night, when William, Kate and the rest of their family weren't present.

William was in London on Tuesday and met with Prime Minister Andy Burnham for talks at 10 Downing St. William and Kate's Kensington Palace office said that it wouldn't comment on security matters.

Anmer Hall, which has 10 bedrooms, was a wedding present to the couple from the late Queen Elizabeth II. William and Kate use the house about 171 kilometres north of London as a country residence on weekends. The couple and their three children spend most of their time at Forest Lodge in Windsor, west of London, which they have described as their "forever home."

Iran rules out US talks until seven conditions are met, warns of wider conflict

AP

Dubai, Nov 24 : Iran repeated Tuesday that there'll be no talks with the United States to end the conflict unless several conditions are met.

The Islamic Republic also said three oil tankers have struck naval mines in the Strait of Hormuz and caught fire despite US aerial cover.

Meanwhile, at least eight Palestinians were killed after three separate Israeli strikes in Gaza.

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

Iran insists on seven conditions before talks with US

Iran's chief negotiator and parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said Tuesday Tehran wouldn't negotiate with the US "until Iran's seven conditions are met," according to Iranian state television.

Iranian authorities haven't publicly stated what those conditions are. But Iranian state media have said they include the lifting of sanctions, the ending of the US naval blockade of Iranian ports and the release of seized Iranian assets.

He also warned that Iran would "shift the geographical scope of the conflict should the enemy make a mistake." Iran says three oil tankers



caught fire after hitting naval mines

The naval arm of Iran's Revolutionary Guard said the three oil tankers struck the naval mines because they were "in violation of regulations" regarding passage through the Strait of Hormuz.

The Guard's navy said in a post on Telegram Monday that the strait "is not a place to test unauthorised routes or to disregard maritime warnings."

It said the tankers were "engulfed in flames" after hitting the mines despite being under US aerial escort.

At least eight Palestinians killed after Israeli strikes in Gaza

Hospital officials in Gaza said at least eight people were killed in three separate strikes Monday night and Tuesday morning, including one on a police station in Khan Younis.

Officials at al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City said two people were killed in a strike just before midnight. Officials from Nasser Hospital reported three police officers killed in a strike in southern Gaza early Tuesday. Al-Aqsa Hospital said three others, including a child, were killed in a strike Tuesday morning in central Gaza.

Israel's military did not immediately respond to questions about the strikes.

DC XI Kathua beats PHE (Mech) by 183 runs in Save Water Cup cricket tournament

KT NEWS DESK

Kathua, Nov 24 : Deputy Commissioner (DC) XI delivered a commanding performance to register a massive 183-run victory over PHE (Mech) in the Save Water Cup (Super League) cricket tournament played at the Sports Ground, GDC, Kathua.

After winning the toss, DC XI elected to bat first and posted an imposing total of 218 runs for the loss of four wickets in 20 overs. CIn reply, PHE (Mech) struggled against the disciplined bowling attack of DC XI and were bundled out for just 35 runs in 11.2 overs, handing DC XI a convincing victory by 183 runs.

For PHE (Mech), Manish Gupta scored seven runs, while Narender contributed five runs. The DC XI bowlers maintained consistent pressure throughout the innings and restricted the opposition to a modest total.

DC Kathua's Rajesh Sharma and Jimmy shared three wickets each, while CPO Kathua Ranjeet Thakur claimed two wickets.

The match witnessed an impressive all-round performance by DC XI, with Amir Khan's brilliant century emerging as the highlight of the contest.

The match was played under the Save Water Cup – Super League, with Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma leading DC XI and XEN PHE (Mech) Narender captaining PHE (Mech).

Trump to pardon turkeys Freedom and Feathers at White House

AP

Washington, Nov 24 : Two turkeys named Freedom and Feathers are set to get Thanksgiving pardons from US President Donald Trump on Tuesday.

Both birds will get a reprieve from ending up on a Thanksgiving dinner table, but only one of them will get a ceremonial pardon at the White House. The public can vote online for which of the West Virginia native birds will get the in-person honour from Trump. Both will live out their days at Texas A&M University.

Tuesday's event will be the 79th turkey pardoning, according to the White House, but the tradition did not become annual until George H.W. Bush's administration in 1989.

Harbhajan urges ICC and cricket boards to curb India-Pakistan players' conduct

PTI

Mumbai, Nov 24 : Former spinner Harbhajan Singh on Tuesday called for the ICC and the respective cricket Boards to step in and curb the behaviour of India and Pakistan players during their matches, saying the reactions from both sides set a "shameful" example for the next generation.

Referring to the heated exchanges during India A's 48-run defeat to Pakistan A in the Asia Cup Rising Stars match in Doha on Sunday, Harbhajan said the conduct of players from both teams was not appropriate.

"The ICC and the respective Boards need to step in. The reactions of both Pakistan and Indian players after winning, and what happened, are not right. It is shameful and sets a bad example for the next generation," Harbhajan said during the launch of the HSBC Golfing League.

The India-Pakistan clash was marked by a series of tense moments. India A captain Tilak Varma and Pakistan A skipper Abdul Samad did not shake hands at the toss, while a mix-up in announcing the toss result briefly caused



confusion before Pakistan A were confirmed having won the toss.

The tension spilled onto the field during Pakistan A's innings, with India pacer Harshit Rana involved in heated verbal exchanges with Pakistan openers Shamyl Hussain and Maaz Sadaqat.

After taking Hussain's catch off Ayush Badoni's bowling, Rana gave him an animated send-off and followed it up with another aggressive celebration after dismissing Rohail Nazir.

The exchanges continued later in the match, and when Rana was dismissed for a duck, Pakistan spinner Sufyan Moqim appeared to exchange words with him as he walked back, with a teammate stepping in to restrain Moqim.

Harbhajan also questioned India's decision to sign off on a draw in the first Test against New Zealand with 15 overs still remaining in the day's play, saying he would have preferred the team to bowl for the remaining 90 deliveries.

"I would have bowled those 15 overs. Anil Kumble's approach was always to fight till the last ball. I remember Michael Clarke taking two wickets in the last two overs in Sydney. You never know what can happen in those 15 overs," he said.

On the 2018 ball-tampering scandal involving Australia, Harbhajan said reverse swing had traditionally been associated with Pakistan and India, but other teams perhaps used unfair means to tamper with the ball.

"This is a very old thing. Pakistan and India were being told for a long time that reverse swing has come from there. This work is done from there.

"This is not a new thing. We have made such a big thing about it. Australia was doing it earlier. England was doing it. South Africa was doing it. Wherever the ball is reversing, there must be something being done to it.

"How much they do naturally or what they have done with sandpaper, that is bad. If you try to make the ball reverse naturally, it takes some time for the ball to start moving.

"But if you get the ball to reverse in the 10th over, then it is understood that it cannot be done without the ball being tampered with. Australia is not as simple as they used to be. And their players too."

Harbhajan also felt that perhaps the entire Australian team was aware of what was happening in South Africa.

"I am saying from the first day that they should not be given so much respect that they keep it on their head. They have also played the game. They have also done all these things.

