



PM's Vision for New India Rests on Its Youth, Startup Culture: HM Shah

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PM has fulfilled dream of transforming Indian youth from job seekers to job providers; From 2016–2024, India has emerged as world's third-largest startup, digital ecosystem

GANDHI NAGAR: Asserting that youth and startup ecosystems are the backbone of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of New India, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said that during his 11-year tenure the Prime Minister has fulfilled the dream of transforming Indian youth from job seekers to job providers.

Addressing the inaugural session of the Startup Conclave 2025 here the Union Home Minister said, "Before 2014, Indian youth had to leave the country to innovate, conduct research, or implement their ideas in the start-up sector. In 2000, there was no concept of startups, systems, or ecosystems in India."

He said, "By 2014, there were fewer than 500 startups, and dreaming of startups was only feasible for children from affluent backgrounds." He emphasized that over the past ten years, PM Modi launched Startup India in 2016, and today, India has become the fastest-growing country in building a world-class startup ecosystem.

Shah said that through Startup India, PM Modi has fulfilled the dream of

transforming Indian youth from job seekers to job creators.

He has elevated startups beyond mere profit-making entities, making them a significant tool for self-reliance. The

The digital ecosystem rapidly brings the ideas, vision, and courage of the youth to the forefront of the nation and the world.

He said that in 2015, India's ranking

through the New Education Policy, has created a vertical for research and study on the Indian Knowledge System, opening this treasure trove for India's youth. By leveraging this knowledge, young Indians can conduct world-class research.



startup ecosystem has become a platform to address many of the country's challenges, accelerate innovation, and provide opportunities for youth creativity.

Amit Shah said that in the eight years from 2016 to 2024, India has become the world's third-largest startup ecosystem. Furthermore, over the past ten years, India has also emerged as the third-largest digital ecosystem, empowering the startup ecosystem.

in the Global Innovation Index was 91st, and today it has reached 38th. The Home Minister expressed confidence that within the next three years, India will rank among the top ten countries in the Global Innovation Index and, in the coming years, will lead global innovation.

NEW EDUCATION POLICY OPENED TREASURE TROVE FOR INDIA'S YOUTH
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The Union Home Minister said that in the 11 years of the PM Modi led government, significant transformations have been witnessed in the country, with efforts made in every sector to expand the startup ecosystem. The credit for this expansion

■ See On P/6

CM Receives ₹1 Crore Cheque From UBI For Flood victims

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Several MLAs call on CM to discuss developmental issues of their constituencies

SRINAGAR: Union Bank of India extended support to the ongoing flood relief efforts in Jammu and Kashmir by contributing 1 crore. A cheque was formally handed over to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at Civil Secretariat here.

Expressing gratitude, the Chief Minister appreciated the gesture of the Bank, noting that such contributions would significantly aid in relief and rehabilitation measures for the affected people. He said collective efforts from institutions and individuals play a crucial role in helping

the State recover from the calamity.

Meanwhile, Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Banihal, Sajjad Shaheen and MLA Budhal, Javid Iqbal, called on the Chief Minister at the Civil Secretariat. They discussed key developmental issues concerning their respective con-



stituencies and sought the Government's intervention in addressing the pressing needs of the people.

■ See On P/6

Maharaja Hari Singh's 130th birthday celebrated in Jammu

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JAMMU: Streets in Jammu came alive with fervor and unity on Tuesday as thousands gathered to honor the 130th birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh, the last Dogra ruler of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The day, observed as a public holiday



across the Union Territory, saw processions, rallies, and tributes that underscored the enduring legacy of the

■ See On P/6

India Needs to 'Think in India,' Not Just 'Make in India': Army Chief

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NEW DELHI: Stating that India must move from "Make in India" to "Think in India,"



Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi on Tuesday said that 'Operation Sindoor' demonstrated the positive impact of self-reliant technology, and the need of the hour is to remain ahead of evolving threats.

Addressing the inaugural session of the Tri Services Academia Technology Symposium (T-SATS) at the Manekshaw Centre, the Army Chief, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "We have to encourage domestic ideation, innovation, and system development by industry, think tanks, and academia."

He compared technological adaptation in warfare to a game of chess, saying that failing to think ahead would lead to setbacks.

He said, "While indigenous scalability has been shown, further investment in niche technology and enterprise-scale implementation is required."

He said India's proposed air defence system, Sudarshan Chakra, would integrate multiple protective layers, starting with counter-drone systems and extending to counter-UAV and counter-hypersonic systems. "Some elements cannot not be discussed publicly for security reasons but I assure you

■ See On P/6

J&K Cabinet Recommends Autumn Assembly Session From October 13

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SRINAGAR : The Cabinet on Wednesday decided to recommend to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha the summoning of the J&K Assem-



bly on October 13.

Sources said, that the Cabinet, which met this morning under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, decided to recommend to the LG the summoning of

the Assembly on October 13.

"The session will be brief and may span seven days, from October 13 to 20," they disclosed, adding that the recommendation will now be sent to the LG for formal approval.

in Amalgam, in which 26 civilians were killed.

Therefore, the Assembly must meet on or before October 28 to

"The **session** will be brief and may span seven days, from **October 13 to 20**," they disclosed, adding that the recommendation will now be sent to the **LG** for formal approval.

fulfill statutory requirements.

As per the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, there must not be a gap longer than

■ See On P/6

CRPF reiterates bond with Kashmiri's: DG GP Singh



every situation."

The occasion marked the flagging off of the 3rd edition of the Yashasvini High-Altitude Women's Bike Expedition 2025 from Srinagar's historic Lal Chowk.

The event, infused with tributes, cultural programs and community participation, highlighted not only the CRPF's operational spirit but also its social connect with the Valley, as locals, women riders and officers joined hands in a journey of courage and resilience.

At the start of the ceremony, DG, GP Singh, paid glowing tributes to the martyrs of the 2001 Parliament attack, saluting their sacrifice

■ See On P/6

Bottimline

Ayushman Bharat Effectuated Revolution In Public Healthcare: PM Modi

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NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted on Tuesday that Ayushman



Bharat, which was launched on this day in 2018, has effected a revolution in public healthcare, ensuring financial protection and dignity for its beneficiaries.

The medical insurance scheme provides annual health cover of Rs 5 lakh and covers the poor and all senior citizens above

the age of 70.

Modi said on X, "Today we mark 7 years of Ayushman Bharat. This was an initiative that anticipated the needs of the future and focussed on ensuring top quality as

by Modi, said the government's showpiece welfare initiative covers over 55 crore citizens and lauded it as the "world's largest health assurance scheme". Over 42 crore Ayushman cards have been issued so far, it added.

It has led to the government's health

Modi said on X, "Today we mark 7 years of Ayushman Bharat. This was an initiative that anticipated the needs of the future and focussed on ensuring top quality as well as affordable healthcare for people. Thanks to it, India is witnessing a revolution in public healthcare. It has ensured financial protection and dignity."

expenditure rising from 29 per cent to 48 per cent, while out-of-pocket cost dropped from 63 per cent to 39 per cent, it added. "Millions of families saved from financial ruin during illness," it said.

Human Toll

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150 Dead, 178 Injured In J&K Floods

SRINAGAR: Flash floods and cloudbursts that struck Jammu and Kashmir in August and September claimed 150 lives, left 33 persons missing, and caused property damage worth crores.

According to the figures, Kishtwar District recorded the highest number of casualties where 33 persons are still missing. "A total of 150 people lost their lives while 178 persons were injured" data reveals, adding, "Over 13600 houses were damaged fully, severely or partially across the region during the recent natural calamities."

According to the figures 864 houses were damaged in Kashmir of which 16 were fully damaged, 57 severely and 791 partially.

An official told the KNO that the relief has already been disbursed in all these cases.

On agricultural losses, more than 12,500 hectares of land got affected and nearly 315 hectares were hit in Horticulture sector, primarily in

Anantnag, Kulgam and Pulwama districts with estimated losses of about Rs 59 lakh.

In Jammu, 12,800 houses were damaged. Of them, 4,200 houses were fully damaged and over 8,600 par-



tially damaged. The data revealed that the worst-hit districts are Udhampur and Jammu.

Besides, 758 were declared unsafe after the government conducted safety audit of 8,800 schools in Jammu division.

It may be recalled that soon after the flash floods and landslides hit Jammu and Kashmir,

■ See On P/6

Srinagar to host 2nd edition Kashmir Marathon on Nov 2

Winners to get prizes up to Rs 3 Crore, registration open

SRINAGAR: The second edition of Kashmir Marathon-2025, a flagship sporting event, is all set to be held on November 2 in Srinagar with the authorities keeping the registration open for the event.

Kashmir marathon, the event is scheduled to be held on 2nd November, 2025 while the winners will get the prizes are up to Rs 3 crore.

"Join the Kashmir Marathon 2025 on 2nd November in Srinagar. With prizes up to Rs 3 Crore, this is your chance to shine on the global stage. Register today," Kashmir Marathon post reads on X.

Earlier this month, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah chaired a meeting to review preparations for the upcoming Kashmir Marathon-2025, a flagship sporting event aimed at promoting sports, fitness, tourism, and Kashmir's vibrant culture.

The Chief Minister emphasised that the marathon must go beyond being a sporting event to become

■ See On P/6

Law will take its course, BJP's Ashok Koul on MLA Doda's detention

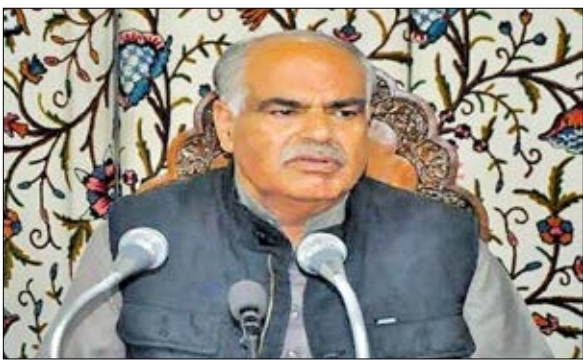
Reiterates statehood promised by PM, HM; says comprehensive compensation for flood-hit soon

Anantnag: "Law will take its own course in every matter and no one is above the law," Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) General Secretary J&K (Organisation), Ashok Koul said on Tuesday, while commenting on the detention of MLA Doda, Mehraj Malik, under the Public Safety Act (PSA).

Speaking to reporters here, Koul said: "Even National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah has himself admitted that what Mehraj Malik said against a government officer was wrong. So, what questions can the NC raise now? Law is doing its work and nobody is above it; be it the BJP or the NC."

On the restoration of statehood to Jammu & Kashmir,

the BJP leader said that both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah



have already assured it on the floor of the Parliament. "The PM and HM have assured that the statehood will be given back very

soon," he said.

Speaking about the damages caused by recent floods in parts of

horticulture departments. "The report will be forwarded to the Union Government. Home Minister Amit Shah has already released Rs 209 crore to the SDRF, and a comprehensive compensation package is expected very soon. Whosoever has suffered damages will be compensated," he said.

On the issue of the upcoming assembly session, he urged the administration to take into consideration the schedule of important Hindu festivals in the coming month while finalising the dates. "Many Hindu festivals are approaching, and the government must ensure that the assembly session is scheduled accordingly," the BJP leader said—(KNO)

Sewa Parv 2025 activities witness enthusiastic public participation across Kathua District

KATHUA: Continuing the Sewa Parv 2025 campaign, a series of activities were organised today across Kathua district, reflecting collective spirit towards cleanliness, digital empowerment and sustainable development.

The Sheep Husbandry Department inaugurated a five-day training programme under CSS-ATMA at the District Complex in the presence of MLA Kathua, Dr. Bharat Bhushan, and District Sheep Husbandry Officer Dr. R.K. Manhas.

