



Terrorism Taking Its Last Breath In J&K: LG Manoj Sinha

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Addresses Athletes at 10th All India Police Judo Cluster

Security has significantly improved across the country. Roots of left-wing extremism were dismantled and India is witnessing a new era of progress driven by rapid economic growth: LG

SRINAGAR: "J&K Police is not only fighting terrorism, maintaining law & order and protecting citizens but it is also a crucial agent of socio-economic development," the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Friday. He said J&K Police has ensured peace and stable society for industrial growth and overall progress in the Union Territory. The Lieutenant Governor was speaking at the 10th All India Police Judo Cluster (Men & Women) - 2025. "Terrorism is breathing its last in J&K. The peace has enabled unparalleled progress and brought greater prosperity in the lives of people. Security has significantly improved across the country. Roots of left-wing extremism were dismantled and India is witnessing a new era of progress driven by rapid economic growth," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the police, army, and CAPFs for dismantling terror support systems,

ernor also spoke on the power of sports to foster a sense of collective identity, camaraderie, courage, character build-

All India Police Judo Cluster serves as a vibrant platform to celebrate Unity in Diversity and showcase India's rich cultural and social heritage," he said.

More than 2,000 athletes are partici-



"Sports is the **universal language** of unity and it promotes inclusivity and mutual respect. The sports events like All India **Police Judo Cluster** serves as a vibrant platform to celebrate Unity in Diversity and showcase India's rich **cultural and social heritage**," he said.

and preventing cross-border infiltration. He emphasized on intelligence-based kinetic operations and adopting a multifaceted approach to tackle internal security challenges.

The Lieutenant Governor also praised the J&K Police force in building a fear-free environment for citizens.

In his address, the Lieutenant Gov-

ing, peace, equality and friendship among people and the region.

He called upon the youth to develop qualities like compassion and courage, and dedicate their potential and talents in service to the nation.

"Sports is the universal language of unity and it promotes inclusivity and mutual respect. The sports events like

pating in the championship comprising of Judo, Wushu, Pencak Silat, Taekwondo and Karate, hosted by Jammu Kashmir Police.

DGP, Nalin Prabhat; Shri S.J.M. Gilani, Special DG Coordination PHQ; ADGP Armed, Anand Jain; senior officials of Police and Civil Administration; representatives of various sports associations; prominent sports personalities, and youth in large number were present.

Minister Javed Rana Calls on LG Manoj Sinha

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SRINAGAR: Javed Ahmed Rana, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, called on the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, at Raj Bhavan, Srinagar.

Mr. Rana discussed several key issues pertaining to his Ministries that require the urgent attention and intervention of the Lieutenant Governor.

Prominently, he raised the matter of ensuring the continued flow of the Central Share of finances under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), which are critical for ongoing developmental and welfare projects across Jammu & Kashmir.

He also highlighted the need for adequate funding and support for the newly identified tribal villages included under the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan, an initiative aimed at the ho-

listic development of tribal communities.

He emphasized that timely allocation of resources will ensure the effective implementation of welfare schemes and infrastructure projects in these remote



and underserved areas.

The Lieutenant Governor assured the Minister of all possible support for inclusive development and welfare of all sections of society, particularly the tribal communities.

Raids In Srinagar At Premises Of Terrorist Associates

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SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir police on Friday conducted raids at the premises of terrorist associates linked with banned outfits at multiple locations in the city here.

In its sustained efforts to dismantle the terror ecosystem and curb unlawful ac-



tivities, Srinagar police conducted extensive raids at multiple locations across the city, a police spokesman said.

He said the searches ■ See On P/6

NC announces candidates for Rajya Sabha polls

Choudhary Ramzan, Sajad Kichloo, Shammi Oberoi to contest polls



SRINAGAR: National Conference on Friday announced its candidates for the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls scheduled on October 24.

Addressing a news conference here, National Conference, General Secretary, Ali Muhammad Sagar named Choudhary Muhammad Ramzan (former minister), Sajad Ahmad Kichloo (former minister of state for Home) and Shammi Oberoi (Treasurer) of its candidate for the polls.

"They will nomination papers in the next few days," he said, adding that the names of candidates were finalised by the party's core committee.

Ramzan, a senior National Conference leader from Handwara, ■ See On P/6

BSF has not let its guard down along IB, watching border threats: IG BSF

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JAMMU: Inspector General (IG) of Border Security Force (BSF) for Jammu, Shashank



Anand on Friday said that the security forces are alert on the border and are maintaining a tight vigil.

Talking to reporters at BSF Headquarters here, IG BSF said, "Cross-border activities remain under constant watch and we are prepared to counter any threat."

"We are closely monitoring all activities. Whenever we notice any suspicious movement we develop effective strategies with other agencies," the IG said. ■ See On P/6

He said the BSF remains vigilant and committed to preventing any attempt at infiltration or cross-border activity. "The enemy always tries to infiltrate, but we are vigilant and in close coordination with our sister agencies," he added.

On evolving threats and warfare methods, IG Anand said the BSF is adapting new technologies, including drone warfare and artificial intelligence.

"This 21st century has witnessed changes, and aerial routes such as drones are being used. AI is also being employed. BSF is not lagging behind; we are training our troops in drones for attack and defence purposes, and if there is any opportunity, we will use it," he said.

The IG BSF said that the challenges on the border change with seasons, especially during winter, and the force is prepared accordingly. "During winter season,

Cybercrimes Rising Faster Than Defences, Warns Union Home Secy

FE NEWS NETWORK

KOCHI: Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan on Friday said the nation must stand united to tackle cybersecurity issues.

He was speaking after inaugurating COCON 2025, the annual cybersecurity conference organised by the Kerala Police here.

Mohan pointed out that cybercrime is on the rise globally, even as defensive measures are put in place.

He said that, along with offences such as digital arrest, cyber-dependent crimes are also increasing.

Investigation agencies must act vigilantly, but the public must also remain alert to cybercrime, he said.

The inaugural session was presided over by MP Hibi Eden, while State Police Chief and DGP Revada

Chandrashekhar delivered the keynote address.

Mohan also released a booklet, "National Strategy Against Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse,"



It is attended by people from various corporate firms, government organisations, including the various investigation agencies, academia, research organisations,

He Said That, Along With Offences Such As **Digital Arrest**, Cyber-Dependent Crimes Are Also Increasing. ”

which was brought out by the Kerala police.

COCON is an annual conference that discusses topics such as information security, data protection, and privacy.

and cybersecurity experts.

As part of the event, various technical, non-technical, legal, and community events are organised.

The conference will conclude on Saturday. (PTI)

J&K sees tax revenue boom, led by 87% surge in land revenue

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SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir's own tax revenue has shown a strong rise over recent years, hinting at a steady improvement in the Union Territory's financial position. The stamp duty and registration fees are witnessing one of the sharpest increases, growing by 57 per cent from Rs 325.54 crore to Rs 512.02 crore. Land revenue has nearly doubled, rising by 87 per cent from Rs 60.57 crore to Rs 113.28 crore.

According to the official data, Jammu and Kashmir's total own tax revenue increased from Rs 8,876.99 crore in 2020-21 to Rs 11,707.28 crore in 2021-22. This has shown a growth of 31.88 per cent in a single year, hinting at higher collections across all tax segments.

A senior finance department official said, that the increase is due to better compliance and stronger revenue administration. "Post-pandemic recovery has clearly revived trade, transport, and real estate activity. Further, the GST frame-

work has matured in Jammu and Kashmir. With tighter enforcement and improved digital tracking, leakages have reduced significantly," he added.

The State Goods and Services Tax (SGST) was the biggest contributor, rising from



Rs 4,839.35 crore in 2020-21 to Rs 6,394.31 crore in 2021-22, an increase of over 32 per cent. State Excise collections went up from Rs 1,347.42 crore to Rs 1,782.79 crore, also a 32 per cent jump. Taxes on sales and trade climbed from Rs 1,495.61 crore to Rs 1,906.31 crore.

Stamp duty and registration fees saw

one of the sharpest increases, growing by 57 per cent from Rs 325.54 crore to Rs 512.02 crore. Land revenue nearly doubled, rising by 87 per cent from Rs 60.57 crore to Rs 113.28 crore. Taxes on goods and

"The government's focus on plugging gaps and digitising payments is showing results," he said, adding that more citizens are entering the formal tax net

passengers recorded the steepest jump, from Rs 0.90 crore in 2020-21 to Rs 5.73 crore in 2021-22, a 536 per cent increase.

A senior official at the department of finance here attributed this

■ See On P/6

CS Pushes For Seamless Fruit Transportation From Valley

Also Directs For Exploring Rail Freight Link To Major Metro Markets

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SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, chaired a high-level meeting to review the transportation and smooth movement of fruit consignments from the Valley to markets outside.

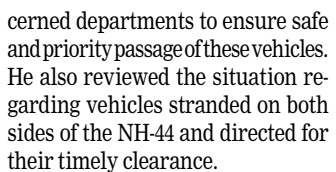
The meeting was attended by Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir; Secretary, Transport Department; IG Traffic; Transport Commissioner; Secretary in Agriculture Production Department; MD, HPMC; Regional Officer, NHAI; and other concerned officers.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary took stock of the current status of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH-44) and its restoration to full operational capacity. He specifically enquired about the movement of fruit-laden trucks from the Valley and the unhindered passage of other essential commodities coming from outside towards Srinagar.

He further directed that no fruit truck should remain stranded on the highway and instructed the concerned departments to ensure safe and priority passage of these vehicles.

He also reviewed the situation regarding vehicles stranded on both sides of the NH-44 and directed for their timely clearance.

While reviewing long-distance transportation options, the Chief Secretary advised the



cerned departments to ensure safe and priority passage of these vehicles.

■ See On P/6

Infiltrators in voters' list pollute spirit of Constitution: Amit Shah

NEW DELHI: Backing the SIR exercise, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said the inclusion of infiltrators in the voters' list pollutes the spirit of the Constitution and asserted that voting rights should only be available to the citizens of the country.

Delivering a lecture in the memory of former editor-in-chief of Dainik Jagran, Narendra Mohan, on the topic of 'infiltration (ghuspaith), demographic change and democracy', the home minister said the Centre will follow the policy of "detect, delete and deport" while dealing with infiltrators.

Shah said infiltration, as well as the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls by the Election Commission, should not be viewed from a political angle, emphasising that it is a national issue.

The Congress has gone into a "denial mode" on the issue of the SIR, Shah said, adding that the exercise took place during the party's government as well.

"The opposition is opposabilities exercise because their vote banks ■ See On P/6

DC Ramban hands over Loan Sanction Letters to 65 aspiring entrepreneurs

RAMBAN: District Administration Ramban, in collaboration with J&K Bank, distributed loan sanction letters under Mission YUVA among 65 eligible beneficiaries.

The letters were formally handed over by Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan along with ADC Varunjeet Singh Charak, Cluster Head J&K Bank Sanjay Kumar Belowo, AD Employment Amit Kumar during a brief function.

Senior officers of the District Administration and functionaries of J&K Bank and stakeholders attended the function.



The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the sponsoring departments and Jammu & Kashmir Bank for effectively implementing Mission YUVA and achieving its core objectives in the district.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner described Mission YUVA as a transformative initiative for tackling unemployment by equipping youth with access to finance, skills and livelihood opportunities. He urged the beneficiaries to utilize the loans judiciously and establish sustainable ventures with sincerity and discipline.

Representatives from J&K Bank reaffirmed their commitment to supporting youth under the scheme by ensuring smooth loan processing and timely disbursement. They also stressed the importance of financial discipline and timely repayment to ensure the continued success of the programme.