Around one hundred breeders were registered for the programme. District

Sheep Husbandry Officer shared a detailed training schedule highlighting modern interventions in livestock rearing, fodder management, vaccination drives, Dosing, dipping and employment-oriented schemes. On the occasion, the MLA commended the role of the department in uplifting weaker sections and handed over an on-spot sanction letter for establishment of a breed-based farm under HADP to a beneficiary. In Billawar, the Municipal Committee organised a cleanliness drive in and around Shiv Temple to promote hygiene and community participation

in maintaining public spaces.

The Municipal Committee Hiranagar carried out multiple sanitation activities including a cleanliness drive at Ward No. 9, fogging at public places in Ward No. 4 and sanitation work at CTU in Ward No. 1, ensuring cleaner surroundings for residents.

The Municipal Council Kathua conducted several impactful activities under Sewa Parv Day 7. A cleanliness drive under the "Ek Ganta Ek Sath" campaign was held from Jarai Chowk to V2 Mall with active public participation. A plantation drive under the theme "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam"

was organised at the Material Recovery Facility, Kathua, with installation of tree guards for sapling protection. Wall painting activities on AMRUT and NCAP themes were also carried out at PWD Colony under AMRUT 2.0 to spread awareness on sustainable urban growth.

To mark Digital Literacy Day, ITI Kathua organised a digital awareness and training programme, focusing on UPI, DigiLocker and other e-services. Special training was also imparted to Self-Help Groups to enhance digital skills and strengthen grassroots empowerment.

Soulful Bhajan Sandhya marks auspicious beginning of Navratras at Chichi Mata Ji Temple

SAMBA: The sacred Navratras commenced with divine melodies and spiritual fervor at the Chichi Mata Ji Temple as the District Administration Samba, in partnership with the Chichi Mata Mandir Committee, organized a magnificent Bhajan Sandhya last night at the revered Shrine.

The event was curated by the District Centre of the Department of Information and Public Relation (DIPR).

The evening transformed into a celestial celebration as renowned artists from the prestigious J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages joined hands with talented local performers to present soul-

stirring devotional bhajans. The melodious renditions created an atmosphere charged with spirituality, drawing hundreds of devotees into a collective expression of faith and reverence.

The event witnessed overwhelming participation from devotees, temple committee members, and the broader local community, all united in seeking the divine blessings of Mata Chichi Ji. The gathering exemplified the power of shared faith in bringing communities together during this holy period.

The initiative, thoughtfully curated by the District centre DIPR, served a dual purpose – preserving the rich tradition of

devotional music while fostering cultural harmony across diverse communities.

The opening Congregation set the tone of devotion, unity and cultural celebration that will resonate throughout the nine-day festival of Navratras.

The Bhajan Sandhya not only honored the Goddess but also strengthened the bonds of community participation and spiritual togetherness.

The District Administration Samba remains committed to supporting such meaningful cultural and religious initiatives that enrich the spiritual life of the community while preserving our cherished traditions.

DC Kishtwar inspects restoration work at Naigad Water Supply Scheme

KISHTWAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma visited the Naigad Gravity Water Supply Scheme to review the ongoing restoration work of rain affected pipeline undertaken to reinstate water supply to the town and adjoining areas.

During the inspection, the DC reviewed two major damaged spots at Bajri Point Wagam Nallah and another site at Wagam Nallah, where water supply lines were severely affected.

The first damaged site was rectified earlier, while restoration work at Bajri Point Wagam Nallah is currently underway. The existing track, damaged due to sinking, has been realigned to facilitate interconnection with the gravity line and make the system functional at the earliest.

The DC held detailed discussions with the Executive Engineer, AEE, AE and field staff of the Jal Shakti Department regarding the challenges faced in the restoration process. He directed the department to accelerate the pace of work to ensure early resumption of supply to the residents of the town, who have been facing water shortage due to the damages. He also assured full support and timely arrangements from the District Administration to facilitate smooth completion of the project.

The DC was accompanied by Ex-En Jal Shakti Kishtwar, Er. Sanjeev Kumar Gupta, AEE, Jal Shakti Kishtwar Rahul Kotwal and other concerned officials.

Reasi observes 7th Day of Sewa Parv with cleanliness, health and community initiatives

REASI: The 7th day of Sewa Parv in District Reasi saw active participation from various departments with a focus on cleanliness, health, and public welfare. The Rural Development Department (RDD) celebrated "Clean Green Utsav" with an eco-friendly and zero-waste motto, promoting sustainable practices among the citizens.

The Municipal Council Reasi conducted several initiatives under the Swachhata Hi Seva campaign. A plantation drive was held at the Old Kalka Mata Temple Heritage Area in Ward No. 3, besides cleanliness drives at the Bus Stand and around the District Sports Stadium.

Additionally, the Municipal staff carried out a door-to-door awareness campaign in Wards 7 and 8, educating residents about proper waste segregation and

solid waste management.

The Health Department organized 56 screening and speciality camps across the

Other departments also contributed through various awareness and service activities, reinforcing the collective



district. Residents were screened for hypertension, diabetes, tuberculosis and anemia. Child vaccinations were administered and antenatal check-ups (ANC) for women were conducted to ensure maternal and child health.

spirit of Sewa Parv. The week-long celebrations have seen enthusiastic participation from citizens and officials alike, reflecting Reasi's commitment to cleanliness, health and community welfare.

Doda observes Sewa Parv with green, clean & wellness initiatives

DODA: The spirit of Sewa Parv 2025 celebration continues to resonate across District Doda with a series of green, clean, and wellness initiatives organised by the Ayush and the Forest Departments.

The programs highlighted community service, environmental sustainability, and public health awareness, engaging officials, staff and local residents alike.

The Ayush Department observed Sewa Parv, Poshan Maah, and Swachhta Pakhwada in all 29 Ayush institutions (AAMs/GADs) of the district under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh and Director Ayush J&K, Dr. Suresh Sharma.

The activities included plantation drives, cleanliness campaigns, diet and nutrition

awareness programs, and Ayush wellness camps. Supervised by District Ayush Officer Dr. Ajay Tickoo, the initiative reflected the department's



commitment to health, wellness and sustainable living. Similarly, the Forest Division Doda joined the district-wide celebrations, conducting plantation drives to promote ecological balance and awareness programs focusing on forest conservation.

Officials, staff members and community members came together to reaffirm the importance of environmental responsibility and sustainable

development.

The combined efforts of the twin departments showcased harmony between nature, health, and society while embodying the true essence of Sewa Parv—service to people, service to nature and service for a healthier tomorrow.

JMC Commissioner inspects 27 MLD STP at Bhagwati Nagar

Directs completion of pending works for early commissioning of Plant

JAMMU: To ensure timely delivery of urban infrastructure and foster the sewage management system in the city, Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) Dr. Devansh Yadav visited the 27 MLD Capacity Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) developed on Activated Sludge Process (ASP) technology at Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu.

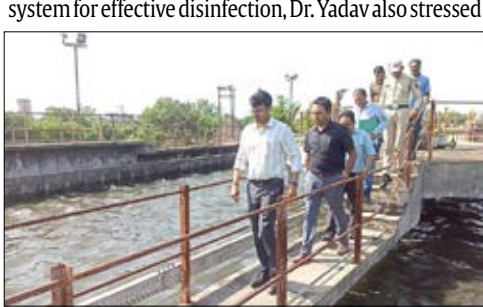
The Project, constructed by NBCC (India) Limited in 2016 to improve sewage treatment capacity, has started partial functioning since last month.

During the inspection, the Commissioner took a detailed review of the functioning of the plant and enquired about the status of facilities created under the project.

While appreciating the progress made so far, Dr. Yadav noted that certain crucial works are still pending which are necessary to make the plant fully operational and beneficial for the public.

Directing the NBCC officials to complete all pending works within 15 days, particularly making the in-house

laboratory functional and activating the gaseous chlorine system for effective disinfection, Dr. Yadav also stressed



the importance of securing operational consent from the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee (JKPCC), which is a statutory requirement to ensure compliance with environmental standards.

The Commissioner highlighted that once these steps are completed, the plant will be formally handed over to the Department of Housing and Urban Development,

Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

This will pave the way for its full-scale operation and provide much-needed sewage treatment facilities to stake-holders.

"Completion and commissioning of this plant is a critical step towards ensuring cleaner water bodies, reducing environmental hazards and improving public health in Jammu," Dr. Yadav said while interacting with officials.

The Commissioner further emphasized that the JMC is committed to providing modern urban infrastructure for better sanitation and environmental protection.

He urged upon the executing agency to adhere to the timeline and assured full cooperation from the Corporation for expediting clearances and facilitating inter-departmental coordination.

Among others, senior officers of JMC, engineers from the executing agency, and representatives of the Housing and Urban Development Department accompanied the commissioner during the visit.

Sewa Parv: Health screening & awareness activities held in Udhampur



UDHAMPUR: In continuation to ongoing Sewa Parv and Swasth Nari Shakshat Parivar Abhiyaan campaign, the health teams, under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai on Tuesday conducted comprehensive screening and counselling for women across Udhampur district.

The individuals were screened for hypertension, diabetes, anaemia, tuberculosis and common cancers and provided free diagnostic tests like haemoglobin, blood sugar, sputum, chest X-ray and ultrasound.

Health education sessions promoted balanced nutrition, healthy lifestyle and importance of early disease detection. Women with health concerns were referred for further care.

Meanwhile, a series of activities and awareness programmes were organised in Block Ramnagar, where participants pledged to "Say No to Plastic" and adopt eco-friendly alternatives, reaffirming commitment to a clean, green and sustainable future.

Rajouri observes Sewa Parv Day 07 with focus on health, digital literacy, cleanliness among other welfare activities

RAJOURI: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner, Abhishek Sharma, a series of impactful activities were organised across Rajouri district as a part of the ongoing campaign under Sewa Parv.

The DSEO Rajouri (Nodal Officer Sewa Parv), in collaboration with the Forest Department and hostel inmates, took a Swachhta Pledge and carried out a cleanliness as well as plantation drive at Govt. Boys Pahari Hostel.

The seventh day of the campaign was further marked by diverse welfare activities, awareness drives, and community outreach initiatives, reinforcing the spirit of inclusive development and citizen empowerment.

Departments across the district worked in tandem to deliver services and raise awareness about various flagship schemes and initiatives.

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Department conducted awareness programmes on

government welfare schemes and facilitated the registration of eligible women under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) to foster maternal and child health services. The Fisheries



Department organised Kisan Goshitis to educate farmers on best practices, government support schemes, and the potential for growth in the fisheries sector.

The Common Services Centres (CSCs) played a key role in promoting digital empowerment by conducting sessions on digital literacy and cyber hygiene, equipping citizens with essential knowledge about online safety

and responsible internet use. The Health Department held screening camps and facilitated

registrations under the PM Ayushman Bharat Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), ensuring wider access to quality healthcare services. J&K Bank undertook financial inclusion and enrolment drives, encouraging people

to open bank accounts, avail government-backed financial schemes and embrace formal banking systems.

The Agriculture Department led awareness sessions on vital schemes such as PM-KISAN, Kisan Credit Card (KCC), and the importance of Soil Health Cards, aiming to enhance farm productivity and rural prosperity.

To promote environmental sustainability, the Forest Department launched extensive plantation drives, while Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) conducted

Swachhta drives and community tree plantation events, rallying citizens around the cause of cleanliness and urban greening.

The Rural Development Department (RDD) celebrated "Clean Green Utsav", promoting eco-friendly and zero-waste celebrations, underlining the district's commitment to sustainable practices.

Additionally, the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) created awareness about Mission YUVA, aimed at empowering rural youth through skill-building and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Besides these, various other departments also organised numerous welfare activities in alignment with the objectives of Sewa Parv, ensuring broad-based outreach and public participation. Sewa Parv continues to serve as a dynamic platform for integrated service delivery, celebrating good governance and deepening citizen-government connect across every corner of Rajouri district.

...From Cleanliness to Women Empowerment

Day 7 of Sewa Parv 2025 witnesses multiple initiatives

KISHTWAR: As part of the ongoing Sewa Parv 2025 campaign, a series of impactful initiatives were conducted across District Kishtwar today under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Kishatwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma. The events focused on environmental conservation, cleanliness, health, nutrition, women empowerment and community welfare.