PG College Rajouri hosts workshop on “Mental Health: Issues and Concerns”

RAJOURI: In observance of World Mental Health Day, the Government Post Graduate College Rajouri organized a thought-provoking and socially relevant workshop themed “Mental Health: Issues and Concerns.”

The event aimed to promote awareness, reduce stigma and encourage open conversations about psychological well-being among the youth.



The Deputy Commissioner graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, while the College Principal Prof. Zamir Ahmed Mirza presided over the event. The programme was organized by the Department of Sociology and the National Service Scheme (NSS) under the academic supervision of Prof. Khaleeq Ahmed.

In his keynote address, Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma underlined the problem of rising incidence of stress, anxiety and depression among students and young professionals. He emphasized the importance of nurturing psychological resilience, building emotional intelligence and breaking the social stigma attached to mental health.

Interacting with the students, the DC discussed pressing issues such as social isolation, digital dependency and suicidal tendencies, urging the youth to become advocates of mental well-being and community support.

Prof. Khaleeq Ahmed, in his scholarly presentation elaborated on the biological, social and cultural dimensions of mental health. He highlighted the need for early intervention, empathetic communication and institutional support mechanisms to address mental health challenges and promote holistic wellness.

Earlier, the session began with a welcome address by Prof. Murtaza Ahmed, who emphasized the necessity of integrating mental health literacy into academic curricula and community outreach programmes. His remarks set the intellectual tone for the deliberations that followed.

The event was attended by distinguished faculty members and nearly 300 students, who actively participated in the interactive sessions with enthusiasm and curiosity.

In his presidential address, Prof. Zamir Ahmed Mirza lauded the efforts of the organizing team and reiterated the moral and institutional responsibility of colleges to cultivate environments conducive to emotional wellness and compassionate dialogue. He also extended gratitude to the Deputy Commissioner for his inspiring and insightful address.

The workshop concluded with an engaging interactive session and a formal vote of thanks, leaving participants motivated to carry forward the message of mental health awareness and collective well-being in their communities.

JKTPO organises 4th Export Awareness cum E-Commerce On-boarding Drive in Udhampur

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UDHAMPUR: Continuing its 2025 series of Export Awareness Workshops, the Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO), under the aegis of the Industries & Commerce Department, organized the 4th Export Awareness cum E-Commerce Onboarding Drive in District Udhampur on 10th October 2025.

The workshop was held with the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), District Administration Udhampur, Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO), Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), HDFC Bank and the Government e-Marketplace (GeM).

The event aimed to sensitize and support MSMEs, artisans, entrepreneurs, and farmers about export potential, government incentives, and e-commerce integration. Experts conducted interactive sessions on export benefits, IEC registration, India Business and Trade Portals, credit and risk insurance, logistics, and digital market access for local products.

Prem Singh, Additional DC, Udhampur inaugurated the workshop and emphasized the district's export potential under the ODOP-DEH initiative, highlighting products like Pickle, Tourism and Garlic. She underlined the importance of capacity building, quality enhancement and market-oriented skill development to strength-

en Udhampur's export ecosystem.

The workshop witnessed enthusiastic participation from around 130 participants,

and branding support, while FIEO promoted the India Business Portal for global visibility, credit support and trade



including local artisans, MSME representatives, entrepreneurs and farmers. With this, the series has so far seen strong participation -110 in Samba, 100 in Jammu and 90 in Kathua- reflecting the growing interest of local producers in exploring export opportunities and digital commerce integration.

Representatives from DGFT, APEDA, FIEO, HDFC Bank and GeM provided guidance on export opportunities and support. DGFT highlighted schemes like EPCG, MEIS, SEIS and Advance Authorization, along with IEC registration. APEDA spoke on export standards, product registration

updates. ECGC explained credit risk insurance protecting exporters from defaults and political risks and HDFC Bank outlined export finance, working capital solutions and digital banking tools. GeM demonstrated vendor onboarding, encouraging entrepreneurs to leverage the platform for nationwide exposure, transparent procurement and timely payments. This workshop is part of JKTPO's ongoing efforts under the District as Export Hub (DEH) and One District One Product (ODOP) initiatives to boost district-level exports, strengthen market linkages and integrate local producers into global value chains.

Dr. Piyush Singla Chairs Study Group's Meet On Establishment Of IT Park In J&K

JAMMU: Secretary, Information Technology (IT) Department, Dr Piyush Singla chaired the meeting of Study Group constituted for

aegis of IIT Jammu, with the report to be structured in two phases; Phase I: Development under the Higher Educational Institu-



establishment of IT Park in Jammu and Kashmir at Civil Secretariat here.

The meeting was held to review and deliberate upon the preliminary report prepared for setting up a world-class IT Park in the UT.

During the meeting, members held detailed deliberations on the proposed framework and implementation strategy.

The group decided that the preliminary report shall be revisited in light of the observations and directions issued during the deliberations, and updated accordingly by the Study Group to incorporate all relevant suggestions and refinements.

The meeting further decided that the proposed IT Park shall be developed under the

tion (HEI) Model, and Phase II: Expansion through Public-Private Partnership (PPP) / Private Investment Model.

The group also decided that the incentive framework for the IT Park shall be aligned with the notified Industrial Policy of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir to ensure uniformity and ease of implementation.

It was also decided that the final report, incorporating all suggestions and recommendations, shall be submitted to the Government for consideration which will include an overview tracing the evolution of the IT/ITeS ecosystem in J&K, details of incubatee funds available with various Administrative departments, and recommendations

for creation of a Unified Portal to consolidate incubatee funding opportunities across States and Union Territories, drawing upon national models like the DoT's Telecom Incubation Fund.

During the meeting, Dr. Singla directed that the Planning department shall provide authentic, validated, and up-to-date data from credible sources like YUVA Report, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative indicators to support evidence-based planning. He emphasized that data validation points must be clearly defined and cross-verified across all departments to maintain accuracy and consistency.

The Secretary also directed the IT department to initiate Skill Outreach Programmes aimed at enhancing employability and preparing the youth for opportunities in the IT/ITeS sector in collaboration with higher educational institutions and Skill Development department.

CEO, JaKeGA, Mahima Madan; Director General (E&S), Ather Hussain Qadri; Director General, Planning; Showkat Mahmood Malik, Special Secretary, Information Technology Department; Prof. M.T. Arvind and Prof. Anurag Misra from IIT Jammu; Professor from IIM Jammu and Senior Consultant, SeMT, besides other officers and members of the Study Group also attended the meeting.

DC Reasi inspects Fisheries and Sericulture Units

Emphasizes use of modern techniques, livelihood promotion

REASI: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Nidhi Malik conducted an extensive visit to the District Fish Farms at Sullia and Thanpal to review the ongoing op-

works for quality seed production and its distribution to local fish farmers.

At the Thanpal Fish Farm, the DC inspected the bio-plant setup and reviewed



erations, infrastructure and achievements of the fisheries sector in the district.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner took a comprehensive assessment of the breeding processes of Common Carp and Mahaseer, besides reviewing the various stages involved in the breeding cycle. She also inspected the hatchery units and interacted with officials to understand the methodologies adopted

the maintenance of breeding ponds and other infrastructure facilities. She emphasized the importance of adopting modern fish farming techniques and sustainable practices to enhance productivity and support the livelihoods of rural fish farmers. She also visited the Fisheries Department Guest House, which is currently under renovation. She directed the officers to ensure that renovation

works are completed within the stipulated timeline with due focus on functionality and aesthetics.

The Deputy Commissioner directed officers to focus on improving seed quality, farm management, and capacity-building initiatives for local youth interested in fish culture.

Later, Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik visited the Mulberry Farm at Gran Morh to review the ongoing activities of the Sericulture Department and assess the progress in mulberry cultivation and cocoon production in the district.

The DC was informed that the Gran Morh Mulberry Farm spans over 50 kanals of land, out of which 30 kanals serve as a pre-nursery area where 31,500 cuttings have been planted. It was further apprised that around 15,000 A-class mulberry plants will soon be uprooted and distributed among farmers to promote cocoon rearing and boost sericulture-based livelihood generation.

In addition, the DC inspected the attached mulberry block, where 8,500 mature mulberry plants are currently growing. These plants serve as a source of cuttings, while the remaining plants are provided to farmers for cocoon production.

Among others present during the visit were AD Fisheries Masood Anwar and District Sericulture Officer Rajiv Gupta.

DHS Jammu inspects patient care services at PHC GhouManhasan

JAMMU: Director Health Services Jammu Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar visited Primary Health Centre (PHC) GhouManhasan to review its functioning and assess the healthcare delivery system at the institution.

During the visit, the Director interacted with the medical and paramedical staff and took a detailed review of patient care services, avail-



ability of essential drugs, diagnostic facilities and cleanliness of the premises. He emphasized the importance of maintaining discipline, punctuality and providing compassionate care to the patients.

Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar also inspected various sections of the PHC including OPD, Labour Room, Immunization Section and Laboratory. He appreciated the efforts of the staff in maintaining healthcare services in the rural area. He directed the concerned officials to ensure effective implementation of all national health programmes and strengthen preventive and promotive healthcare measures at the grassroots level.

The Director reiterated the commitment of the Health Department to provide quality healthcare services to the people of Jammu Division and assured that all necessary support will be extended for further upgradation of facilities at PHC GhouManhasan

Ramban: Girls, Boys students acquainted about life-saving skills, disaster preparedness

RAMBAN: The District Administration Ramban, in collaboration with the Mahila Di-



saster Management Committee (MDMC), the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) organised a Disaster Awareness and Preparedness Programme at Government Higher Secondary School, Ramban.

The programme aimed to educate and empower Boys and Girls students—with essential life-saving skills and practical knowledge required during emergencies. The MDMC Ramban emphasized that youth and women form the backbone of any resilient community and their active involvement can greatly strengthen local disaster response mechanisms.

During the session, students received hands-on training in improvisational techniques such as using household items like T-shirts and blankets to prepare makeshift stretchers. Demonstrations also covered vital first aid and emergency response procedures, including managing cardiac arrest, femur fractures and other critical situations.

Considering Ramban's vulnerability to natural calamities, such initiatives play a vital role in fostering community awareness and preparedness, ensuring timely and effective response during crises. The MDMC Ramban expressed gratitude to the NDRF and SDRF teams for their active participation and continued support in building a culture of safety and resilience within the district.

Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign 3.0

GDC Kastigarh hosts awareness lecture

DODA: Dy. SP Aman Thakur Memorial Government Degree College Kastigarh organized an awareness lecture as part of the national initiative “Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign 3.0” aimed at promoting a healthy and addiction-free lifestyle among students.

The programme was held under the guidance of the College Principal Prof. Koshal Kumar Mangotra. Convenor Anti-Tobacco Committee Dr. Anupam Lata delivered the keynote address, sensitizing students about the harmful effects of tobacco use, the influence of peer pressure and the importance of making conscious and healthy life choices. She also highlighted the government measures and awareness programmes designed to curb tobacco consumption among youth.

A large number of students participated actively in the session and engaged in interactive discussions. The event was coordinated by Dr. Sumit Kotwal, with full support from the faculty members of the college.

The lecture concluded with a pledge to spread awareness and contribute towards building a tobacco-free society.

Sakeena Ito reviews performance, functioning, progress of School, Higher Education Deptts.

Also assesses progress of works on ongoing projects

Calls for stringent monitoring, field-level inspections to address delays, remove bottlenecks

SRINAGAR: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo chaired a high level meeting at Civil Secretariat here today to review the performance, functioning and progress of various ongoing projects of School Education and Higher Education Departments across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education department, Shantmanu; Secretary School Education, Ram Niwas Sharma; Director General School Education Kashmir, Dr. G.N Itoo; Project Director Samagra Shiksha, Director School Education Jammu, Mission Director, RUSA, Special Secretaries of Higher Education and School Education departments, Director Finance/Director Planning of Higher Education and School Education departments, Director Colleges, Chief Engineer PWD of Central Kashmir/South Kashmir/North Kashmir/Jammu/Chenab/Pir Panjal zones, Chief Education Officers of all districts and other concerned officers of both departments.