The Municipal Council (MC) Kishtwar led a mega cleanliness drive on the Historic Chowgan Grounds, engaging officials and Swachta Executives.

The campaigns also included a door-to-door awareness drive on waste segregation, promoting the use of the Swachhata App and encouraging citizens to minimize single-use plastics for a cleaner and greener Kishtwar.

The Government ITI organised activities focusing on women empowerment through skill development.

The Social Welfare Department organized a painting competition on environment conservation and hazards of drug abuse at the Girl Child Care Institute "Parisha," followed by a cleanliness drive.

The ICDS Department organised orientation training for the workers of all Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) across the district, for identifying and monitoring severely and moderately acute malnourished (SAM/MAM) children using growth monitoring devices and appetite tests.

Similarly, Health, Rural Development, ICDS, Forest, Education and Social Welfare departments conducted awareness and outreach programs across subdivisions, tehsils and blocks, ensuring widespread community engagement and reinforcing the values of civic responsibility and environmental stewardship.

Day 07 of Sewa Parv 2025 exemplified the spirit of "Seva, Sankalp, and Samarpan," bringing together citizens from all walks of life to work towards a sustainable, healthy and progressive Kishtwar.

Sakeena Itoo addresses 10th National Ayurveda Day celebrations

Calls for launching holistic public awareness campaigns across J&K on benefits of Ayurveda, Ayurvedic medicines



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SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo virtually addressed the 10th National Ayurveda Day celebrations organised by Directorate of Ayush, J&K at Convention Centre, Jammu.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar; Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah; Director Ayush, J&K, Dr. Suresh Kumar Sharma; Director Health Services, Jammu, Director Family Welfare J&K, MD JKMSCL, former Directors of Ayush, Healthcare professionals and other officers also attended the event, either in person or through video conferencing.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister underlined the significance of Ayurveda as one of the oldest and most effective systems of holistic healthcare. "Ayurveda embodies India's cultural wisdom, offering a lifestyle and healthcare model deeply connected to nature. The theme 'Ayurveda for People and Planet' reminds us that the health of individuals and the health of the environment are inseparable. It is our responsibility to preserve this knowledge and make it accessible to every household.", Minister Sakeena said. The Minister called upon all the participants to carry out a dedicated awareness campaign on the benefits of Ayurveda so that people take due benefits from it. "These celebrations will be fruitful only when

the message of benefits of Ayurveda reach to common masses in every district, in every panchayat and every area of Jammu and Kashmir", the Minister said.

The Health Minister further said that there is not much awareness about Ayurvedic medicines, highlighting that people should be made aware that Ayurvedic medicines have less side affect as compared to general medicines.

Minister Sakeena also highlighted various initiatives of the government in health sector, adding that the Omar Abdullah led government is determined to take advanced medical care facilities to far flung and rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

She called upon all the participants that every effort should be made so that the people can take due advantage of these initiatives which is the main purpose of this government.

She further lauded the Directorate of Ayush, J&K for its continuous efforts in expanding Ayush healthcare services, promoting awareness, and bringing traditional systems closer to the youth through education and outreach. She stressed on further public outreach programs, capacity building and extension of facilities in each nook and corner of J&K, so that Ayush becomes a household name.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar in his address lauded the role of Ayush in life style disorders. He stressed on the need to focus on strength areas of Ayush like Non Communicable diseases.

Secretary Health, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed in his virtual address, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, said that Ayurveda is a science of life that goes beyond curative medicine by addressing prevention, lifestyle management, and wellness and its integrative approach is essential in combating the modern epidemic of lifestyle disorders. He stressed on Research and Development, Scientific Validation, Standardization and mass public awareness so that Ayush becomes the most acceptable system all over the globe. In his key note address, Director Ayush, Dr. Suresh Kumar Sharma highlighted the growing importance of Ayurveda in today's healthcare landscape. He said, "Ayurveda not only aims to cure diseases but also to maintain harmony within the body and with nature. The theme for this year reflects the need for sustainable health practices that benefit both people and the planet. The Directorate of Ayush, J&K is committed to providing quality Ayush healthcare services across the Union Territory and to integrate Ayurveda-based preventive and promotive health measures into the mainstream".

He also elaborated on the achievements of the department, including the operationalization of Ayush Health & Wellness Centres, promotion of herbal awareness campaigns, and expanding access to traditional healthcare in rural and urban areas alike. The mega event witnessed the enthusiastic participation of nearly 700 medical professionals, paramedical staff, students, and members of the general public. The celebration was enriched with cultural programmes reflecting India's Ayurvedic heritage, as well as inspiring lectures by renowned Ayurvedic physicians on subjects like immunity building, lifestyle disorders, mental wellness, and the ecological significance of Ayurveda.

On the sidelines of the function, 15 thematic stalls were installed, showcasing Ayurvedic methodologies, Panchakarma therapies, Unani regimental therapies, medicinal plants, and yoga asanas. These stalls attracted large crowds and provided hands-on knowledge and demonstrations, creating awareness among the participants about the practical applications of Ayush systems in daily life.

Budgam witnesses diverse activities under ongoing Sewa Parv celebrations

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BUDGAM: As part of the ongoing Sewa Parv celebrations, district Budgam witnessed a wide range of community-oriented activities organised across different blocks, focusing on cleanliness, sustainability, cultural awareness, and agricultural best practices.

At Block S.K. Pora, a cultural Ladishah performance and a play were staged in collaboration with Government High School S.K. Pora and Government Middle School Razwen. The performances, delivered in the local Kashmiri language, emphasized eco-friendly behaviour and sustainable everyday habits, ensuring the message of Sewa Parv reached the local population in an impactful and relatable manner.

At HSS Bugam, Chadoora, a wall painting activity was carried out under Sewa Parv, where students and volunteers depicted themes of cleanliness, environmental protection, and social responsibility.

The creative initiative not only beautified the surroundings but also spread awareness through art.

In Beerwah block, Horticulture department Budgam organised demonstrations on orchard drainage, water harvesting, and fruit and vegetable



preservation. These practical sessions aimed to equip farmers with sustainable practices to improve productivity and reduce post-harvest losses.

Meanwhile, in Ratsun Block, a Zero Waste Celebration Festival was observed, highlighting the importance of eco-friendly practices, waste minimization, and responsible resource use, thereby encouraging community participation in sustainable living. Additionally, cleaning drives were undertaken in and around SBM assets at Block Narbal, reinforcing the commitment towards hygiene, sanitation, and maintaining public infrastructure under Swachh Bharat Mission.

Sewa Parv 2025 Horticulture Deptt Anantnag holds awareness / CBP, Machinery Show

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ANANTNAG: As part of the ongoing Sewa Parv 2025 celebrations, Horticulture department, Anantnag organised an awareness-cum-capacity building programme (CBP) and Machinery Show at Kokernag. The programme aimed to educate orchardists to

adopt modern and scientific horticulture practices to enhance productivity, improve fruit quality, and maintain orchard health throughout the seasons. Experts from the department provided detailed demonstrations and practical advice to farmers. Speaking on the occasion, SDM Kokernag, Prince Kumar, who was the chief guest, said that Sewa Parv provides an important platform for farmers and common people to directly engage with government officers, share their concerns, and receive first-hand knowledge about welfare schemes. Subject Matter Specialist, Horticulture Development Anantnag highlighted the department's flagship schemes and their benefits, urging orchardists to avail the facilities under various government programmes.

Sewa Parv-2025: Bandipora witnesses series of activities with enthusiastic public participation



FE News Network

BANDIPORA: Continuing the spirit of Sewa Parv 2025, a series of cleanliness, awareness, and community-oriented activities were carried out across district Bandipora by various departments and municipal bodies with active public involvement.

Wetlands and Wular Conservation Management Authority (WUCMA) organized an awareness programme to sensitise fisherfolk about sustainable fishing practices, and also highlighted linkages with social welfare schemes for their welfare.

Municipal Committee Hajin conducted a door-to-door plastic waste collection drive along with cleanliness campaigns at the Animal Husbandry office and the Well Baby Clinic.

Similarly, Municipal Committee Sumbal carried out an extensive door-to-door awareness campaign on source segregation and scientific waste management. Awareness programmes and on-site visits were also conducted under PMAY

(U) to guide beneficiaries.

The Committee further undertook activities including cleanliness of Jhelum banks, clearance of community toilets, registration of vendors under PM SVANidhi, verification of PMAY beneficiaries, and sanitation of the revered Ziyarat Sharif Syed Abdullah Shah Bukhari.

Social Forestry Range Bandipora, Division Baramulla, organized an awareness programme at Panchayat Ghar Ashtangoo on reducing single-use plastics.

The programme saw participation of locals, students, and staff, and was followed by a plantation drive to encourage eco-friendly practices. Municipal Council Bandipora also carried out several activities under Sewa Parv, including clearance of community toilets near Papchan Bridge, cleanliness drives on the banks of Wular Lake at Lankreshipora and near Jamia Masjid Nusoo, awareness among households residing along the Jhelum at Lankreshipora, besides clearance of identified hotspots along the Onagam-Kaloosa road.

Field Day organised for farmers at DARS SKUAST-K

FE News Network

SRINAGAR: A farmers' Field Day focused on 'Improved Technologies for Higher Pulse and Maize Production and Quality Seed production for Sustainable Crop Production'

was organized by SKUAST-K at Dryland Agriculture Research Station (DARS), Rangreth.

On the occasion, Dr. M. Ashraf Bhat, Associate Director Research, briefed the participants (farmers of three Zones and Agri. Officials of district Budgam) about latest technologies and practices for enhancing pulse and maize productivity in the region.

He impressed upon farmers to use SKUAST-K released varieties in cereal, pulse and forage crops to combat harmful effects of changing climatic scenario.

In his address, Dr. Bhat highlighted outreach

activities and achievements of HADP Project No. 1 for strengthening Seed System in the region.

The programme also included a field visit, where farmers were given live demonstrations of improved crop varieties and scientific cultivation methods.

Dr. Ajaz A. Lone, Professor I/c, AICRP on Pulses also highlighted technological advancement of pulse cultivation in temperate Kashmir ecologies.

A large number of farmers attended the event and interacted with scientists, gaining practical insights on sustainable farming practices to improve productivity and profitability.

The event was organized in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Budgam and District Agriculture Office, Budgam and was sponsored by the Indian Institute of Pulses Research (IIPR), Kanpur and the Indian Institute of Maize Research (IIMR), Ludhiana.

HRD Programme On 'Integrated Pest Management' Held At Mujgund Srinagar

FE News Network

SRINAGAR: A Human Resource Development (HRD) programme on 'Integrated Pest Management' (IPM) was held at Mujgund, Srinagar.

The event, organized by the Central Integrated Pest Management Centre (CIPMC), Srinagar in collaboration with the State Agriculture Department, Zone Mujgund, witnessed active participation from local farmers and agricultural officials.

Dr. M.K. Arya, Deputy Director (PP), CIPMC Jammu, was the chief guest in the event. In his address, Dr. Arya emphasized the significance of adopting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices to reduce excessive dependence on chemical pesticides.

He highlighted the environmental and health benefits of IPM, urging farmers to incorporate

biological and cultural methods for sustainable pest control.

Assistant Plant Protection Officer (PP), CIPMC Srinagar, delivered a detailed presentation on the National Pest Surveillance System Mobile App, explaining its user-friendly features and multiple benefits for the farming community.

The app enables real-time pest reporting, expert consultation, and timely advisories, thereby enhancing pest management and crop productivity.

Agriculture Extension Officer (AEO), Mujgund, briefed the attendees on the implementation of centrally sponsored schemes aimed at strengthening grassroots-level agriculture.

In-charge Marketing Officer, delivered an insightful lecture on Marketing Dynamics and Entrepreneurship Development, motivating farmers towards agribusiness ventures.

Dr. Waheed Khanday earns spot in Stanford's Global top 2% Scientists

FE News Network

SRINAGAR: In a proud moment for SP College Srinagar and the academic community of Jammu and Kashmir, Dr. Waheed Ahmad Khanday, Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemistry, has been recognized among the world's top 2%



scientists by Stanford University, USA, for the year 2025. Dr. Khanday has made notable contributions in the field of Chemical Engineering, focusing on waste management, environmental safety, and water treatment technologies. His research has garnered wide international recognition, with over 55 published articles in reputed journals and approximately 4,000 citations, reflecting the global impact and quality of his work. The Principal of SP College Srinagar congratulated Dr. Khanday, stating, "It is a matter of immense pride for SP College that one of our own faculty members has been placed in Stanford University's list of the world's top 2% scientists. This recognition not only highlights Dr. Waheed's dedication and scholarly excellence but also underscores the potential of academic talent within college setups. His achievement will serve as an inspiration for faculty and students alike." Dr. Khanday's inclusion in this prestigious global list is being hailed as a remarkable feat for a college-based researcher. It underscores the strong research culture being fostered at SP College Srinagar and opens new avenues for collaborative research in environmental and chemical sciences, further enhancing the institution's academic reputation on the global stage.

Dy. CM conducts extensive tour of Srinagar, Ganderbal districts

Reviews progress of works on vital road projects, bridges

FE News Network

SRINAGAR/GANDERBAL: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary along with Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, conducted an extensive tour to inspect the development works related to roads and bridges in Srinagar and Ganderbal districts.

During the tour, the Deputy CM visited Nehru Park to review the preparedness regarding widening of Boulevard road from Nehru Park to Kral Sangri.

Interacting with the officers of executing agency, the Deputy CM said that this significant project will substantially augment road connectivity and ensure long-term public convenience. He further said that it will also provide a major boost to connectivity and economic activity for the residents of Srinagar.

While visiting Ganderbal, the Deputy CM

assessed the progress on Hospital Road and Gozhama Bridge.

He inspected the works related to road from Bus Stand to District Hospital approved under NABARD for the cost of Rs. 7.51 crore. He directed the XEN to ensure early execution of the work so that hassle free connectivity is given to the hospital.

On his inspection of Gozhama bridge at Shilwat Ganderbal, the Deputy CM was informed that this bridge is double lane with 208 mtr span and the department has submitted the DPR for 44.25 crore for administrative approval. He was also informed that the project consists of main bridge and approach roads, with main bridge approved at a cost of Rs 12.77 Crs and approach road for 5.74 Cr.

The Deputy Chief Minister directed the officers to ensure that any process related to formalities of project is expedited so that the project can be



completed at an earliest.

Later, the Deputy CM also inspected the ongoing construction works at Noor Jahan Bridge

at Qamarwari.

During the inspection, the Deputy CM was informed that on completion, this 127-metre

span bridge will serve as a vital alternate link across the river Jhelum, significantly decongesting traffic on Srinagar's busy routes and easing the movement between Noorbagh, Qamarwari, Khanyar, Nallahmar Road, and adjoining areas.

Interacting with the officers of executing agency, the Deputy CM emphasized on timely completion of this important project without further delay, adding that the government is determined to ensure time-bound completion of all critical infrastructure works across J&K.

The Deputy CM reiterated the Government's commitment to ensure time-bound completion of all vital infrastructure projects in Jammu & Kashmir. He directed the concerned authorities to closely monitor the finishing works and ensure that the bridge is dedicated to the public within the announced timeline.

Editorial

Fruit Of Woe

When you see rotting apples covering the orchards of Pulwama and Shopian, it is more than a seasonal phenomenon; it is an enigmatic, economic harbinger. This year, the phenomenon of 'Giran' apples that drop from the tree too early, has not only transformed from a small source of relief into a source of acute anxiety for Kashmiri farmers. The fate of this low-grade apple is signalling the larger vulnerability of the horticulture economy of the valley where logistics issues can unravel an entire system of livelihoods.

Traditionally, what the higher end apple market viewed as unwanted waste, was an important part of the agricultural economy. The 'Giran' apple provided its own, albeit humble, alternative supply chain. It served a network of small traders, juice plants, and processing facilities—providing farmers with a reliable cost recovery function. For hundreds of seasonal workers—pickers, packers, and transporters—this business represented badly needed income. It was a safety net for growers in covering their costs for pesticides, labor, and packaging to sell their main crop. The small, makeshift mandis were a hall marker of a grassroots, community innovation to minimize waste, and maximize profit.

The ecosystem has now fallen apart. The main cause for this is the frequent and extended closure of the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, which is the valley's only land connectivity to the rest of country. The business of 'Giran' is a race against time; days to get the fruit in and then alternately, get it out to a processing unit before it will spoil. With the highway inherently unpredictable, and closing often, the traders simply do not have the time, to risk their fruit spoiling in transit after fighting to get it in. As a private trader explained, 'Giran' apples accounted for a huge 30-40% of this season's yield due to unprecedented weather. With no buyers, the farmers are left watching their fruit rot, their modest buffer gone.

This is a big deal, this isn't only about wasting low-quality fruit. It is the collapse of an economic buffer that was a stoic solution to lift thousands of families at the grassroots level. When farmers say that even getting ₹100 per crate was a bonus, that reinforces how thin each margin is and how each part of the season counts. The collapse of 'Giran' is a landslide of events for this valley that will cause pickers, truckers, and local/regional traders to face unemployment and additional diesel shortages and additionally push the rural hardships further.

It is entirely justifiable and necessary that growers are calling on the government for fast action. Governments need to appreciate that the horticulture industry is not defined solely by the premium apple market but it needs a resilient systematic approach. Immediate action needs to be taken to ensure that trucks transporting apples, including 'Giran', are moving smoothly to market. This may involve special logistics; perhaps prioritizing apple truck movements within limited weather inoculation or indicating confidence in traders.

In the long-term resolution of this breakdown, it forcibly reminds us of the significant value of upgraded infrastructure, which may eventually look at alternative routes and/or value-added, local processing in the region which will help reduce outward dependency. The story of the 'Giran' apple is a microcosm of a wider systemic issue. It illustrates hauntingly and transparently that the valley's economic viability is at the whim of logistical challenges. To address fallen food is to turn a blind eye to the valley's falling fortunes. The government needs to be aggressive before this necessary reason for decline reaches a point of irreparably damaging it altogether.

Ban For A Better: Enforcing The Gutkha Ban



Dr. Priyanka Saurabh

The Haryana government recently took a bold and significant decision, announcing a complete ban on the consumption and sale of gutkha, pan masala, and tobacco throughout

health crisis. Its direct impact will be that people will stay away from these harmful products and the new generation will be inspired to avoid them. It also serves as a warning to shopkeepers and distributors who are endangering people's lives by selling these products.

Tobacco and gutkha consumption are not only harmful to health, but also socially and economically. Many poor families in Haryana spend a significant portion of their limited income on gutkha and tobacco. This not only undermines their financial well-

perspective. A fine of up to 10 lakh is a deterrent that will help discourage shopkeepers from selling these products. Furthermore, this move sends a message to society that compromising health is a serious crime. Once implemented, this ban will likely resonate with other states. This step will set an example of how combining health care and law enforcement at the state level can ensure public safety.

This decision by the Haryana government is not only necessary from a health perspective, but also sends a message to society and the



the state. Under this decision, shopkeepers and distributors selling these products could face fines of up to 10 lakh. This move is not just legal action, but a decisive step taken for the health of the people and the well-being of society.

At least 4,000 new cancer cases are being reported in Haryana every month. This figure is not only alarming, but also reflects the rapid spread of harmful habits like gutkha, pan masala, and tobacco in our society. Health experts have long pointed out this problem, and now the government has taken concrete steps to address this serious situation.

The consumption of gutkha, pan masala, and tobacco is not just a habit; it is also a cause of serious illness. Long-term use increases the risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, and digestive tract. Furthermore, it can lead to heart disease, lung problems, and other serious health issues. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), tobacco consumption kills millions of people every year. In India, the number of tobacco- and gutkha-related illnesses is also increasing.

This ban by the Haryana government is an important step toward mitigating this

being but also impacts their children's education and other essential family needs.

From a social perspective, tobacco and gutkha consumption is rapidly increasing among the younger generation. School and college students are using these products, laying the foundation for serious health problems in the future. This government initiative is crucial to curb this trend and promote health awareness among young people.

Simply banning tobacco isn't enough. Public awareness and education are equally important. Health awareness campaigns are essential in schools, colleges, and local communities. Unless people are properly informed about the dangers of tobacco and gutkha, they won't abstain from them. The Ministry of Health and local authorities should jointly launch campaigns to educate people about the risks of cancer and other serious diseases. They should also educate people about alternative health measures and ways to live a tobacco-free life.

This decision by the Haryana government is significant not only from a health perspective, but also from a legal and administrative

younger generation that distancing from harmful habits is the key to a better life. Items like tobacco, gutkha, and pan masala not only harm health but also place economic and social pressure on families and society. This ban is expected to reduce the number of tobacco- and gutkha-related diseases in the state over time. Additionally, awareness and education programs will motivate people towards healthier living. This step marks the beginning of a health revolution in Haryana, and to make it successful, the entire society, administration, and families will have to work together.

Ultimately, this decision sends the message that health is paramount and that concrete steps in the best interests of society are essential at all costs. Haryana's example can serve as an inspiration to the entire nation: that through health protection and legal measures, future generations can be protected from disease.

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Pledge And The Promise: A New Chapter In Healing



WANI ARFAT

The first day of college is a memory that stays with you forever. It is not merely the start of education but the beginning of a journey filled with self-discovery, responsibility, and hope. When I left home for Ramzaan College of Nursing, my heart carried two opposing emotions—excitement for the opportunities ahead and nervousness for the unknown world of new faces, teachers, and experiences that would shape my future.

As I passed through the gates of the college, pride walked with uncertainty. Walls looked unfamiliar, passages were a blur of voices never known before, and every face that went by looked as keen to recognize me as I did to recognize them. In silence, I entered a class and sat with people who were to slowly become friends, struggling to quiet down the tempest of emotions within me.

Our initial meeting was with Professor Ajaz Sir, our class coordinator. He established the tone for our journey with his words. He reminded us that being a nurse is not a mere career but a service to mankind, a science, a discipline, a responsibility. He explained to us that we were not mere students but future caretakers/healers and researchers. His words made a lasting impact, revealing to us the sacred objective of the course we had embarked upon.

Next arrived Mudassir Sir, our lecturer for Anatomy and Physiology. He spoke about more than just the human body. He spoke about courage, faith, and commitment, explaining that to be a nurse one should be completely committed. When he saw our worried faces, he urged us to adopt confidence even in the face of uncertainty. What he spoke about ingrained in me the idea that learning how to learn is as important as learning

itself.

Abid Sir, our lecturer for Nursing Foundation, once taught an excellent lesson about trust—trust in Allah as well as in what is meant for us. He also told us that good role models are neither stars nor celebrities but our lecturers who create our character, value systems, and discipline. He

a career it is indeed.

Mahek Maam also opined, emphasizing industriousness and efficient time management. "Work hard," she counseled. "Time is valuable, and a minute is a minute." It seemed to me that such admonitions were a reminder that responsible scholarship is the key to a successful varsity

and dedicated.

One of the toughest moments of the day was to introduce myself to the entire class on stage. My voice never favored me for public speaking, but as I spoke, my nervous gradually turned into confidence. I learned from this episode that being a part of a college is not only about learning but

about responsibility, and learning to serve society with honesty. That anxious home-bound student who departed early morning returned home a changed person with lessons to be learned about courage, humility, responsibility, and hope. What is unique about the first day is not perfection



told us that something as fundamental as good manners, being on time, and neat appearance reflects dignity and professionalism.