During the meeting, Minister Sakeena took comprehensive evaluation of key developmental initiatives, infrastructure projects, and academic reforms being implemented across J&K in both Higher Education and School Education departments.

While reviewing the status of ongoing projects in Higher Education department under various schemes like Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA), and CAPEX budget initiatives, the Minister emphasized on the timely execution of all ongoing works, particularly those related to infrastructure development, digital learning

facilities, teacher training programs, and curriculum enhancement.

She directed the officers of executing agencies that college construction projects need to be

Taking stock of faculty positions in colleges, the Minister called upon the officers of Higher Education department to look out for the feasibility of increasing remuneration in favour of Academic

education, directing the concerned officers to expedite the installation of smart classrooms, ICT labs and e-content access facilities to bridge the learning gap, particularly in rural and far-flung areas. Reiterating the government's commitment to inclusive and equitable education, Minister Sakeena said that special attention is being given to educational infrastructure in remote, border and tribal areas, to ensure every child in J&K has access to quality learning opportunities.

The Minister further called upon all the CEOs to utilise funds under Samagra Shiksha efficiently so that required infrastructure can be created. She further directed the CEOs to monitor projects in their respective districts on regular basis and maintain coordination with project executing agencies for their early completion.

Taking stock of Human Resource issues, the Minister asked the officers of School Education department to appoint Nodal Officer in each district for maintaining coordination with ACB for timely obtaining of Vigilance Clearance certificates in favour of employees. She also directed the CEOs to submit report card on monthly basis to respective HoDs highlighting progress of ongoing projects and other achievements in every aspect of this vital sector. She also gave directions for early finalisation of proposal for de-freezing of teacher posts for timely recruitment process.

Highlighting that students in Government schools are equally talented as that of Private schools, the Minister called upon the officers to create awareness among students, especially in far flung areas, regarding JKOS and NIOS admissions so that they can qualify the 12th level exams in other modes also. The Minister also called for enhanced coordination between School and Higher Education departments to ensure seamless academic progression and policy alignment from the foundational to advanced levels of learning.



completed within stipulated deadlines without compromising on quality. She called for stringent monitoring and field-level inspections to address delays and remove bottlenecks in project implementation.

"Our government is committed to strengthen educational ecosystem in J&K. Every project, whether in remote village or an urban hub, must translate into tangible outcome for students and teachers. Timeliness and accountability are non-negotiable", Minister Sakeena asserted.

The Minister further asked the Director Colleges to maintain close coordination with Chief Engineers so that the projects which require minor works are completed by the end of this month.

arrangement teachers so that more persons are attracted to it till vacancies are filled on regular basis. She also directed the officers to create posts for all newly established degree colleges for better educational outcomes.

The Minister also underlined the need for research-oriented learning, industry linkages, and innovation-driven curriculum reforms. She urged college heads to encourage student-led projects, entrepreneurship cells, and collaborations with reputed institutions to enhance employability and practical learning outcomes.

Similarly, while reviewing the school education department, Minister Sakeena spoke on the importance of digital transformation in school

Advisor Wani interacts with delegations, reiterates commitment to citizen-centric governance

Meets series of public, departmental delegations at Raabita Office; assures prompt resolution of public grievances

SRINAGAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani met a series of public and departmental delegations at the Raabita Office and listened to their issues and demands pertaining to various sectors.

Delegations representing the power, handicrafts, handloom, floriculture, and education sectors apprised the Advisor of their respective concerns related to public infrastructure, employee welfare, and service matters.

Issues of general public importance were also raised during the interactions.

The Advisor gave a patient hearing to all delegations and

assured that the genuine issues projected will be examined and



addressed in coordination with the concerned departments.

Reaffirming the Government's commitment to transparent and responsive

governance, the Advisor said that regular public interactions

are an essential part of the

administration's efforts to ensure accountability and deliver services effectively at the grassroots level.

Protest Erupts in Patel Bagh, Pampore Over Blocked Drainage System

Locals Appeal to Pulwama Administration; BJP Leader Seeks Land Reclamation

Pampore: Residents of Patel Bagh in Pampore on Friday staged a protest against the alleged failure of authorities to address a severely blocked drainage system, which they say has disrupted normal life and poses growing health concerns.

Locals gathered in the area to voice their anger, claiming that stagnant water caused by the choked drains has started to seep into homes and businesses, making daily life increasingly difficult.

Protesters said they have raised the issue multiple times with the relevant departments, but no concrete action has been taken.

"We are facing a lot of difficulties due to the choked drains. The water has started entering our homes and shops. If this is not addressed soon, the situation will worsen," said one of the protesters.

With the onset of winter and the likelihood of increased rainfall, residents are worried the problem will escalate.

They have urged the Pulwama district administration, especially Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, to personally intervene and direct

immediate restoration of the drainage system.

Meanwhile, BJP leader Mohd Lateef Bhat, who also visited the area, raised a separate concern. He demanded that the district administration take immediate steps to recover 16 kanals of state land allegedly occupied by some local residents in the vicinity.

Bhat emphasized that both the civic issues and encroachments should be dealt with firmly and fairly to ensure proper urban management and public welfare.

The residents said they will continue their protest if the administration fails to take swift and effective action.

Haris Handoo assumes charge as Director SKICC



SRINAGAR: Special Secretary in Chief Minister's Secretariat, Haris Ahmad Handoo assumed the charge of Director SKICC.

On the occasion, the Director was given warm welcome by the SKICC staff. The Director, after assumption of charge, held a brief interaction with the officers and other staff.

During the interaction, he highlighted that SKICC's stature as a premier destination for national and international events need to be maintained. He emphasized upon the officers and staff to work with utmost dedication for promotion of this place as a hub for conferences, cultural events, and global collaborations that highlight the scenic and cultural richness of Jammu & Kashmir. "SKICC has always been a symbol of excellence and hospitality in the region", he said.

He assured the employees that all issues pertaining to functioning of this vital institution will be resolved.

The employees assured full support to the new Director to carry on the legacy of this prestigious conference centre.

2 missing Army paratroopers found dead in Kokernag forests



Anantnag: Two Army paratroopers who went missing five days ago during an operation in the Ahlan Gadole area of Kokernag in south Kashmir's Anantnag district have been found dead. "The body of the second missing para commando was recovered by security forces today during the ongoing search operation in the dense forest area of Gadole in Kokernag," an official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

The body of the first missing para commando was recovered from the same forest area yesterday. "On the intervening night of October 6 and 7, an operational team in the Kishtwar Range encountered a severe snowstorm and whitout conditions in the mountains of South Kashmir. Since then, two soldiers had gone out of communication," the Chinara Corps wrote on X on Wednesday. "Intense search and rescue operations were launched but were hampered by adverse weather conditions," it added.

A massive combing operation was launched on Monday evening in the dense Gadole forest area to trace the missing commandos. The Army had pressed drones, UAVs, and helicopters into service during the search. "Chinara Corps honours the supreme sacrifice of Bravehearts Lance Havildar Palash Ghosh and Lance Naik Sujay Ghosh, who laid down their lives while conducting relentless counter-terror operations in the Kishtwar Range of Kokernag, battling extreme weather conditions. Their courage and dedication will forever inspire us. Chinara Warriors salute the valour and sacrifice of the Bravehearts. We stand in solidarity with the bereaved families and are committed to their well-being," the Chinara Corps said in a post on X on Friday.

With the recovery of both bodies, the search and rescue operation concluded in the area—(KNO)

...J&K Mental Health Crisis

2 lakh treated at IMHANS, 3.7 lakh at GMC Anantnag

Anantnag: Amid a growing mental health crisis across Jammu and Kashmir, doctors say a significant number of people are beginning to come forward and seek treatment, marking a slow but positive shift in awareness and acceptance.

Official data from the Government Medical College (GMC), Anantnag, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer, reveals that over 3.7 lakh patients with mental health issues have been treated at the hospital in the past five years.

Similarly, the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS), GMC Srinagar, has catered to around two lakh patients last year.

"As the only tertiary-level psychiatric hospital in the region, the IMHANS catered to around two lakh patients last year, including those seeking help for both general mental health problems and substance-use disorders," Dr Yasir Rather, Professor, Department of Psychiatry, IMHANS, said. "This number itself reflects the growing demand for accessible, affordable, and stigma-free care."

He said this year's theme reminds us that mental health care must not be a privilege of peace, but a necessity in times of crisis.

"In Kashmir, where people continue to face layers of uncertainty, recent war-like situations and natural disasters like floods and earthquakes, social stress, and mental health challenges are deeply woven into daily life," Dr Rather said. "We must work collectively to strengthen community-based mental health services, integrate psychological support into disaster and emergency response, and ensure that no individual, regardless of geography or background, is left behind when it comes to care." Dr Yasir added, "Let this day serve as a call to

action: to make mental health services accessible in every setting, protect recovery as a human right, and build systems that stand firm even in crisis."

Doctors, however, warn that the magnitude of mental health problems remains deeply concerning, with depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and substance abuse being among the most common issues reported.

"Recognising the warning signs in people who have suicidal thoughts and ensuring help through positive support networks is a moral responsibility for all of us," a senior psychiatrist said, stressing that early intervention can save lives.

He noted that drug abuse has emerged as one of the gravest social concerns, especially among youth. "The percentage of indulgence in drugs has seen a dangerous upsurge in recent years. Young people, in particular, are falling prey to various kinds of social evils — the most damaging being substance abuse, which destroys both purpose and potential. It's time to act — now or never," he added.

Health professionals suggest several simple yet effective steps to maintain emotional well-being. "Engage in at least one physical activity daily, as it helps release endorphins that elevate mood. Seek help from mental health professionals when needed. Avoid negative coping mechanisms such as smoking, self-harm, or social isolation. Also, set emotional and occupational boundaries to prevent burnout," doctors advised.

They added that mental illnesses are closely linked to multiple social and behavioural issues, including societal tendencies. "Drug addiction remains a major social menace that needs urgent and compassionate redressal," another expert said.

Experts attribute the higher prevalence of mental

health issues in J&K to a combination of turmoil, prolonged stress, and vulnerability due to social and political factors. "The stigma surrounding mental disorders, lack of awareness, and delayed treatment-seeking behaviour make the situation worse. We need a joint, sustained effort to change this," a mental health specialist observed.

Doctors called for creating supportive living conditions and promoting early childhood development as long-term measures to improve community mental health. "Interventions such as preschool psychosocial programs, nutritional support, and early emotional care can lay strong foundations for a healthier society," they said.

Strengthening primary healthcare systems to handle mental health disorders is equally crucial. "Mental health treatment should be available at the grassroots level with affordable diagnostic tests and low-cost therapies," the experts suggested.

They also called for a soft and empathetic approach towards drug addicts, understanding their struggles and addressing root causes rather than solely resorting to punishment.

Doctors further warned that rapid urbanisation, migration, and climate change are emerging as significant stressors. "Economic and social vulnerabilities increase the risk of depression, anxiety, and alcohol use. Displacements caused by extreme weather events and climate-related distress can have long-term mental health impacts on communities," they said.

Experts agreed that a multi-dimensional approach involving families, schools, community leaders, and healthcare institutions is essential to reverse the rising trend of mental health disorders in Jammu and Kashmir—(KNO)

Capacity Building Programme on Community Based Disaster Management held at Kupwara

KUPWARA: The District Administration Kupwara, in coordination with the Department of Disaster Management, Relief,

Ahmad, who also serves as the Chief Executive Officer of District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Kupwara.