Zahid Sir then addressed the congregation emphasizing the religious aspect of nursing. He termed it as worship itself where serving others grants one much more than one can earn with money. He explained with a most inspiring account regarding Hazrat Rifa'iah bint Sa'd (RA), who is credited with being the first Islamic nurse. He demonstrated how prestigious and honored

career.

Beyond the lectures, I explored the campus. I saw lively classrooms, well-equipped laboratories where science comes alive, the principal's office symbolizing leadership, faculty rooms full of knowledge, and the library, where rows of books quietly awaited eager minds. Watching students deeply absorbed in study made me realize that learning doesn't come only from lectures but also from curiosity, self-study, and reflection. Knowledge grows when we are patient, persistent,

also about overcoming one's fears and transforming one's weaknesses into strengths. When they called my name as a Class Representative, pride and responsibility mingled together in my heart. It was a moment to serve, to lead, to grow.

First day instilled me with lessons much deeper than nursing. Efforts lead to confidence, professors teach us how to live, nervousness is only natural, and growth is realized through challenges. College is about tests and grades but also about developing character, finding one's own identity, learning

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CS inaugurates Mega Health Camp at Ganderbal under SewaParv

FE NEWS NETWORK

Reviews ongoing works at District Hospital, inspects Yatri Niwas at Kheerbhawani

Sewa Parv programme and Swasth Naari Sashakt Parivaar Abhiyaan.

The camp was inaugurated in the presence of Secretary, Health & Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah; Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD), Aijaz Asad; Divisional Com-

missioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg;

Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore along with other officers from district administration. As part of the Abhiyaan, a wide range of healthcare services were made available to the public. Senior citizens above 70 years of age were issued Golden Health Cards under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, enabling them to access free and qual-

ity healthcare services. The camp also featured Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) screenings,

general medical check-ups, Tuberculosis (TB) screenings, and mental health stalls, benefiting large sections of the community. On the occasion, the Chief Secretary also reviewed several ongoing health infrastructure projects in the district, including the 50-bed Critical Care Block and the District Integrated Public Health Care Lab, a state-of-the-art facility along with block-level laboratories which will function on a hub and spoke model. He also inspected the Mortuary Building, Administrative Building and Public Canteen being constructed under UT Capex Scheme.

Later, the Chief Secretary visited the Kheer Bhawani Temple at Tulmulla to review the ongoing Yatri Niwas project.

He inspected the progress of the work and received a detailed briefing on timelines for the remaining components. Secretary, RDD, Aijaz Asad, apprised him of the current status and pace of execution.

Emphasizing the significance of the project, the Chief Secretary stressed the importance of adhering to approved timelines and maintaining high-quality standards. He directed the executing agencies to expedite the pace of work to ensure timely completion.



GANDERBAL: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, inaugurated a Mega Health Camp at District Hospital Ganderbal under the

missioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg; Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore along with other officers from

ity healthcare services. The camp also featured Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) screenings,

Devotees make a beeline for Vaishno Devi shrine as Navratri celebrations kick off

FE NEWS NETWORK

KATRA (REASI): With chants of 'Jai Mata Di' and bhajans played from loudspeakers filling the air in Katra, the base camp for the Mata Vaishno Devi temple, hundreds of devotees on Monday made a beeline for the decked-up shrine atop Trikuta hills on the first day of Navratri to pay obeisance and seek blessings of the deity.

Sparkling lights and colourful decorations have added to the spiritual fervour and gaiety of the town in Reasi district, with devotees setting out on pilgrimage since early morning to seek the blessings of Mata Rani amid multi-tier security arrangements.

The nine-day Navratri festival got off to a grand beginning, with officials expecting a footfall of more than 10,000 pilgrims daily. Close to 10,000 devotees visited the shrine till evening on Monday, they said.

"The Shrine Board has made very elaborate arrangements for the Navratri to ensure a comfortable yatra for the devotees," Sachin Kumar Vaishya, CEO, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, said.

Welcoming the devotees on the first day of the festival, Vaishya said the Shrine Board has deployed volunteers to guide the pilgrims, manage the rush, and ensure smooth

movement along the 13-km yatra route.

Drinking water points, medical stations, and crowd management measures have been put in place to ensure a safe and comfortable pilgrimage experience for the devotees



coming from across the country, Vaishya said.

This year, the Shrine Board has introduced wireless communication sets to enhance coordination and communication along the yatra route. A multi-tier security grid involving the police, CRPF, paramilitary forces, and quick-response teams will be in place throughout the festival, the officials said.

Chanting devotional hymns and singing bhajans, the devotees made their way towards the holy Bhawan after climbing a decorated serpentine path, with cries of 'Jai Mata Di' renting the air.

The devotees offered prayers and participated in rituals, celebrating the beginning of the nine-day festival with enthusiasm, the officials said.

The shrine has been adorned with floral decorations, creating a festive ambience for the thousands of devotees expected to arrive here over the next nine days.

Hunamant Singh, a devotee, said he came from Garhwal (Uttarakhand) and this was his first visit to Vaishno Devi during Navratri.

"I come here often at other times. I heard a lot about Navratri here – that the decorations are beautiful and the 'darshan' is very good. Today I saw it first hand, it was amazing..."

Singh, who came here with his family members and relatives, added, "It was a call of the Mata. I am getting her blessings during Navratri, which will bring happiness and growth in our lives."

Like Singh, Simita from Pune said Mata came in her dreams, prompting her to rush to join a caravan of devotees who came here to pay obeisance.

"My heart and mind were in turmoil for some time but they calmed after 'darshan'. My dream has come true as Mata called me. I feel a divine calmness and satisfaction now," Simita said.

The pilgrimage to Vaishno Devi resumed on September 17 after remaining suspended for 22 days due to a devastating landslide along the track caused by torrential rain on August 26, which killed 34 people and injured 20 others. (PTI)

10th Ayurveda Day Celebrated At AYUSH Health & Wellness Centre Kenihama Budgam

FE NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: AYUSH Health & Wellness Centre, Kenihama celebrated the 10th Ayurveda Day here with series of activities under this year's theme 'Ayurveda for People & Planet'.

The celebrations were held under the guidance of District AYUSH Officer Budgam, Dr. Firdous Malik.

Addressing the celebrations, Medical Officer, Dr. Nusrat Bashir highlighted the importance of Ayurveda, stating that it is not just a system of healthcare but a complete science of life, based on the principle of harmony between the individual and the environment. She said that the observance of Ayurveda Day reflects the collective resolve to harness the full potential of Ayurveda for global wellbeing and a healthier planet.

As part of the programme, lectures were delivered on the role of Ayurveda in healthy living and disease management. Free medical check-ups were also

conducted for the needy and disease-specific medicines were distributed among the patients. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material was also disseminated for creating public awareness regarding preventive healthcare practices.



An awareness lecture on Yoga was also organised on the occasion, highlighting its significance for overall physical and mental well-being. Besides, Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) screening of individuals was undertaken, while special focus was laid on anaemia screening of the needy people.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar makes history, holds High Court Division Bench proceedings from Gurez virtually

FE NEWS NETWORK

GUREZ: In a historic first, Justice Sanjeev Kumar, senior-most Judge of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh, presided over Division Bench proceedings from Gurez through virtual mode, marking a new chapter in technologically enabled justice system where geographical barriers no longer hinder access to courts.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar was on an official trip as Executive Chairman J&K Legal Services Authority regarding the child friendly scheme of NALSA-2024 and he heard all the listed cases from Munsiff Court Gurez through virtual mode.

The historic bench comprised of Justices Sanjeev Kumar and Sanjay Parihar, the former joined from Gurez while the latter was in Jammu wing of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh.

The lawyers also attended their cases from



Jammu as well as Srinagar wings of High Court through video conferencing facility. As many as 45 cases from Jammu wing and

5 cases from Kashmir wing were heard through digital platform which exhausting the entire Cause List for the day.

While this initiative has declared the availability of virtual facility from a cut off tehsil of Gurez Bandipora in courts, it has been widely applauded by the local stakeholders.

Justices Sanjeev Kumar impressed upon utility of this service by lawyers, litigants and defence personnel living in Gurez.

Justices Sanjeev Kumar directed Central Project Coordinator e-Court High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Fayaz Ahmad Qureshi to ensure seamless service of e-filing, display of timely case information, real time display of cause list for information of all the litigants to prevent any deprivation to such facilities.

For immediate installation of Kiosk in

Munsiff Court Gurez, a direction was passed by Justice Sanjeev Kumar which will provide various e-Courts services to people of Gurez.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, who is also Chairman of High Court Information Technology Committee, exhorted upon improvising the existing IT infrastructure to ensure leverage between physical and digital platform for ease of court business and enhancing digital access to physical platforms.

This move is first of its kind which will connect a cut off border area with rest of the world on digital platform.

By making proper use of the same, lawyers can e-file their cases anywhere in the country, e-file replies, check status of their cases, cause list of any court and keep the people of Gurez connected with all the courts across India. It will also bridge the geographical and snow barriers. People and lawyers expressed gratitude for such a unique beginning in such a distantly cut off area.

Seva Parv 2025: KU organises cleanliness drive, field visits, literacy programme

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: To mark the ongoing Seva Parv 2025 celebrations, the University of Kashmir (KU) organised a series of community outreach initiatives, reflecting its commitment to social responsibility, inclusivity, and civic awareness. The events were coordinated by varsity's Department of Students' Welfare.

Weeklong cleanliness drive
The National Service Scheme (NSS) unit of KU launched a weeklong Cleanliness Drive across the main and satellite campuses. The programme was flagged off by Prof. Shazia Manzoor, Head, Department of Social Work KU, who underlined the importance of collective responsibility in maintaining hygiene and sustainability. Dr. Waqar Amin, Coordinator NSS KU, highlighted the role of such initiatives in nurturing civic sense and environmental consciousness among students. KU NSS Programme Officers, Dr. Humaira Showkat and Dr. Aijaz Ahmad, also motivated the volunteers. A large number of NSS volunteers and staff of the varsity's Environment and Hygiene wing actively participated in the drive.

Field visits to senior citizen home, SOS village & ICDS centres

The Department of Social Work organised a field visit to Ahati Waqar Senior Citizen Home, SOS Children's Village and ICDS Centres. Students engaged with elderly people and children through life skills activities, storytelling, and interactive sessions, aiming to spread joy and instil compassion through meaningful interactions.

Adult literacy and career counselling programme
The Directorate of Lifelong Learning (DLL), in collaboration with Phaag Development Forum, organised an Adult Literacy Programme and Career Counselling Session for Youth at Darbagh, Harwan. The programme aimed to empower local adults with basic literacy skills while guiding young people on career opportunities, skill development, and future prospects. The series of initiatives under Seva Parv 2025 showcased KU's ongoing efforts to promote education, social responsibility, environmental awareness, and community care.

NIT Srinagar connects South Indian Martial Arts with Kashmir's campus spirit

FE NEWS NETWORK

Over 80 students attended two-day Silambam workshop

SRINAGAR: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar successfully organized a two-day



Silambam Workshop, introducing students to the traditional martial art of Tamil Nadu. The event, held at the Institute's Common Hall, concluded with enthusiastic participation and a rich cultural exchange.

Out of 140 registrations, 80 students were short-listed and trained in two batches of forty each. The sessions covered the basics of Silambam, including footwork, postures, and stick-handling techniques, blending elements of discipline, focus, and physical fitness.

Students from across India studying at NIT Srinagar took part, symbolizing unity through cultural learning.

The campus witnessed a unique confluence as the rhythmic movements of South India's ancient martial heritage found eager learners against the serene backdrop of Kashmir.

Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. Binod Kumar Kanuja, said such initiatives are vital to preserving traditional knowledge while shaping students' character.

"These workshops not only safeguard cultural heritage but also instill discipline and confidence among our students. The union of Tamil Nadu's Silambam and Kashmir's youthful energy reflects India's

unity in diversity," he said.

Registrar NIT Srinagar, Prof. Atikur Rehman, lauded the initiative and stressed the value of extra-curricular activities.

"Workshops like these strengthen the holistic development of our students. Cultural cross-pollination enriches their academic journey as well," he remarked.

Dean Students' Welfare, Prof. Abid Bazaz, also

highlighted the overwhelming response to the program.

"The enthusiasm of 140 registrations itself proves the appetite for learning and cultural exploration. The training will surely inspire more such initiatives in the future," he said.

The program was coordinated by the Culture Club and SoapBox, led by Dr. Dinesh Kumar Rajendran, Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the Drone Research Centre, who also served as the trainer.

A lifelong practitioner of Silambam, Dr. Rajendran trained at the Sadayappa Martial Arts Academy in Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu.

"Silambam is not just a martial art but a philosophy that cultivates self-control, focus, and balance. Bringing this Tamil tradition to Kashmir reflects the cultural harmony we must continue to cherish," he said.

The workshop concluded with live demonstrations by participants, who showcased their newly acquired skills before faculty and peers. The event underscored the fusion of Tamil Nadu's martial heritage with the academic and cultural vibrancy of Kashmir.

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Shah

goes to the ecosystem created by Prime Minister Modi, as well as to students and youth. He highlighted that the number of startups has grown from 500 in 2014 to 1.92 lakh today, a 380-fold increase. Similarly, the number of unicorn startups has risen from just 4 in 2014 to over 120 today, with a total valuation exceeding \$350 billion. Shri Shah emphasized that this demonstrates how, by leveraging the ecosystem created by Prime Minister Modi, talent can be harnessed to create unicorn startups. He urged industry stakeholders to collaborate with startups to expand in every dimension.

STARTUP ECOSYSTEM HAS PROVIDED SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT TO 17.9 LAKH PEOPLE

Amit Shah said that India currently has 21,000 startups in the IT sector and 17,000 in healthcare. Moreover, there are 11,000 startups each in agriculture, the service sector, and education. He added that startups have expanded their reach to 770 districts in India, showcasing the strength of India's startup ecosystem. Furthermore, 48% of startups are founded by women, and 900 startups in the Northeast are led by women. Shah stated that the startup ecosystem has provided sustainable employment to 17.9 lakh people so far.

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation said that since 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has created a supporting environment for startups and provided financial, policy, infrastructure, banking, and industry support for their growth. He said that a Fund of Funds of 10,000 crore has been established, a Startup India Seed Fund with a corpus of 945 crore has been launched, the maximum loan limit has been increased from 10 crore to 20 crore, support of up to 20 lakh has been approved for Proof of Concept, and funding of up to 50 lakh has been approved for prototype development. He further said that Prime Minister Modi launched Make in India, introduced PLI schemes in 14 key sectors, removed over 40,000 compliances, and removed more than 3400 laws from the category of criminal laws.

APART FROM PM MODI NO ONE ELSE COULD HAVE SIMPLIFIED, REFORMED GST

Amit Shah said that apart from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, no one else could have simplified and reformed GST. After a long time, the country has seen a leader like Prime Minister Modi in whom both taxpayers and the public can place their trust.

He noted that Prime Minister Modi, with great courage and by taking all states along, successfully implemented GST.

GST collections began at 80,000 crore and today have crossed over 2 lakh crore.

Shah added that under GST reforms, Prime Minister Modi reduced the prices of many items by half, by one-third, and even to zero in some cases. Through GST reforms, Prime Minister Modi has shown the public that the government's purpose is to raise revenue to run the country, not to exploit the people.

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation said that since India's independence, the public is witnessing such a massive tax reduction for the first time. He stated that GST reform is a bridge of trust between taxpayers and the government.

Shah recalled that when the Modi government came to power, income up to 2.5 lakh was tax-exempt, but today income up to 12 lakh is taxed at zero.

These two examples, he said, demonstrate that the government levies taxes not for exploitation, but for the people, for the country's development, and for self-reliance. Shri Shah said that his move will serve as a bridge of trust between taxpayers and the Government of India for decades to come.

STARTUP CONCLAVE 2025 WILL DELIBERATE ON PM MODI'S MISSION TO ESTABLISH INDIA'S IDENTITY IN STARTUP WORLD

Referring to the objective of the Startup Conclave 2025, Shah said, "It will deliberate on all aspects of Prime Minister Modi's mission to establish India's identity in the startup world and find solutions to challenges."

Pertinently the conclave has been organized on the theme of three mantras: innovate, elevate, and accelerate.

Shah said that over two days, discussions will be held in seven sessions on various topics, providing a significant platform to connect emerging startups with investors and realize Prime Minister Modi's mantra of "mind to market."

He highlighted that the compilation of the Indian Knowledge System was also launched during the event. "This system encompasses the finest knowledge from around the world in fields such as Ayurveda, classical arts, architecture, mathematics, philosophy, science, space, and the environment." —(KNO)

Union Bank

The Chief Minister assured them that the concerns raised would be duly examined and appropriate steps taken to ensure balanced development across all regions. (DIPR)

Maharaja Hari Singh

visionary leader known for his progressive reforms and commitment to justice.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the celebrations kicked off early with a massive rally organized by the Yuva Rajput Sabha (YRS), which snaked through the heart of Jammu city, drawing participants from diverse communities chanting slogans in praise of the Maharaja.

Members of the Shri Amar Kshatriya (Rajput) Sabha gathered at Maharaja Hari Singh Park near Jogi Gate, where floral tributes were laid at the statue, accompanied by speeches, highlighting his role as a social reformer who championed education, women's rights, and welfare for the underprivileged.

"His motto, 'Justice is my Religion,' remains our guiding light," said one attendee, echoing sentiments shared widely on social media.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha led the official tributes, posting on X. "Tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh Ji on his Janm-Jayanti. A statesman of excellence & harbinger of change, he introduced landmark reforms to ensure welfare of common man. His legacy of inclusive governance, progressive vision & contributions to motherland continues to inspire us."

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh also joined commemorative events, attending gatherings alongside senior BJP leaders. Family members and political figures added personal touches to the day's observances.

Vikramaditya Singh, grandson of the Maharaja and former Member of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Council, shared on X: "Respectful homage to my grandfather Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu & Kashmir on 130th birth anniversary!"

PDP Youth President Aditya Gupta, however, used the occasion to critique the 2019 abrogation of Article 370, arguing it undermined the State Subject laws introduced by Hari Singh to protect local identities, calling the celebrations "hypocrisy" without restoring those safeguards.

Social media buzzed with heartfelt posts, from videos of rallies to reflective messages on the Maharaja's integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India via the 1947 Instrument of Accession.

One user captured the spirit: "Every caste, every Dogra, every corner of Jammu stood united... This is the power of Dogra legacy—unity above caste, faith & politics."

Born on September 23, 1895, to Maharaja Amar Singh, Hari Singh ruled from 1925 until the monarchy's end in 1952. His reign modernized the state through reforms like compulsory primary education and anti-untouchability laws, leaving an indelible mark on Dogra heritage—(KNO)

Cabinet Recommends

six months between the last sitting of one session and the first sitting of the next.

"The Lieutenant Governor shall, from time to time, summon the Legislative Assembly to meet at such time and place as he thinks fit, but six months shall not intervene between its last sitting in one session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next session," reads the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019.

Given the current scenario, the issues of statehood and reservation are expected to dominate proceedings in the House.

In the last Assembly session, three resolutions on statehood lapsed due to disruptions caused by the National Conference, following the rejection of an adjournment motion brought by its legislators on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025.

The issue of reservation also surfaced repeatedly during discussions in the House in the last session.

The detention of APP MLA Mehraj Malik and the hindrances in the movement of fruit trucks on the Srinagar-Jammu highway are also expected to come up for discussion—(KNO)

CRPF reiterates

and remembering those honoured with the Ashoka Chakra, India's highest gallantry award.

Adding colour to the occasion, local artists performed Kashmiri folk music and Rouf dance, creating a festive atmosphere. Cultural groups also showcased performances reflecting Kashmir's rich traditions, drawing applause from the audience, which included women and children from Lal Chowk and adjoining areas.

DG Singh, while addressing the gathering, said, "This expedition is not just a test of endurance, but a reminder of CRPF's contribution to India's internal security and its everlasting commitment to the people of Kashmir. Your encouragement inspires us to serve better."

He said the seven-day high-altitude expedition will see an all-women CRPF team cover nearly 1,400 km from Lal Chowk to Pangong Tso and back, crossing Khardung La at an altitude of 18,000 feet. He extended his greetings to the riders, calling them "torchbearers of courage and inspiration."

He also acknowledged the officers leading the expedition as, DIG Balav Sharma, Brigadier SP Rai and DK Singh, with appreciating their guidance in preparing the team for extreme conditions including sub-zero temperatures and rough terrain.

It is worth mentioning, the Yashasvini High-Altitude CRPF Bike Expedition is an exclusive Mahila Bike series that began in March 2023 with the Delhi-Jagdarpur ride. Its second edition was flagged off in September 2023 from Srinagar, Shillong, and Kanyakumari to Kevadia. This year's edition, flagged off from Kashmir's heart, adds special significance, strengthening the CRPF's message of unity, courage, and people's connect.

Moreover, a statement issued as accessed by KNO reads: to carry forward the message of patriotism and national integration, the 3rd Edition Yashasvini High Altitude CRPF Bike Expedition 2025 was flagged off today by, Gyanendra Pratap Singh, IPS, DG CRPF from the iconic clock tower at Lal Chowk, Srinagar.

It reads as, the bike expedition comprising 33 fearless women bikers shall undertake a journey from Srinagar to the breath-taking Pangong Tso Lake via Khardung La in Ladakh showcasing a vibrant display of women empowerment, resilience, grit, and teamwork of CRPF's women warriors.

"The nine-day bike rally shall cover approximately 1,400 km culminating with their return to Srinagar on October 1, 2025. The bikers will carry the National Flag along with the Force's message to the nation: "Desh Ke Hum Hain Rakshak", " the statement reads.

It reads as, speaking on the occasion, G.P. Singh, IPS, DG CRPF, congratulated the women bikers, stating that they are the torchbearers of the CRPF and deserve special appreciation and gratitude. He also reiterated that the CRPF stands with the people of Kashmir in every situation and expressed gratitude to the local population for their continued support.

"Also present on the occasion were Dr. Anamika Singh, President, CWWA, Sundari Yadav, Zonal Head CWWA, Deepak Kumar, ADG (Training) CRPF, Rajesh Kumar, ADG, J&K Zone CRPF, SJM Gilani, SDG (Coordination) PHQ J&K Police and Vidhi Kumar Birdi, IGP Kashmir Zone, Vineet Brij Lal, IG Kashmir Ops Sector CRPF, Pawan Kumar Sharma, IG Srinagar Sector CRPF and senior officers of CRPF, J&K Police and civil administration," it reads with adding the event was also marked by vibrant cultural performances, including the Kashmiri folk dance Rouf, and a Taekwondo demonstration.

The statement also reads, DG CRPF honoured the Veer Naris and the families of the martyrs who were specially invited and assured them of all possible support and timely assistance—(KNO)

Ayushman Bharat

When illness strikes, it shouldn't mean financial ruin, the statement said, claiming that the scheme has protected more than six crore families from poverty every year. (PTI)

Srinagar

a holistic cultural and tourism experience. The Director of Tourism, Kashmir, made a detailed presentation on the preparations and proposed plan of activities for the marathon.

He had directed officials to tie up with hotels, restaurants, and local businesses to provide special packages for participants and visitors, allowing them to explore Kashmir's hospitality, cuisine, and heritage during their stay.

He had also suggested introducing 10 km and 5 km runs for local participants in addition to the full and half marathons, thereby expanding community engagement and encouraging youth participation. Stressing the importance of sustainability, he called for efforts to secure a title sponsor for the mega event to ensure financial viability and greater brand visibility—(KNO)

J&K floods

Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived in Jammu on August 31 and toured the flood-hit Jammu and assured the victims of relief and rehabilitation.