Rehabilitation & Reconstruction (DDMRRR), today organized a one-day Capacity Building Programme under Community-Based Disaster Management at the ACD Complex, Kupwara.

The programme was presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Gulzar

The event witnessed active participation from a range of stakeholders, including Deputy Secretary, DDMRRR, Snober Jameel; Assistant Commissioner Development Kupwara, Muzaffar Ahmad, BDOs, Panchayat Secretaries; ICDS workers; and other concerned officials.

The primary objective of the programme was to strengthen the capacities of grassroots functionaries and local communities in effective disaster preparedness, response, and mitigation. Emphasis was laid on the importance of community engagement, coordination among departments, and proactive planning to minimize disaster-related risks. Speaking on the occasion, the ADC highlighted the significance of empowering local communities and frontline workers to build resilience against natural and man-made disasters. He appreciated the efforts of the department in organizing the training and encouraged all participants to disseminate the knowledge gained at the community level. The programme featured expert sessions, interactive discussions, and the dissemination of resource material designed to equip participants with essential skills and best practices in disaster management.

CUKashmir's DMS holds lecture on 'How to Start Your Enterprise'

Ganderbal: Department of Management Studies (DMS), Central University of Kashmir (CUKashmir), through its BizTalk Club Tabsur, organized an extension lecture and interactive session

on entrepreneurship titled "How to Start Your Enterprise." The session was attended by BBA (Hons) and MBA students and featured Mr. Sheikh Yameen, founder of Curve Electric—a public e-bike sharing company that is redefining sustainable urban mobility in India. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Yameen shared his entrepreneurial journey, stating that "making a business is not rocket science." He narrated how his startup, founded just three

years ago, "has already saved over 200 metric tons of carbon emissions." "The company recently achieved a major milestone by securing its first pre-seed funding at a valuation of USD 1 million." Drawing from his experiences delivering talks at BITS Pilani and several IITs, Mr. Yameen emphasized that academic brilliance alone does not determine entrepreneurial success. "Every venture begins with an idea," he remarked, "but unless you execute it

effectively, it means nothing. Entrepreneurship is a game of execution—easier said than done." Encouraging students to translate ideas into action, he proposed establishing a Student Consulting Firm within the department to provide learners with hands-on experience in business problem-solving and client interaction. Earlier, Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad, Head, Deptt of Management Studies, emphasized the role of experiential learning and real-world

exposure in shaping future entrepreneurs.

He appreciated Mr. Yameen's inspiring journey as a young innovator committed to sustainability and technological advancement. In her speech, Dr. Mir Insha Farooq, Academic Coordinator, underscored the importance of entrepreneurial learning and highlighted Tabsur's mandate in nurturing business acumen among students. Dr. Waseem Jehangir proposed the vote of thanks.

Editorial

New Face Of Border Security

The recent statement of BSF that “the borders of the nation are constantly under vigil,” is more than the generic statement or observation one could make about border security in the current state of geopolitical affairs. There are elements of truth in anything said about border security, however IG Shashank is also addressing something more significant, that is the remarkable metamorphosis of India's paramilitary forces and the country's preparations for an anomalous 21st century of warfare.

The totality of the department's mission has not changed - that is the border must be secured and infiltration must not occur. The BSF's statement that cross-border activity was being continuously monitored and that the BSF is in “close coordination” with security agencies is especially relevant for public assurance and confidence. The enemy possesses numerous persistent and adaptive modalities, and layered defence and intelligence response are the only reasonable defensive means. This close coordination and unwavering vigilance are all that will be required to fortify the foundations of the national security of the country.

What stands out in IG Anand's speech, however, is his astute observation of the evolution of threat vectors. The battlefield of the 21st century is no longer a function of only land. The onset of drone biology has added a new low-cost, undetectable dimension for cross-border mischief.

With this backdrop, the BSF's proactive approach is commendable. Establishing the School of Drone Warfare at the BSF Academy in Gwalior is a strategic masterstroke. Moving from simply defensive measures through training, “drone squadrons and drone commandos”, which is based in both preventative and attack, signifies a shift of paradigms. The confidence that the force “will be able to do damage from an enemy as they may have never imagined” is indicative of a shift from reactive patrolling to preventative deterrence that is tech-centric. The strategy of Artificial Intelligence (AI) will refine this edge, providing more efficient and predictive means of mitigating suspicious observed activity.

In citing Operation Sindoor to act as an engine to speed-up the induction of modern technology across forces, we see an important lesson; operational experiences must be situated to inform development of future capabilities. Equally, the recognition of environmental and seasonal challenges - winter, for instance presents uniquely favourable conditions for accessing and infiltrating other territories - demonstrates tactical granularity in the planning processes needed for a force that guards varying levels of diverse terrain.

The possible enduring images of IG Anand in a nice suits and elegant future engagement options dissipates, teetering instead, on the latter. As described within IG Anand's brief, it's not the picture of a static force relying upon legacy established and scripted methods delivered in parochial time frames. It's rather the imagery of a dynamic institution, with the foundational inequality in the complexities of the transformation it is to undertake. This transformation is not going to be either easy or follow a statutory process. Transiting one legacy-efficient operations that historically was merely border guarding to a state of drone wholesale warfare and Architecture of AI is going to continuously require investment, training and supported leadership insights.

GST 2.0 Transforming Markets, Bringing Relief To Families



■ MOHAMMAD HANIEF

India's most sweeping tax reform in nearly a decade has begun to unfold across shop counters, factory floors, and household budgets. The revamped Goods and Services Tax—popularly called GST 2.0—came into effect on 22 September 2025, streamlining the country's indirect-tax structure and promising a rare combination of cheaper essentials, simpler compliance, and sharper levies on luxury and “sin” goods.

The measure, approved at the fifty-sixth meeting of the GST Council earlier this month, replaces the earlier four-tier system of 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent with just three broad rates: a five-per-cent slab for essential goods and services, a standard 18 per cent rate for most items, and a steep 40 per cent for high-end or harmful products. Supporters hail it as the boldest fiscal reset since the original GST was introduced in 2017.

Within days of the rollout the reform is already visible in everyday life. Across major cities and smaller towns, prices of staples such as bread, paneer and traditional sweets have dropped as bakers and dairy suppliers adjust to the new five-per-cent slab. Personal-care items—soaps, shampoos and toothpaste—have seen similar reductions. Pharmacies report lower bills for a wide range of medicines after life-saving drugs were exempted from tax and many others moved to the lowest bracket. Perhaps most striking for families is the removal of GST on life and health-insurance premiums, a change long sought by consumer groups. Agents say inquiries for new policies rose noticeably in the week after the announcement, signalling a potential expansion of financial protection in a country where insurance penetration has remained stubbornly low.

The benefits extend to rural India as well. Agricultural implements, fertilizers, pumps and even sewing machines now carry the five-per-cent rate, easing costs for farmers and small entrepreneurs. For those managing thin margins in villages and small towns, the shift promises measurable savings through the harvest and festive seasons ahead.

The reform is equally significant for manufacturers and retailers of consumer durables. Items that once attracted a 28-per-cent levy—including refrigerators, washing machines, air-conditioners and televisions—now fall into the standard 18-per-cent category.

Major electronics brands have already trimmed price tags, with some large-screen televisions discounted by tens of thousands of rupees. Automobile makers, from market leaders to niche players, are issuing revised price lists that lower the cost of popular models by amounts ranging from a few thousand to more than a lakh. Cement, a key input for housing and infrastructure, has shifted to the same standard rate. Builders and contractors say this could reduce construction costs and revive stalled projects, providing a welcome push to the real-estate sector after years of high input prices.



Not every market segment is celebrating. The creation of a 40-per-cent slab for luxury and de-merit goods is reshaping strategy in industries that depend on high-end consumption. Makers of luxury cars, yachts, private aircraft, premium spirits and tobacco products face a much heavier tax burden. Early indications suggest distributors are recalibrating inventories and revising sales forecasts downward as consumers weigh the steeper costs. The government is unapologetic about this tilt. Policymakers argue that taxing luxury and harmful products more aggressively not only discourages undesirable consumption but also offsets the revenue lost from easing rates on essentials. Initial projections suggest the lower slabs could cost the exchequer about 48,000 crore annually, a gap New Delhi hopes to fill through higher collections from the top bracket and improved compliance across the board.

Clarity is the other pillar of the reform. The original GST, despite its promise of “one nation, one tax,” grew complicated over time as multiple slabs and special exemptions created ambiguity. Businesses often found themselves embroiled in disputes over how a product should be classified: was a particular snack taxable at 12 or 18 per cent, or did a sweetened beverage qualify as a luxury drink? Such disagreements clogged tribunals and courts, increasing uncertainty and costs. GST 2.0 aims to sweep away much of that

confusion. By consolidating goods and services into just three categories, the government expects fewer disputes, faster adjudication and a reduction in the administrative burden on both tax officers and entrepreneurs.

Small and medium enterprises stand to gain the most. Under the earlier regime, delayed refunds and intricate filings tied up working capital and discouraged formalisation. The Council has pledged a streamlined digital filing system and faster refund mechanisms alongside the new structure. Entrepreneurs in the informal and rural economy—where bookkeeping resources are limited—may

which items fall into which slab. Consumer groups warn that unless authorities monitor pricing closely, some companies may pocket the tax cuts instead of passing them on to buyers. There is also the question of long-term revenue stability. While the government expects the 40-per-cent slab and improved compliance to make up for the estimated loss, skeptics caution that sustained high taxes on luxury and harmful goods could eventually dampen demand to the point where collections fall short.

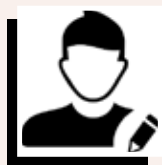
For now, though, the most tangible proof of GST 2.0 is in the marketplace. Shoppers in city supermarkets and village bazaars alike are noticing lighter grocery bills. Electronics stores advertise festival discounts that combine seasonal offers with the new lower tax. Auto showrooms report a spike in foot traffic from buyers who had been delaying purchases in anticipation of the reform. The benefits reach beyond urban centres. Farmers buying fertilizer pumps, tailors investing in new sewing machines and families renewing health-insurance policies are all discovering that the new rates leave more money in their pockets. Even state-owned power utilities expect to pass on modest savings to consumers as taxes on key inputs fall, lowering monthly electricity bills.

India's first GST rollout in 2017 was heralded as a landmark in fiscal integration, but its complex structure gradually eroded that promise. GST 2.0 seeks to restore it, balancing the government's revenue needs with consumer relief and social objectives. By reducing the number of slabs, cutting compliance costs and aligning taxation with health and welfare priorities, the reform positions itself as more than a fiscal tool—it is also a social and economic instrument. The months ahead will test whether those ambitions are realised. Much depends on the speed with which refunds are processed, the efficiency of digital filing systems and the Centre's ability to compensate states. If these pieces fall into place, GST 2.0 could well mark a decisive turning point, reshaping India's fiscal landscape and reinforcing its reputation as a competitive, investment-friendly economy.

As the festive season gathers pace, millions of Indians will experience the reform not through policy papers or council meetings but in the everyday relief of lower bills, affordable appliances and accessible insurance. In markets from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, the lighter price tags tell the story of a tax revolution just beginning to take hold.

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Artificial Intelligence: Making Higher Education Inclusive, Accessible



DR. REYAZ AHMAD

In the evolving landscape of higher education, artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly becoming a transformative force. While AI is often associated with efficiency, automation, and data-driven innovation, one of its most promising contributions lies in enhancing inclusivity and accessibility. In an increasingly diverse and digitally connected academic environment, leveraging AI to bridge gaps in access, support marginalized students, and personalize learning experiences has become both a necessity and a moral imperative.

1. The Need for Inclusivity and Accessibility in Higher Education

Higher education has long grappled with issues of inequality—whether related to socio-economic status, disability, language barriers, or geographic location. Traditional teaching methods and institutional frameworks often inadvertently marginalize students with special needs, underrepresented minorities, and non-traditional learners. To truly democratize education, it is essential to create environments where every learner can thrive, regardless of background or ability.

2. AI-Powered Tools and Solutions

AI has introduced a host of tools that can significantly enhance the inclusiveness and accessibility of higher education:

a. Personalized Learning Platforms

AI-driven learning management systems can analyze students' learning patterns, strengths, and weaknesses to offer tailored content, pacing, and feedback. This personalization is especially valuable for neurodiverse students and those requiring differentiated instruction.

b. Natural Language Processing (NLP)

AI-powered NLP applications like real-time transcription services (e.g., Otter.ai or Microsoft Translator) can assist deaf or hard-of-hearing students by providing instant captions during lectures. Similarly, NLP can help students with dyslexia by simplifying texts or reading them aloud.

c. Adaptive Assessment and Feedback

Automated grading systems that adapt to student responses can offer immediate,

English speakers, AI tools such as machine translation and multilingual chatbots can break down language barriers. These technologies help students navigate administrative processes, understand academic material, and communicate with peers and instructors more effectively.

3. Supporting Students with Disabilities

AI enables institutions to better support students with physical and cognitive disabilities:

- Screen readers and text-to-speech tools help visually impaired students access written



personalized feedback. This allows students to learn from mistakes in real-time and reduces the delay in traditional feedback cycles, enhancing engagement and motivation.

d. Language Translation and Support

For international students or non-native

content.

- Voice-command interfaces empower students with mobility impairments to interact with digital platforms.
- Cognitive support tools provide scaffolding for students with ADHD, autism, or

learning disabilities, such as reminders, focus aids, and simplified content.

By embedding these technologies into the educational infrastructure, universities can promote a more equitable learning environment.

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Higher education has long grappled with issues of inequality—whether related to socio-economic status, disability, language barriers, or geographic location. Traditional teaching methods and institutional frameworks often inadvertently marginalize students with special needs, underrepresented minorities, and non-traditional learners. To truly democratize education, it is essential to create environments where every learner can thrive, regardless of background or ability.

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4. Enhancing Outreach and Enrolment

AI can also be employed in recruitment and admissions to ensure diversity and equity:

- Bias detection algorithms can review admissions essays or decisions to minimize unconscious biases.
- Predictive analytics can identify students from underserved backgrounds who are likely to succeed with the right support.
- Virtual assistants can help prospective students navigate the application process, especially those from first-generation college-going families who may lack guidance.

5. Challenges and Ethical Considerations

While AI offers numerous benefits, its integration into higher education must be handled with care:

- Data privacy is a major concern; institutions must ensure compliance with data protection regulations and maintain transparency.
- Algorithmic bias can inadvertently reinforce inequalities if the training data reflects existing societal prejudices.
- Over-reliance on automation could diminish human interaction, which is essential for social and emotional learning.
- To address these challenges, AI implementation must be accompanied by ethical oversight, human-centered design, and continuous evaluation.
- 6. Institutional Strategies for Inclusive AI Adoption
 - To maximize the benefits of AI for inclusivity and accessibility, institutions should:
 - Invest in faculty training on inclusive pedagogy and AI literacy.
 - Collaborate with accessibility experts and advocacy groups during tool development and selection.
 - Pilot AI solutions in diverse classroom settings to gather feedback and make necessary adjustments.
 - Promote digital equity by ensuring all students have access to necessary devices and internet connectivity.

Conclusion
Artificial intelligence holds immense potential to transform higher education into a more inclusive, accessible, and empowering space for all learners. When applied thoughtfully, AI can help dismantle barriers, personalize learning experiences, and create educational opportunities that are truly equitable. As institutions continue to adopt AI technologies, the focus must remain on using them to bridge—not widen—the gaps in access and achievement. By aligning innovation with inclusivity, the future of higher education can become more just, diverse, and impactful.

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Thousands throng Dastgeer Sahab shrines (RA) on Friday following

FE NEWS NETWORK

Dastageer Sahib (RA).
From Khanyar Chowk to SheerazObserver KNO), emotions ran high when
the holy relic of the saint was displayed,

Srinagar: The narrow streets of Khanyar in Srinagar and Sarai Bala turned deeply devotional on Friday as an ocean of devotees gathered to observe the Friday following Urs Mubarak of the revered saint, Hazrat Sheikh Syed Abdul Qadir Jeelani (RA), popularly known as

Chowk, the air reverberated with cries of devotion as men, women and children sat on prayer mats in front of the grand Dastageer Sahib Shrine, raising their hands in supplication.

According to the details collected by the news agency—Kashmir News

with devotees breaking into tears, their voices trembling with faith and longing. "I come here every year, but the moment the Moi-e-Muqqadas, (holy relic) is displayed, my heart trembles," said 65-year-old Ghulam Rasool, his eyes moist.

"It feels as if the saint himself is among us, blessing us all."

The scene was one of spiritual grandeur as homes near the shrine opened their doors and rooftops for people to catch a glimpse of the relic.

"The entire Khanyar was soaked in faith today," said a local resident, Fazil. He said, every corner echoed with prayers and people from every age group, from elderly men leaning on sticks to little children sitting on their parents' laps, were part of this ocean of devotion.

Similar situation was witnessed in Sarai Balai area of Srinagar.

Meanwhile, the shrine's management committee had made elaborate arrangements for devotees, ensuring smooth movement and uninterrupted prayers. Volunteers distributed drinking water and tea among the gathering, as spiritual hymns and recitations filled the air. Notably, as the relic was displayed, devotees waited, some silently wiping tears, others openly crying, a moment that once again reflected Kashmir's timeless bond with Dastageer Sahib (RA).

"Faith brings us here," said Fatima, a young woman from Downtown. "No matter how busy life gets, this day pulls us to Khanyar. It is not just a tradition, but it is love, it is connection." —(KNO)

RDPRD conducts district-Level IT workshops to strengthen MGNREGA implementation across J&K

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a major stride toward modernising the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural

Yuktadhara, NMMS, e-KYC, e-MB Module, SECURE 2.0, and Geo-fencing.

Workshops have already been successfully organized in the Anantnag-

Yuktadhara enables scientific and resource-aligned planning at the Gram Panchayat level, ensuring judicious utilization of resources," he said.

Waseem Raja said that the NMMS app enhances real-time monitoring through digital attendance and e-KYC verification, while the e-MB module facilitates accurate digital measurements and timely updates of on-ground progress, ensuring greater accountability and efficiency.

Designed to be both interactive and practical, the workshops included live demonstrations on operating the digital tools.

Executive Engineers, Block Development Officers (BDOs), Assistant Engineers, Junior Engineers, Programme Officers (MGNREGA), Panchayat Secretaries, MIS Operators, Technical Assistants, and Gram Rozgar Sahayaks (GRS), received hands-on training to strengthen their capacity in digital implementation and monitoring of MGNREGA works.

In the coming days, similar workshops are scheduled to be held in the Kathua, Samba, Kupwara, Srinagar, Ganderbal, and Budgam districts to ensure complete coverage across all regions of the Union Territory.



Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department (RDPRD) is conducting a series of district-level workshops on IT initiatives and record maintenance across the Union Territory.

The capacity-building workshops aim to equip field functionaries and stakeholders with practical knowledge of the latest digital platforms, such as

Kulgam, Shopian-Pulwama, Udhampur-Ramban, Doda-Kishtwar, Jammu-Reasi, Rajouri-Poonch, and Baramulla-Bandipora districts.

Speaking on this initiative, Additional Secretary, Waseem Raja said that the integration of cutting-edge technology in rural development ensures transparent, need-based, and efficient planning at grassroots level.

"The use of platforms like

J&K Police, Forest Department Collaborate for Capacity Building Training on SOPs in North Kashmir

FE NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: A specialized two-day training program for the Forest Frontline officers of the Forest Territorial and Forest Protection Force concluded today at the District Police Lines, Baramulla.

The training focused on equipping the Forest personnel with the necessary skills and adherence to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for effective vehicle checking and frisking. The inaugural day emphasized the role of Forest Guards in enforcement, particularly their duties related to vehicle inspections.

A key module covered the Legal Aspects of enforcement, providing a comprehensive overview of relevant legislation, including the Indian Forest Act, the Wildlife Protection Act, and the Arms Act.

The training also focused on practical training modules on vehicle checks, techniques for identifying contraband, methods for spotting and seizing illegal

items such as illegally harvested timber, wildlife products, and unauthorized weapons.

On day two the participants were made aware on safe and lawful Frisking techniques and safety protocols. The session thoroughly covered the legal boundaries, ensuring personnel understood the limits and legality of personal searches.

The training also focused on strategies for handling resistance and managing confrontational situations professionally. Safety and Communication, covering the use of protective gear, enhancing Personal Safety through situational awareness, and ensuring Team

Coordination through effective communication during operations was also covered during the training program.

The training culminated in intensive Mock Drills, where participants engaged in simulated scenarios to practically apply their newly acquired knowledge on vehicle checks and frisking procedures in a controlled environment.



Comm Secy Industries & Commerce inaugurates three days Buyer-Seller Meet at Budgam

FE NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Vikramjit Singh inaugurated three days Buyer-Seller Meet at Budgam to promote traditional handicrafts and facilitate market linkages for local artisans and producers.

The Buyer-Seller meet is being organised by Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) and is sponsored by Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, under National Handicraft Development Programme (NHDP) as part of on-going efforts to support and revitalize Jammu and Kashmir's rich handicraft heritage.

Managing Director, JKTPO, Sudershan Kumar; Director NIFT, General Manager JKTPO, AD Handicrafts, DCH and other senior officers of the district were also present on the occasion.



Speaking on the occasion, the Commissioner Secretary highlighted that the Buyer-Seller Meet will serve as key platform for local artisans to showcase their unique craftsmanship and build sustainable commercial relationships with buyers, thereby contributing to economic empowerment of the region's artisan community. He added that the event will

facilitate interactions between artisans and buyers, ensuring economic up-liftment for the artisan community and promotion of Jammu and Kashmir's rich art and culture.

Around 50 artisans from both regions participated in the event, showcasing diverse range of Handmade GI-tagged products like Pashmina, Kani shawls, Sozni embroidery, Paper Mache, Chain Stitch, Basohli paintings,

Crewelwork, and more. The event successfully attracted 40 national buying houses operating across various international markets. Participating visitors had a unique opportunity to interact directly with the artisans and explore high-quality, handcrafted products celebrated for their distinctiveness and cultural heritage.

The event will witness an impressive business deals along with a high level of engagement among participants leading to meaningful interactions and productive business discussions. The overwhelming response to the event underscores the event's relevance and effectiveness in fostering connections among industry stakeholders.

In addition, the event is projected to generate an impressive number of business leads, further cementing its status as a high-impact platform for networking, lead generation, fostering business opportunities and strengthening the textile sector.

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DC Ganderbal chairs DLC meet on PMAY 2.0 Urban

FE NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore convened a meeting of the District Level Committee (DLC), here to review and decide cases under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY 2.0).

During the meeting, the committee thoroughly examined the applications received under the scheme, which aims at fulfilling the vision of 'Housing for All' by providing pucca houses to the eligible beneficiaries belonging to the Economically Weaker Sections, Low-Income Groups, and other entitled categories.