Shah accompanied by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Leader of Opposition in the J&K Assembly Sunil Sharma and other top officials toured different areas in Jammu region to assess the situation.

He met the flood victims at Mangu Chak, one of the worst-hit villages near Jammu Airport, and took the first-hand account of the situation. He interacted with the villagers and assured them proper relief and rehabilitation.

Shah also visited Tawi bridge near Bikram Chowk and inspected the damage along the riverbanks.

Shah during his Jammu visit also chaired a meeting attended by LG Sinha, CM Omar, LoP Sharma, the DGP of police, and several officials of the Centre and the Union Territory administration.

Shah also reviewed the damage caused to the border security grid by the flash floods

Before the Home Minister's visit, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visited Jammu on August 24 to take stock of the situation following flash floods triggered by a cloudburst in Chisoti village in Kishtwar district. However, Singh's plan to visit the devastated village couldn't materialize due to inclement weather and the blocking of a road by a landslide in Paddar Sub-division—(KNO)

Army Chief

that it's one of the best systems in the world," he added.

The Army Chief said the system would combine sensors, missiles, surveillance apparatus, and artificial intelligence tools to provide both defence and offensive capabilities.

According to him, the concept was in the ideation phase but would be comprehensive in scope. He cautioned that adversaries were also improving their capabilities, pointing to the drones encountered during Operation Sindoor, which had shown advanced features including the use of artificial intelligence and visual navigation even after GPS jamming.

He said India's counter-drone and GPS-jamming systems had performed effectively during the operation, minimising damage. However, he added that similar results could not be assumed in the future because adversaries would adapt once they understood India's current capabilities.

He cited examples from the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict and the Russia-Ukraine war, where relatively inexpensive drones had caused significant damage to costly military assets. He said this reflected the cycle of innovation and adaptation in warfare, where the side adapting faster gained an advantage.

He said self-reliance provided not only inde-

pendence but also the ability to surprise an adversary. Such surprises, he added, could only be used once before the other side learned, requiring continuous innovation.

He said the economic dimension of war also needed to be considered. Drones were now both military and commercial assets, and their wider use would affect security as well as the economy.

General Dwivedi said Mission Sudarshan Chakra would aim to integrate multiple defence layers and advanced systems, keeping India ahead of adversaries while remaining economically viable.

A new portal was launched ahead of the symposium to connect researchers and academic institutes across the country, and the response had been substantial—(KNO)

‘Giran’ apples rot in orchards due to highway closures, say growers

PULWAMA: In Kashmir's apple heartland, orchards are strewn with fallen fruit this year, but instead of offering relief to struggling farmers, the "Giran" apples have turned into a fresh source of worry.

Locally known as "Giran", these are apples that fall prematurely from trees before harvest.

Growers said, that due to unusual weather and heavy fruit fall this season, nearly 30–40 per cent of the crop is "Giran". Yet, unlike past years, there are no takers for the produce.

Traditionally, small makeshift roadside mandis would spring up across Pulwama, Shopian, and other apple belts where "Giran" apples found ready buyers for juice factories and low-grade processing. However, repeated closures of the Srinagar–Jammu National Highway have disrupted supplies so severely that these mandis were forced to shut down.

"Earlier, Giran apples at least helped us recover some costs. Even if sold at Rs 100–150 per crate, it was a relief compared to nothing," said Nazir Ahmad, a grower from Pulwama. "But this year, after highway issues, traders closed their mandis. The fruit we had procured rotted in front of us because it could not be transported outside. Now, no one wants to buy it."

The situation has left hundreds of youth, who earned seasonal income by trading in "Giran", without work. "The Giran business relies on quick movement. If the fruit doesn't reach outside mandis within two days, it spoils. Buyers know this risk, so they simply stopped coming," explained a trader at Jabli Pora Fruit Mandi.

For many farmers, "Giran" apples once acted as a lifeline—bringing in modest earnings that supported their expenses on pesticides, labour, and packaging. Now, growers say they are forced to watch helplessly as the fruit rots in their orchards.

"This is not just about a low-grade apple; it is about livelihoods," said Abdul Hameed, another grower from Shopian. "Thousands of families, from pickers to packers to transporters, are tied to this trade. If the government doesn't take immediate steps, this part of our economy will collapse completely."

Farmers are now appealing for urgent intervention. They want authorities to make special arrangements for apple-laden trucks, including those carrying Giran produce, so that the fallen fruit can reach processing units before spoiling.

Once dismissed as waste, "Giran" apples had gradually built an ecosystem of employment in Kashmir. Today, the same apples are proving to be a burden, symbolising how fragile the valley's horticulture economy remains in the face of logistical bottlenecks—(KNO)

Daughter of Kashmiri Journalist Killed in Hyderabad Road Accident

SRINAGAR: A pall of gloom has descended over the family of Hyderabad-based Kashmiri journalist Khurshid Wani after his eldest daughter, Amna Khurshid, lost her life in a tragic road accident in Hyderabad, Telangana. The incident, which occurred on Tuesday morning in the Hayat Nagar area of the southern city, has sent shockwaves across Kashmir's journalistic and social circles.

Family members said the accident took place while Amna was on her way to college. The 19-year-old, a TDC student, was struck by an unknown vehicle that sped away from the scene, leaving her critically injured on the road. Passersby rushed her to a nearby hospital, but doctors could not save her despite immediate medical intervention. "She left home full of hope and energy, but destiny had other plans. It is a tragedy beyond words," said a grieving relative.

Police in Hyderabad confirmed that a case has been registered and that efforts are underway to identify and trace the vehicle involved. CCTV footage from the locality is being closely examined. "The investigation is active, and we are confident of making progress soon," a police officer said.

The tragedy has left the Wani family devastated.

Amna's mortal remains will be flown from Hyderabad to Srinagar on Wednesday morning. Family members told CNS that the body will be transported to her ancestral village in Devar, Tral, in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, where she will be laid to rest at 8 a.m. "We are preparing to receive her tomorrow. The entire village is preparing for the burial," a family elder said.

The young student was remembered by locals as bright, ambitious, and deeply committed to her studies. "She was a diligent girl with a promising future. Her death is not only a personal loss for her family but a collective tragedy for all of us who knew her," said a relative.

Her father, Khurshid Wani, a journalist originally from Tral, has been working with a private television channel in Hyderabad for the last six years. Colleagues in the media fraternity expressed deep sorrow at the incident, recalling Wani's dedication and professionalism. "Khurshid has always been a hard-working journalist, respected for his commitment. For him to suffer such a personal tragedy is heart-breaking. The fraternity stands with him in this difficult time," said a senior journalist based in Srinagar.

In Tral, locals have begun gathering at the family home, preparing to offer condolences once the body arrives. Neighbours described Amna as a cheerful and respectful young woman who was known for her kindness. "She had her whole life ahead of her. We still cannot believe she is gone," said a neighbour in Devar village.

Her burial at her ancestral graveyard in Tral will mark not only the return of a daughter to her homeland but also the final chapter of a story of unfulfilled dreams. (CNS)

SC directs states, UTs to file status reports on cheque bounce case disposal

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed all the states and union territories to file status reports on the steps taken to augment the disposal of cheque bounce cases.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta passed the order while hearing a suo motu matter concerning expeditious trial of cases under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments (NI) Act, 1881. Section 138 of the Act deals with dishonour of cheque for insufficiency, etc of funds in the account.

Senior advocate Sidharth Luthra, assisting the court as an amicus curiae, referred to the apex court's May 2022 order which, as a pilot study, directed the constitution of 25 special courts with retired judicial officers in five states for expeditious disposal of these cases.

"We have to see whether the pilot project is working or not," Luthra said.

He said he has filed an application in the matter. "We want a status report setting out the steps taken to increase disposal... data as regards vacancies and appointments," he said.

The bench directed all the states, union territories and registrar general of the high courts to provide the necessary status reports within six weeks.

It posted the matter after six weeks. In its May 2022 order, the top court said the special courts under the NI Act would be set up in Maharashtra, Delhi, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan in view of a large number of pending cases.

"The pilot study shall be conducted in 25 special courts in total. One special court shall be established in each of the five judicial districts which have been identified as having the highest pendency by each of the five high courts of the states with the highest pendency of NI Act cases," it said. (KNO)

Public Notice

It is hereby notified that in the school records of my daughter Mahroon Fatima, my name has been incorrectly entered as Sima Begum, whereas my correct name is Sima Akhter. The same is duly reflected in my personal records.

Therefore, I request that the correction be made in the school records accordingly.

If any person has any objection to this correction, he/she may submit the same in writing to the concerned school within seven (07) days from the date of this notice. No objections will be entertained after the expiry of the said period.

Sd/-
Sima Akhter
(Mother of Mahroon Fatima)
H. No. 267, Ward No. 2
Mohalla Radio Station, Poonch, J&K (UT)

Nestlé India rolls-out GST rate reduction benefits for consumers

SRINAGAR: Nestlé India welcomes the recent amendments in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates announced by the Government of India. It will pass on the benefits directly to consumers, from September 22, 2025 onwards.

Mr. Manish Tiwary, Chairman and Managing Director of Nestlé India, stated, "The GST rate reduction is a positive step for consumers in India, as it will stimulate consumption and contribute to the overall growth of



the economy. Nestlé has been an integral part of India for over 113 years and consumers are at the heart of our business. We remain committed to the single purpose of serving consumers in all possible ways."

To ensure transparency, Nestlé India has communicated the benefits through announcements in national and regional newspapers. These changes have also been communicated to wholesalers, distributors, and retailers. (PR)

World Food India 2025 To Be Inaugurated by PM Modi On Sept 25

NEW DELHI: The Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) will host the fourth edition of World Food India (WFI) 2025 from September 25 to 28 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.

Spanning an expansive 1,00,000 square meters, the mega global food event will witness participation from over 21 countries, 21 Indian States and Union Territories, ten Central Ministries, and five allied government organizations, making it the largest congregation of stakeholders in India's food processing sector.

The event will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 25 at 6:00 PM. The inaugural session will also be graced by Dmitry Patrushev, Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Chirag Paswan, and Minister of State for Food Processing Industries and Railways Ravneet Singh Bittu.

Speaking on the upcoming event, Chirag Paswan emphasized that World Food India is not merely a trade show, but a

transformative platform to position India as a global hub for food innovation, investment, and sustainability.



He said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the event demonstrates India's commitment to sustainable, inclusive, and future-ready food systems, strengthening the country's position as the Food Basket of the World.

The summit is expected to attract over 1,700 exhibitors, 500 international buyers, and representatives from more than 100 nations.

During the event, more than forty-five knowledge sessions will be held, including thematic discussions, state- and country-specific conferences, and CXO roundtables with over 100 global agri-food leaders. Parallel events include the 3rd Global Food Regulators Summit organized by FSSAI, which will focus on harmonization of global food safety standards, the 24th India International Seafood Show to showcase India's seafood export potential, and a Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet by APEDA with over 1,000 buyers.

Special exhibitions will include international pavilions, state and ministry pavilions, a Pet Food Pavilion, a Technology Pavilion, and a MoFPI Start-up Innovation Pavilion.

This year's edition of World Food India will focus on five core pillars, including sustainability and net-zero food processing, establishing India as a global food processing hub, exploring frontiers in food processing, products, and packaging technologies, promoting food

for nutrition, health and wellness, and leveraging livestock and marine products to accelerate the Indian rural economy.

In addition, Chirag Paswan launched a publication titled "Frequently Asked Questions on Different Concepts of Food Processing", prepared in consultation with industry stakeholders to dispel myths surrounding processed foods and provide science-based guidance for informed consumer choices.

The Ministry acknowledged the valuable contributions of various government ministries, departments, and organizations, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Department of Fisheries, Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of MSME, APEDA, MPEDA, and commodity boards, whose collective efforts have ensured the successful organization of this mega event.