After detailed deliberations and verification of documents, the committee accorded approval to several cases under PMAY 2.0. These approved cases will now move forward for sanction of financial assistance enabling the beneficiaries to construct or upgrade their dwelling units.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC stressed upon transparency and fairness in the selection process and directed the concerned officers to ensure that all genuine and deserving applicants are provided timely benefits. He further instructed the Urban Local Bodies to keep close coordination with field staff so that timely verification, monitoring, and assistance is provided to the applicants.

DC further directed the Revenue and Municipality officials to complete the verification process of the remaining applicants within a week's time.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Manzoor Ahmad; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Lead District Manager, Tehsildar Ganderbal, Executive Officer, Municipal Committee, Ganderbal and representative from Housing Board.



DC Budgam chairs District TB Forum meeting to Strengthen TB Control Measures

Holistic support and Vigilance key to TB Eradication in Budgam: DC

FE NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: A District TB Forum meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, to review and strengthen ongoing efforts under the TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan in the district.

The meeting was attended by CMO Budgam, STO Kashmir, DTO Budgam, other concerned officials as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations, TB Champions, Nikshay Mitras, and all staff associated with the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP).

The DC took comprehensive review of TB-related activities across the district.

The Chair was apprised about the progress achieved under the TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan, identified existing gaps in diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up, and deliberated on strategies to enhance service delivery.

The DC emphasised on improving case detection, treatment adherence, and patient support mechanisms, especially for MDR-TB patients.

He assured full administrative support for strengthening TB control measures in the district. He highlighted the importance of a holistic approach to TB management, including nutritional support, vocational rehabilitation, and social welfare for patients undergoing long-term treatment.

He commended the efforts of Nikshay Mitras for their active role in providing nutritional assistance and counselling to TB patients, acknowledging their contribution to patient retention and treatment success.

The DC stressed the need for accurate and timely reporting of TB-related data under the NTEP, underlining its critical role in monitoring progress and formulating effective interventions.

He instructed all officers to take necessary corrective measures to address gaps in outreach, treatment monitoring, and community awareness.

The meeting further discussed measures to enhance treatment success rates, increase awareness



about TB prevention, and ensure that vulnerable patients receive comprehensive support, including regular health check-ups, nutritional supplements, and access to government welfare schemes.

The DC maintained that the District administration is committed towards eradicating tuberculosis from Budgam by strengthening multi-sectoral coordination, engaging community stakeholders, and leveraging technology for effective monitoring.

He also highlighted that sustained administrative attention, combined with active community participation, is key to building a TB-free Budgam.

He directed all officers and stakeholders to work collectively towards achieving the objectives of the TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan, ensuring that no patient is left untreated or unsupported across District.

Centre

objection. Under our govt watch. Who are they? Supreme court must rule on this.” He also said that not only water much blood had also flown. “Elections took place peacefully and factors such as Pahalgam incident must be considered before granting statehood,” he submitted. Another advocate for petitioners stated that there was an undertaking given to the Court that the statehood will be restored. “If the undertaking is not honoured, what is to be done?,” he asked.

Advocate Sankaranarayanan told the top court that the matter should now go before a five-judge bench if the Centre is not deciding on statehood promise.

SG Mehta asserted that Centre is in consultation with state government and that is the correct approach. “Jammu and Kashmir region has progressed, everyone is happy. 99.99 percent of the people there treat Government of India as their own government. So all that they are saying must be taken with a pinch of salt,” he said.

The Supreme Court recorded, “Learned SG Mehta states that elections to the Jammu and Kashmir assembly were held in peaceful manner and elected government was put in place. It is stated that there has been substantial progress in J&K but says that certain incidents including Pahalgam attack have taken place and all will have to be taken into consideration before a final call. It is stated Centre and state are in consultation. Learned SG seeks more time to respond. Four weeks time granted.”

The petitioners are seeking immediate restoration of statehood and implementation of directions passed by a constitutional bench of the Supreme Court in December 2023.

A bench headed by Chief Justice B R Gavai is hearing the plea. On August 14, the top court had given two months time to the Centre to file its response. So far, Centre has not filed any response.

On December 11, 2023, a Constitution Bench of Supreme Court had upheld abrogation of article 370 but directed Central government to restore statehood to Jammu and Kashmir “as soon as possible”.

Jammu and Kashmir was stripped of special status under article 370 on August 5, 2019, and bifurcated into two Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. Since then Centre has repeatedly assured people of Jammu and Kashmir that statehood will be restored “at an appropriate time” —(KNO)

Raids

were carried out at the residences of terrorist associates and underground workers (OGWs) affiliated with proscribed terrorist organisations, in connection with ongoing investigations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). The coordinated search operations were conducted across various areas of Srinagar, targeting individuals involved in facilitating, aiding, or abetting terror-related activities, the spokesman said.

He said the searches were conducted at 21 premises across the city.

The searches were conducted in accordance with due legal procedure, in the presence of executive magistrates and independent witnesses, and under the supervision of senior officers of J-K police, the spokesman added.

The objective of these searches was to seize incriminating material such as documents, digital devices, and other evidence relevant to ongoing investigations, the spokesman said.

The raids also form part of a broader intelligence-gathering exercise aimed at pre-empting and disrupting any conspiratorial or terrorist activities threatening public peace and national security, he said.

The police said the decisive action underscores its commitment to identify and take firm legal action against all individuals involved in promoting or supporting terror-related and anti-national activities. (PTI)

BSF IG

our challenges are different, and we have formulated strategies to foil any infiltration attempt by the enemy. We are patrolling our borders,” he said.

“After Operation Sindoor, we have accelerated the introduction of modern technology across defence and paramilitary forces,” he said.

“A dedicated School of Drone Warfare has been set up at the BSF Academy in Gwalior, where troops are being trained to operate drone squadrons and drone commandos. We will be able to inflict damage on an adversary in ways they may not have even imagined,” he said.

He also said the BSF has had drone capability for some time, but now it is moving toward next-level warfare. “BSF personnel and officers are being trained

on how to integrate modern technology into 21st-century warfare,” he said.

As part of BSF’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations, IG Anand announced a full marathon in Jammu on November 9, 2025. “For the first time in Jammu, we are organising a full marathon,” he said.

The event aims to promote health, fitness, and identify sporting talent in the Union Territory. “It will nurture talent and inspire healthier lifestyles,” he said —(KNO)

NC announces

has served as minister in NC-led governments. Sajad Kichloo, who hails from Kishtwar, was also a minister in Omar Abdullah-led government.

Shammi, a Sikh face of the party, is a trusted loyalist of Abdullah family.

Sagar said that they are currently in discussion with the National Conference for the fourth seat. “We have kept one seat open and the talks are on with Congress over it,” he said.

The NC leader did not clarify whether they intend to leave one of the three ‘safe’ seats for the Congress or offer them a ‘risky’ seat where the BJP holds an advantage.

Advisor to CM Nasir Aslam Wani said they will soon finalise candidates for Budgam and Nagrota by-polls.

“Since the date of filing of nomination papers for RS polls is on Monday, we finalised candidates today. The Parliamentary board will sit again and announce candidates for two candidates,” he said.

In the Rajya Sabha polls, the National Conference-led alliance is poised to win three seats, while the BJP holds an advantageous position for the fourth.

The competition would be between BJP and the alliance candidate on the fourth seat. While the alliance has 24 second preference votes, the BJP has 28 votes —(KNO)

Tax

rise to better tax administration, post-COVID economic recovery, and stronger enforcement under the Goods and Services Tax regime.

“The government’s focus on plugging gaps and digitising payments is showing results,” he said, adding that more citizens are entering the formal tax net.

The data further reveals that the government has also received Rs 892.56 crore as GST compensation for revenue loss and Rs 3,845.49 crore as back-to-back loans from the Centre in lieu of GST compensation —(KNO)

CS Pushes

Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, to explore the introduction of rail freight services for transporting horticultural produce to major markets such as Mumbai, Kolkata and Bengaluru. He emphasized the need to engage with fruit growers in this regard and to coordinate with the Divisional Railway Manager (DRM), Jammu, to examine the feasibility of such a service.

The Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, apprised the Chief Secretary of the availability and adequacy of transport services for fruit growers, informing that sufficient trucks are presently available at reasonable rates and that growers are not facing any major logistical difficulties.

Secretary, Transport Department, Avny Lavasa, further informed the meeting that in case of any shortage of transport vehicles, the fleet of J&K SRTC trucks would be deployed to facilitate smooth evacuation of fruit from the Valley to outside markets, ensuring full assistance to the fruit growers.

The Chief Secretary reiterated that the administration is fully committed to ensuring seamless transportation of horticultural produce, which forms a key pillar of the Valley’s economy, and directed all concerned officers to maintain coordination and take proactive measures to ensure smooth transportation of this crop throughout the ongoing fruit season. (DIPR)

Amit Shah

are getting cut...It is EC’s constitutional responsibility to clean the voters’ list. You can go to court if you have any issues,” he said.

He said that a time will come when the opposition will also not be spared.

Free and fair elections cannot take place unless the voter list is according to the voters’ definition, which is being an Indian citizen and attaining the eligible age, he said. Underlining the difference between an infiltrator and a refugee, Shah said the latter comes to India to save his/her religion, while an infiltrator crosses over the border illegally, not because of religious persecution but because of economic and other reasons.

“Who are infiltrators? Those who have not faced religious persecution and want to come to India illegally for economic or other reasons are infiltrators. If anyone in the world who wants to come here is allowed to do so, our country will become a dharam-shala,” he said.

He also presented the ‘Jagran Sahitya Srijan Samman’ in memory of the former editor-in-chief of Dainik Jagran. This award was given to an original work in one of the various genres of Hindi literature. (PTI)

Ehsaas Foundation sets up free tea stall at Dastgeer Sahab (RA) shrine in Khanyar

Srinagar: On the sacred and spiritually uplifting occasion of the Urs of Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani (RA)—revered across the world as Ghaus-ul-Azam Dastgeer Sahib (RA)—the Ehsaas Foundation organised a Free Tea Stall at the Dastgeer Sahib Shrine, Khanyar, Srinagar

The initiative was aimed at serving thousands of devotees who thronged the shrine to pay their respects and seek blessings on this blessed occasion.

Throughout the day and night, volunteers from Ehsaas Foundation distributed free tea, water, and other refreshments to the pilgrims visiting from different parts of Kashmir.

Chairman Zahoor Ahmad Malik, while speaking on the occasion, expressed deep spiritual joy and said, “The Urs of Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani (RA) is a time of reflection, devotion, and service. It reminds us of the values of compassion, generosity, and unity taught by the great saint. Serving the devotees through such humble initiatives gives us immense satisfaction and spiritual fulfillment.”

He further added that Ehsaas Foundation has always been at the forefront of community welfare and social upliftment through initiatives like free medical camps, awareness drives, blood donation programmes, and relief work. “Our mission is to serve humanity with sincerity, without any expectation or discrimination. This small act of service at the shrine is a continuation of our efforts to spread kindness and compassion,” he stated.

The stall witnessed a huge participation of local volunteers, members, and well-wishers of the Foundation who worked tirelessly to ensure every devotee was served with warmth and respect.

Devotees and local residents appreciated the gesture, saying it reflected the true Kashmiri spirit of hospitality and brotherhood. The soothing aroma of tea, the smiles of volunteers, and the peaceful chants of prayers created a deeply spiritual atmosphere around the Khanyar shrine.

As night descended, the shrine of Hazrat Dastgeer Sahib (RA) glowed with faith and devotion, while the Ehsaas Foundation’s stall continued its service late into the night—symbolizing love, service, and the timeless message of humanity taught by the saints —(KNO)

Div Com Jammu reviews hospital readiness, civic measures for Dengue control

JAMMU: Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar chaired a meeting to review the preparedness of District Administrations and hospitals to prevent the surge of Dengue cases in Jammu Division.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioners of Udhampur, Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Director Urban Local Bodies, the Principal GMC Jammu, Director Health Services Jammu, Joint Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation, Malariologist and concerned Doctors.

The Divisional Commissioner was apprised of the year-wise comparative analysis of the surge in Dengue cases and the vulnerable spots.

Threadbare discussion was held on preparedness of District Administrations and the preventive measures to be implemented for prevention of Dengue. Readiness of hospitals, availability of medical equipment and staff were also reviewed.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the Deputy Commissioners to prepare a plan with involvement of officials of Health ULB, BDO and District Malaria Officers, underlining points of action to control Dengue spread. He further asked for intensified IEC activities and publicity of Dos and Don’ts for protection against Dengue.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the health officials to share the data of Dengue cases with Municipal authorities for timely implementation of anti Dengue measures.

Principal Government Medical College apprised the Divisional Commissioner on the readiness of GMC and Hospitals for Dengue patients. (DIPR)

A Story of Courage and Recovery: From Addiction to Hope

RAJOURI: XYZ (name withheld), a young woman from a humble rural background, faced severe hardships early in life. At just 18, she began working as a labourer to support her family. Life was difficult and moments of relief were rare. In a vulnerable phase, her older cousins introduced her to heroin, claiming it would ease her pain and make her feel free.

“At first, they gave it to me for free,” XYZ recalls. “But soon, I couldn’t live without it.”

Within months, XYZ was trapped in the grip of addiction. Her health declined rapidly—she grew frail, withdrawn, and hopeless. Seeing her daughter’s condition deteriorating, her mother sought help from the local hospital’s Addiction Treatment Centre. Fortunately, XYZ agreed to undergo treatment—a decision that

changed her life forever.

At the centre, doctors diagnosed her with opioid use disorder and immediately began treatment. Under medical supervision, she was administered Buprenorphine (4 mg per day) to manage withdrawal symptoms and control cravings without inducing a high. Alongside medication, she received regular counseling sessions and psychological support, helping her regain confidence and emotional stability.

In a compassionate gesture, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma personally visited the residence of the recovering victim and assured all possible assistance for her complete rehabilitation. The DC directed that she shall be provided Proper Counseling and Continuous Psychological Support, Comprehensive Rehabilitation Plan & Skill Development and Training Opportunities

During the visit, the DC was accompanied by the District Child Protection Officer (DCPO), Tehsildar, SHO and CWC Member Shazad Lone.

Expressing satisfaction over the victim’s recovery progress, the DC said that the administration is committed to supporting every individual struggling with substance abuse. He emphasized that “no one should fight addiction alone” and highlighted the district’s focus on counseling, community awareness and skill-based rehabilitation under the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan. (DIPR)

Power Shutdown by KPDCL

SRINAGAR: According to the Chief Engineer, Distribution, KPDCL, in order to carry branch cutting and routine preventive maintenance works coming under 33 KV lines, shutdown of 33 Kanipora-Keller line will be

observed due to which Keller, Kanipora and Shadimarg receiving stations shall remain off while power supply to Shadimarg, Kalam-pora, Drabgam, Shirmal, Nadpora and adjoining areas will be affected from 10.00 AM to 03.00 PM on 14 & 20 October, 2025.

Similarly, shutdown of 33 KV Kanipora-Aglar line will be observed due to which IGC Aglar receiving station shall remain off while power supply to IGC Aglar will be affected from 10.00 AM to 02.00 PM on 15 October, 2025.

Likewise, shutdown of 33 KV Kanipora-Pinjoora line will be observed due to which Arhama, Pinjoora and chowdigrund receiving stations will remain off and power supply to Pahnoo, Trenz, Imam Sahib, Arahama, Town, Bongam, Shopian, Pinjoora, Reshinaagri, Vehil, Nowgam and adjoining areas will be affected from 10.00 AM to 03.00 PM on 13, 16 & 23 October, 2025.

As per separate shutdown schedule by the Chief Engineer, Distribution, KPDCL, shutdown of 33 KV Handwara old line will be observed due to which Adoora, Zachaldara and Changimulla receiving stations shall remain off while power supply to Hanga, Haril, Changimulla, Wadder, Rajpora and adjoining areas will be affected on 13, 16 & 20 October, 2025 from 10.00 AM to 03.00 PM.

Likewise, shutdown of 33 KV Kupwara Hot line will be observed due to which Tikker, Drugmulla and Galizoo receiving stations shall remain off while power supply to Kupwara Town, Gulgam, Batergam, Drugmulla, DC Complex and adjoining areas will be affected on 14 October, 2025 from 10.00 AM TO 03.00 PM.

Similarly, shutdown of 33 KV Handwara Town line will be observed due to which Handwara, Pohrupeth and Chogal receiving stations shall remain off while power supply to Handwara Town, Marathgam, Kulthoora, Pohrupeth, Kulangam, and Chogal will be

affected on 15 & 22 October, 2025 from 10.00 AM TO 03.00 PM.

Furthermore, shutdown of 33 KV Machil Tapline will be observed due to which Machil receiving station shall remain off while power supply to Machil, Dapal, Ring Bala, Chountiwari and adjoining areas will be affected on 18 October, 2025 from 10.00 AM TO 03.00 PM.

Likewise, shutdown of 33 KV Hyhama line shall be observed due to which Trehgam, Karihama, & Hyhama shall remain off while Trehgam, Zurhama, Hyhama, Gushie, Dedikoot and adjoining areas will be affected on 18 October, 2025 from 10.00 AM TO 03.00 PM.

Similarly, shutdown of 33 KV Dolipora line will be observed due to which Vilgam, Tarathpora, and Magam receiving stations shall remain off while Magam, Tarathpora, Vilgam, Dolipora and adjoining areas will be affected on 13 October, 2025 from 10.00 AM TO 03.00 PM.

Meanwhile, shutdown of 33 KV Kralpora line will be observed due to which Kralpora, Panzgam, Tangdar, Teetwal, and Keran shall remain off while power supply to Kralpora, Chowkibal, Harrie, Tangdar, Teetwal, Panzgam, and Keran will be affected on 13 October, 2025 from 10.00 AM TO 03.00 PM.

Similarly, shutdown of 33 KV Tangdar Tapline will be observed due to which Tangdar and Teetwal receiving stations will remain off while Tangdar, Taad, Teetwal and adjoining areas will be affected on 15 & 20 October, 2025 from 10.00 AM TO 03.00 PM.

Likewise, shutdown of 33 KV Keran Tapline will be observed due to which Keran receiving station will remain off while Keran, Kalas, Kundiyan and adjoining areas will be affected on 16 & 22 October, 2025 from 10.00 AM TO 03.00 PM.

(DIPR)

NIT Srinagar hosts women’s session as part of two-day Global Alumni Meet SANGAM 2025

Session celebrates women achievers, emphasizes empowerment, leadership, and inclusivity

FE NEWS NETWORK
SRINAGAR: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar, under the aegis of the Office of Dean Alumni and International Affairs, organised a special



Women’s Session on Friday as part of its two-day Global Alumni Meet – SANGAM 2025. The event celebrated the remarkable achievements of the institute’s distinguished women alumni and underscored their pivotal role in transforming professional, academic, and social landscapes.

Themed “Women in Power: Beyond Balance: Towards Brilliance” the session brought together accomplished alumnae, professionals, and scholars from diverse fields to share their experiences.

In his message, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. Binod Kumar Kanauiya, extended warm greetings to all alumnae and participants, expressing immense pride in the institute’s women achievers.

“Our women alumni have excelled in every sphere, representing the values and vision of NIT Srinagar across the globe,” he said.

“They are not only role models for our students but also catalysts of social transformation. The true empowerment comes from education, confidence, and opportunity,” he added.

I/C Director and Dean Research & Consultancy, NIT Srinagar, Prof. Roohie Naaz, said the Women’s Session reflected the institute’s steadfast commitment to promoting gender inclusivity, innovation, and leadership development.

“Such platforms inspire dialogue and mentorship while recognising the contributions of women in building stronger institutions and communities. Women alumni of NIT Srinagar continue to be trailblazers, breaking stereotypes and setting benchmarks in their respective professions,” she said.

Prof. (Dr.) Iffat Hassan Shah, Principal of the Government Medical College, Srinagar, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, delivered an inspiring keynote address.

She emphasized the significance of em-

powering women professionals through mentorship, collaboration, and institutional support.

“Breaking the glass ceiling is not just about individual success; it is about opening doors for others and ensuring that

collaboration, and continuous learning. “Success becomes more meaningful when it uplifts others. Mentorship and peer support are powerful tools that can help women navigate challenges and discover their potential,” she said.

Prof. Iffat extended her appreciation to the Office of Alumni and International Affairs for curating the session as part of SANGAM 2025, describing it as “a tribute to the spirit of resilience, professionalism, and empowerment that defines NIT Srinagar’s women community.”

Institute Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman also lauded the Women’s Session for providing a meaningful platform to celebrate women’s achievements.

“Empowering women through education and opportunity is not just a goal; it is our responsibility as an institution,” he said.

Er. Aaqub Sultana Deva, Chief Engineer (Distribution), KPDCL, who was Guest of Honour on the occasion, expressed her gratitude to NIT Srinagar for hosting such a purposeful event.

Sharing her own journey, she highlighted perseverance, professional integrity, and the importance of self-belief in navigating challenges in male-dominated sectors.

“We must remember that every woman who succeeds in her field opens doors for hundreds of others to follow. Empowering women means empowering entire communities and transforming societies,” Er. Aaqub added.

Er. Anbreena Anjum, District Superintending Engineer, Jal Shakti Department, shared her remarkable professional journey marked by discipline, integrity, and a deep commitment to public service.

Speaking about her experiences in infrastructure and water resource management, she noted that women professionals are increasingly taking on leadership roles that were once considered off-limits.

Er. Samrah Shakeel, Officer on Special Duty, Skill Development, Board of Technical Education, J&K, in her address, focused on the transformative power of mentorship,

The first session was moderated by Dr. Yusra Banday (ECE) and Ms Falak Jahan (Chemistry).

Another session, titled “Breaking the Glass Ceiling,” was moderated by Dr. Iqra Altaf Gillani and featured all guest speakers as panelists alongside Prof. Roohie Naaz, who chaired the discussion.

The discussion explored themes of leadership, equity, representation, and empowerment of women in science, technology, governance, and academia.

In his remarks, Prof. M.A. Shah, Dean Alumni Affairs, said the session was an inspiring beginning to the Global Alumni Meet and aligned perfectly with the vision of connecting alumni across generations.

“Our women alumni are the pride of NIT Srinagar. Their journeys reflect courage, competence, and compassion. Through platforms like SANGAM 2025, we aim to celebrate their success and strengthen our alumni network for collaborative growth,” Prof. Shah said.

He said it is not a symbolic gesture but a strategic initiative aimed at providing a meaningful platform for the institute’s female alumnae to share, inspire, and lead.

Earlier, the event began with a welcome note by Ms. Falak, followed by the screening of a short documentary titled “The Uprising” by MIT Press, depicting global women’s struggles and successes.

The guests were felicitated by Director NIT Srinagar Prof. Roohie Naaz, Prof. MA Shah as a token of appreciation.

In her concluding remarks, Dr. Iqra Altaf Gillani expressed gratitude to all speakers and participants, stating that the event provided a meaningful space for intergenerational learning and collaboration.

Session ended with an interactive Question-and-Answer segment, during which students from various departments posed questions on career growth, leadership challenges, and work-life balance.

World Mental Health Day 2025...