World Food India 2025 is poised to serve as a landmark global platform, showcasing India's transformative journey in food processing while fostering international collaborations, technological innovation, and investment opportunities. (PIB)

Innovation Journey to Viksit Bharat Calls for Global Thinking, Reoriented Mindset: Dr. Jitendra Singh

NEW DELHI: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology; Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh, Tuesday emphasized that the innovation journey to Viksit Bharat demands global thinking and a reoriented mindset.

According to Press Information Bureau (PIB), he underlined that both Government and private sector must shed inhibitions and work in true synergy.

Stressing the need to break mental barriers, he called for adopting global benchmarks and thinking with a global outlook. Dr. Jitendra Singh said the release of NITI Aayog's landmark report marks an important milestone in aligning India's innovation capacity with the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047.

Dr. Jitendra Singh, along with Union Minister for Education Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, jointly released NITI Aayog's report titled "Pathways to Progress: Analysis and Insights into India's Innovation Story" at NITI Aayog headquarters today.

In his address, Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized that early industry linkage with equal partnership in investment is key to transforming start-ups into successful ventures. He cited the example of India's vaccine success story, where private companies were brought on board from Day One, enabling timely development and delivery at scale.

The Minister underlined that India's steady climb in the Global Innovation Index—from 81st position in 2015 to 39th in 2025—is not accidental but the outcome of deliberate policy choices, investments in entrepreneurship, and the spirit of India's young innovators. Today, India hosts the third-largest startup ecosystem in the world, with more than 1 lakh Government-recognized startups and over 100 unicorns.

Importantly, nearly 50% of startups now originate from Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, demonstrating the democratization of entrepreneurship and India's inclusive innovation story.

Dr. Jitendra Singh acknowledged persistent challenges: lack of synergy across institutions, need for patient capital for deep-tech ventures, weak academia-industry linkages, uneven state-level innovation capacities, and gaps in intel-

lectual property protection and commercialization.

To address these, Dr. Jitendra called for creating specialized interfaces on the lines of BIRAC (Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance



Council) and IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre) in other critical areas of technology. Such platforms, he stressed, are essential for fostering seamless collaboration between government and private sectors.

Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized that Government initiatives like the National Deep Tech Startup Policy, and the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) represent a fundamental shift towards building sovereignty in frontier technologies. These efforts, he said, will reward risk-taking, creativity, and collaboration, ensuring that India is not merely a consumer of global technologies but a producer and leader.

Looking ahead, Dr. Jitendra Singh said "India's innovation journey cannot rely on government alone. It requires a whole-of-nation approach—government providing the enabling framework, industry bringing scale and investment, academia driving knowledge creation, and young innovators supplying energy and creativity. Together, we can transform aspirations into achievements and realize the dream of Viksit Bharat by 2047."

The Science Minister further urged stakeholders to view the NITI Aayog report not just as an assessment, but as a roadmap and call to action—to scale successful models, diversify incubators, strengthen state-level capacities, and boldly invest in frontier R&D. (PIB)

"Along with Make in India, we are also working on Make with Friends": Rajnath Singh

Srinagar: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday inaugurated Tata Advanced Systems Maroc's new manufacturing facility at Berrechid in Morocco, calling it a milestone that showcased India's growing role in global defence collaboration.

Speaking at the inauguration, Singh said, "... Along with Make in India, we are also working on Make with Friends. Under this initiative, we will collaborate with trusted partners to develop and produce cutting-edge technologies. Ultimately, through "Make for the World," the benefits of our innovation will be shared with the entire world.

The facility being established in Berrechid is an excellent example of this very vision. This facility also demonstrates that Indian industries are not only capable of meeting domestic needs but are also prepared to enhance the defence capabilities of friendly nations through partnership. This is a model of partnership that respects sovereignty, strengthens local capacity, and also contributes to global peace..."

Placing the new defence plant in the larger framework of bilateral ties, the Defence Minister underlined the progress in India-Morocco relations, noting that cooperation had expanded into multiple sectors. "In recent years, both our countries have explored many areas where cooperation has yielded excellent results. These include renewable energy to fertilisers, information technology to tourism, and now a very important sector, defence and advanced manufacturing," he said.

Welcoming Tata Advanced Systems Limited's presence in Morocco, Singh remarked, "Today, as we welcome India's leading private-sector defence enterprise to Moroccan soil, this day further strengthens our shared resolve. The establishment of this defence manufacturing facility by Tata Advanced Systems Limited is truly a historic moment. It is one of the first foreign defence manufacturing plants established by an Indian company. This is not only a significant step for Tata Advanced Systems but also for the entire Indian Defence Industry." (ANI)



Russia, Ukraine fire drones, missiles and bombs as Zelenskyy seeks help at UN

KYIV: Russia said that it shot down three dozen Ukrainian drones heading toward Moscow while Ukraine said that Russian missiles, drones and bombs killed at least



two civilians, as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy persevered with efforts to bolster international support for his country at a UN gathering of world leaders on Tuesday.

With his troops under strain on the front line after more than three years of fighting Russia's bigger invading army, Zelenskyy was due to begin meetings with leaders gathered in New York this week for the UN General Assembly.

Peace efforts set in motion by US President Donald Trump since he returned to office in January appear to have stalled. Trump's Alaska summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin and a White House meeting with Zelenskyy and key European leaders took place more than a month ago, but the war has continued unabated.

Zelenskyy said that he met late Monday in New York with Keith Kellogg, Trump's special envoy. Kellogg and Zelenskyy discussed cooperation agreements on the manufacturing of drones and Ukraine's purchase of American weaponry, the Ukrainian president said on Telegram.

European leaders have supported Zelenskyy's diplomatic efforts, even as the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza is expected to take centre stage at the United Nations. Some European countries are alarmed by the possibility that the war could spread beyond Ukraine amid what they have called Russian provocations.

NATO allies will hold formal consultations

at Estonia's request on Tuesday, after the Baltic country said that three Russian fighter jets entered its airspace last week without authorization.

Meanwhile, the full-scale war, which began on February 24, 2022, continues to take a heavy toll on Ukrainian civilians.

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights said earlier this month that Ukrainian civilian casualties increased by 40 per cent in the first eight months of this year compared to 2024, as Russia escalated its long-range missile and localized drone strikes.

Also, a UN Human Rights Office report released Tuesday described the dire situation of thousands of civilians detained by Russia in areas of Ukraine it has captured.

"Russian authorities have subjected Ukrainian civilian detainees in occupied territory to torture and ill-treatment, including sexual violence, in a widespread and systematic manner," the report said.

Russian aircraft dropped five glide bombs on the southern Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia during the night, killing a man, regional head Ivan Fedorov said Tuesday.

In the Odesa region of southern Ukraine, Russian ballistic missiles struck the town centre of Tatarbunary, killing a woman, regional head Oleh Kiper said Tuesday morning.

Overall, Russian forces launched three Iskander ballistic missiles and 115 strike and decoy drones at Ukraine overnight, the Ukrainian air force said. It said that 108 drones were intercepted or jammed, but 12 drones and three missiles reached their targets at six locations.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said that more than 40 Ukrainian drones flying toward the Russian capital were shot down between Monday evening and midday Tuesday.

Flights were temporarily halted overnight in and out of Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport, causing delays and cancellations, because of the attack.

The Russian Defense Ministry reported Tuesday that it intercepted 69 Ukrainian drones over a number of Russian regions and the annexed Crimean Peninsula. (PTI)

Indian Navy to Commission 'Androth', Second Ship in ASW-SWC Series

VISAKHAPATNAM: The Indian Navy is set to commission its second state-of-the-art Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC), Androth, at Naval Dockyard, Visakhapat-

nam on October 6, 2025. The vessel was handed over to the Indian Navy on September 13, 2025.



The name Androth carries strategic and symbolic significance, derived from Androth Island in the Lakshadweep archipelago, highlighting India's commitment to safeguarding its maritime territories. In its previous avatar, INS Androth (P69) served the nation with distinction for over 27 years before being decommissioned, and the commissioning of the new Androth honors the legacy of its predecessor.

Equipped with advanced weapon and sensor suites, modern communication systems, and waterjet propulsion, Androth is designed to detect, track, and neutralize underwater threats with precision. The vessel is also capable of undertaking maritime surveillance, Search and Rescue operations, and coastal defense missions across a spectrum of threats.

The induction of Androth strengthens India's maritime security architecture, enhancing the Navy's anti-submarine warfare capabilities while reaffirming the nation's resolve to design, develop, and build world-class warships through indigenous efforts. (PIB)

US, China 'talking past each other' on key issues, says US lawmaker visiting Beijing

BEIJING: The United States and China are talking past each other on key issues, said a US lawmaker leading a bipartisan congressional delegation to Beijing on Tuesday.

The visit, led by Rep Adam Smith, a Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, is the first from the House of Representatives to China since 2019, and comes as tensions have risen between the two countries over trade, technology and opposing views on global conflicts.

The aim of the trip, Smith said, is to increase dialogue between the two sides. "You have to be willing to start the process of saying, Okay, this is where I'm coming from, where are you coming from?" And we're not even at that point yet. We're still sort of talking past each other," Smith said Tuesday.

The US delegation said they hoped China would take meaningful action to reduce the inflow of fentanyl into the US and they expressed concern over China's restrictions on the global supply of rare

earths, according to a readout from the House Armed Services Committee on Monday.

Smith also said Tuesday he is concerned that the US and Chinese militaries are coming too close to each other operationally, and that he wants the Chinese side to engage in more dialogue.

"We've seen this with our ships and our planes, their ships, their planes, coming entirely too close to one another," he told reporters. "At the height of the Cold War, we had regular conversations, regular treaties with the Soviet Union."

In October 2023, the US military said



that a Chinese fighter jet came within 10 feet of an American bomber over the

President Donald Trump said he would meet with Xi at a regional summit in South Korea in late October and visit China in the "early part of next year," following a lengthy phone call between the two on Friday.

South China Sea.

Smith added he hoped for more engagement overall with Beijing.

"Many things that seemed intractable and impossible — once you actually start talking from the standpoint of 'Let's try and resolve this' — it is unbelievable what you can accomplish," he said.

The delegation met with Chinese Defence Minister Dong Jun and separately with Vice Premier He Lifeng on Monday after holding talks with Premier Li Qiang on Sunday.

The US and Chinese militaries suspended communications with each other for over a year starting in August 2022, following a visit by then-US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan. The visit angered Beijing, which claims self-ruled Taiwan as its own territory, to be annexed by force if necessary.

A group of US senators visited Beijing in 2023.

China and the US restored military dialogue in November 2023 after a rare meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and then-US President Joe Biden. But it is unclear how regularly the two militaries have communicated with each other and Smith did not address the frequency in response to reporters' questions on Tuesday.

President Donald Trump said he would meet with Xi at a regional summit in South Korea in late October and visit China in the "early part of next year," following a lengthy phone call between the two on Friday.

The congressional delegation to China also includes Michael Baumgartner, a Republican member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, as well as Ro Khanna and Chrissy Houlahan, both Democrats on the House Armed Services Committee. The lawmakers are in China until Thursday. (PTI)

WAZWAN DELIGHTS

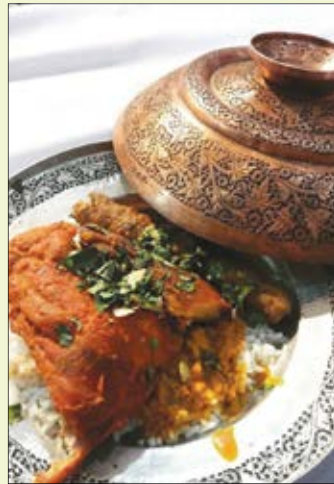
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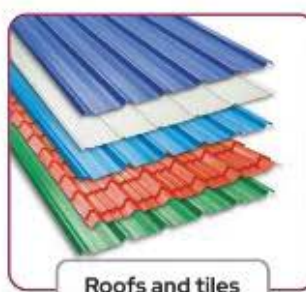
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