Health minister JP Nadda calls for prioritising emotional and mental well-being

NEWDELHI: On the occasion of the World Mental Health Day 2025, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Jagat Prakash Nadda launched several new initiatives for the National Tele Mental Health Programme (Tele MANAS), here.

The new initiatives include launch of Tele MANAS App Enhancements (Multi-lingual UI, Chatbot, Accessibility, Emergency Module). TeleMANAS App will now be available in 10 regional languages, in addition to the English and Hindi languages. These languages include Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Odia, Punjabi. This step is towards providing mental health support in regional languages for enhancing accessibility. In addition, recognizing that persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups face barriers in accessing digital health services, the app now includes accessibility features to make the interface more user-friendly for visually impaired users. A chatbot feature ('Asmi') has also been introduced, allowing users to engage with the app and seek information or help regarding mental health. Furthermore, emergency response content has been incorporated to ensure timely guidance and support during emergencies.

Speaking on the occasion, Nadda remarked that "a sound mind leads to a sound body and a healthy mind and a healthy body lead to a healthy nation." He said, "India is committed to ensuring equitable, affordable,

and inclusive access to mental health services. With the launch of the new features in the Tele-MANAS app, we are strengthening our preparedness to respond



effectively to mental health emergencies and expanding the reach of digital innovations to every corner of the country. Moving a step closer towards normalizing discussions around mental health is crucial to reducing stigma and highlighting mental health as an integral aspect of public health in India."

Nadda also stated that Ms. Deepika Padukone has been designated as the Mental Health Ambassador for raising awareness about access to mental health services. He said that her involvement as a national advocate will help focus attention on mental health and encourage people to seek timely support through government-approved mental health resources. "The partnership with Ms. Deepika Padukone will help widely disseminate awareness about mental health issues in India, normalize discussions to reduce stigma,

and highlight mental health as an integral aspect of public health", he stated.

On the impact of Tele MANAS towards providing mental health services to people, the Union Health Minister highlighted that "since its inception, it has handled around 28 lakh calls, with trained counsellors engaging in more than 20 different languages. Every day, about 4,000 people reach out for support, showing the effectiveness of the service in addressing mental health concerns. The almost equal number of men and women seeking help demonstrates that awareness is growing among all groups." He also stated that the Tele-MANAS mobile app allows people across India to receive help anytime, anywhere.

Smt. Punya Salila Srivastava, Union Health Secretary highlighted that Mental Health is a special focus of this year's theme at the United Nations. She stated that India's digital initiatives including Tele MANAS is aimed at achieving universal health coverage. "Any self-destructive behaviour like suicides can be prevented and stigmas or stereotypes can be reduced by making use of timely, professional and empathetic mental healthcare and quality counselling services through the Tele MANAS app", she stated.

The Union Health Secretary urged all stakeholders to provide their feedback on the enhanced application so that issues, if any, can be mitigated by NIMHANS team in a timely manner. (PIB)

ECI Conducts Online Assessment and Training for ROs and AROs

NEW DELHI: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has conducted an online training and assessment programme for Returning Officers (ROs) and Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) ahead of the upcoming Bihar Legislative Assembly elections and bye-elections.

An official spokesperson said the two-day session, held on October 9 and 10, included interactive doubt-clearing modules on various aspects of the nomination process.

He said a total of 243 ROs and 1,418 AROs participated virtually in the comprehensive training aimed at strengthening preparedness and ensuring compliance with election laws under the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

The sessions covered topics such as nomination scrutiny, candidate qualifications and disqualifications, Model Code of Conduct (MCC), symbol allotment, withdrawal procedures, poll-day arrangements, and counting protocols.

National-level master trainers addressed queries raised by officials to ensure a clear understanding of procedures and uniform implementation of ECI guidelines across constituencies.

In addition, the Commission conducted an online briefing for Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs), District Election Officers (DEOs), and ROs on the newly introduced Presiding Officer Module of ECINet—a digital platform designed to enhance election transparency and efficiency.

Under this system, Presiding Officers will upload voter turn-out data every two hours and at the close of polls via the ECINet mobile app. The data will be automatically compiled at the RO level, enabling near real-time monitoring of voting trends.

The ECI also announced that a trial run of the ECINet application will be conducted at all polling stations prior to polling day to ensure seamless operation.

These initiatives, the Commission said, are part of its ongoing efforts to modernize electoral management and build capacity among election officials for smooth, transparent, and credible elections. (PIB)



Rajnath Singh Calls for Stronger India-Australia Defence Industry Partnership at Sydney Round Table

SYDNEY: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday addressed the maiden India-Australia Defence Industry Business Round Table in Sydney, reaffirming the deepening strategic and industrial synergy between



the two nations.

Speaking at the forum, Shri Rajnath Singh said that under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership 2020, India and Australia stand at a "pivotal juncture" to reposition their defence relations "as co-creators of a secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific."

He described the Round Table as more than a dialogue—"a declaration of intent to make India and Australia natural allies in business, industry, and innovation."

The Defence Minister noted that the relationship has been strengthened through a series of high-level engagements, including the India-Australia Summit in November 2024, the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in October 2024, and his current visit following that of Australia's Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister in June 2025.

He said the partnership rests on shared democratic values, commonwealth heritage, and converging strategic interests.

Rajnath Singh identified three pillars of bilateral ties—government-to-government collaboration, people-to-people connection, and convergence of business interests. He noted that while official and societal exchanges are robust, the defence industrial partnership "still has untapped potential" in joint R&D, innovation, and co-production.

Highlighting India's economic progress, the Minister said the country is on a transformative journey of structural reforms, emerging as the world's fourth-largest and

fastest-growing major economy. India's defence production reached a record 1.51 lakh crore (around USD 18 billion) in 2024-25, while exports grew to 23,622 crore (USD 2.76 billion), with Indian firms now supplying to nearly 100 countries.

Calling for deeper industrial collaboration, he invited Australian companies to co-develop and co-produce high-end systems including propulsion technologies, autonomous underwater vehicles, flight simulators, and advanced materials. "This Round Table can be a great catalyst to tap the unrealised potential in our defence industry collaboration," he said.

Rajnath Singh underlined that India's Make in India and Production Linked Incentive schemes, along with liberalised FDI norms—allowing up to 74 per cent under the automatic route—have created an enabling environment for innovation and investment. To accelerate defence R&D in the private sector, the government has opened free-of-cost technology transfers through DRDO and launched schemes promoting cutting-edge technologies.

He highlighted ongoing cooperation between DRDO and Australia's Defence Science & Technology Group, including joint work on towed array sensors and advancing discussions in quantum technology, AI, cybersecurity, and information warfare.

Pointing to India's shipbuilding expertise, Rajnath Singh said Indian shipyards can offer refit, mid-life upgrades, and maintenance for the Royal Australian Navy and vessels under Australia's Pacific Maritime Security Program.

He cited active partnerships such as Indo-MIM Pvt. Ltd. with Thales Australia, Tata Advanced Systems with W&E Platt Pty Ltd, and Munitions India Ltd. with Aquisport, saying these demonstrate the complementarity of the two nations' industrial ecosystems.

Welcoming Australia's proposal for a reciprocal provision of defence articles and services MoU, he said the move reflects "the trust and confidence that bind us," noting that Australia has identified India as a Top-Tier Partner, easing technology-sharing regulations. (PIB)

UK PM Keir Starmer wraps India visit with AI, fintech investments into India

LONDON: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has said that he secured thousands of new jobs during his visit to India, with a range of UK companies confirming 3.6 billion pounds worth of investments across AI and fintech sectors.

Starmer, who concluded his Mumbai visit on Thursday after wide-ranging talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said the visit had helped the UK seize the opportunities created by the Comprehensive Trade and Economic Agreement (CETA) signed in July.

He promised to open more doors for British businesses in India, following the "ambitious" Free Trade Agreement, which will lower tariffs and mean trade is "quicker, cheaper and easier".

"Alongside a 125-strong business delegation, we have seized the opportunities created by our trade deal with India in full this week," said Starmer, in a statement at the conclusion of his India visit.

"We've secured new investments into the UK, and created 10,600 jobs across the entire country, in some of our most thriving industries. And we've flown the flag for British business in India – opening doors and galvanising our partnerships. Our outward-looking and proud approach is delivering real change, which people will see in their communities up and down the country," he said.

Some of the key investments by British companies highlighted by 10 Downing Street include Graphcore, part of the SoftBank Group, which will invest up to 1 billion pounds in a new AI engineering campus in Bengaluru, creating 500 high-skilled jobs in India's semiconductor industry.

While UK fintech Tide will invest 500 million pounds in India over five years from 2026 – expanding its India workforce to 2,300 by adding 800 professionals in the next 12 months, Revolut is looking to spend 500 million pounds in its India business in the next five years.

Meanwhile, Paysecure, a UK-based payments orchestration company, aims to boost UK exports by 370 million pounds in five years by enabling "seamless payments" for UK businesses in India through integration with top Indian banks and payment gateways.

"Wrapping up a two-day trade mission to Mumbai, the Prime Minister has praised the strengthened, future-facing UK-India partnership,

which will deliver for Britain by boosting growth, creating jobs and making hard-working people better off," Downing Street said.

"A range of UK companies have confirmed 3.6 billion pounds worth of investments that will see them grow and expand into India's super-economy – which will support thousands of



British jobs and deliver growth at home," it stated.

This followed an earlier announcement of 64 Indian investment projects worth 1.3 billion pounds expected to generate 6,900 new jobs across diverse sectors in the UK.

While a new 350 million pounds deal to deliver UK-manufactured missiles to the Indian Army is expected to create a further 700 jobs in Northern Ireland, Yash Raj Films' commitment to make three new Bollywood films in the UK from next year is estimated to bring over 3,000 new jobs to the country from early next year.

Both leaders looked forward to the ratification of the India-UK CETA as early as possible to realise its benefits, reads the joint statement issued after Starmer-Modi talks in Mumbai.

The Prime Ministers also welcomed the re-setting of the Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO), which will support the governance and utilisation of the CETA and drive forward our wider trade and investment partnership, it adds.

CETA, which targets a doubling of annual bilateral trade from an estimated 44.1 billion pounds by 2030, is undergoing a UK parliamentary ratification process that is expected to be completed by early next year. (PTI)

World Mental Health Day 2025: PM Modi calls for making mental health conversations mainstream

NEW DELHI: On the occasion of World Mental Health Day 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday called for making conversations about mental health a mainstream part of public discourse and society, while commending professionals working to promote mental well-being across the country.

In a post on social media platform X, the Prime Minister wrote, "World Mental Health Day serves as a powerful reminder that mental health is a fundamental part of our overall well-being. In a fast-paced world, this day underscores the importance of reflecting and extending compassion to others."

Calling for a collective effort to normalise discussions around mental health, PM Modi added, "Let us also work collectively to create environments where conversations around mental health become more mainstream. My compliments to all those working in this field and helping others heal and find happiness."

Meanwhile, to provide mental health support in regional languages and enhance accessibility, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare Jagat Prakash Nadda launched several new initiatives for the National Tele Mental Health Programme (Tele MANAS) in the national capital today.

These latest initiatives include the launch of Tele MANAS App Enhancements (Multi-lingual

UI, Chatbot, Accessibility, Emergency Module). The Tele MANAS app will now be available in 10 regional languages, in addition to English and Hindi. These languages include Assamese,



Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Odia, and Punjabi.

Speaking on the occasion, Nadda remarked that "a sound mind leads to a sound body, and a healthy mind and a healthy body lead to a healthy nation." He said, "India is committed to ensuring equitable, affordable, and inclusive access to mental health services. With the launch of the new features in the Tele-MANAS app, we are strengthening our preparedness to respond effectively to mental health emergencies and expanding the reach of digital innovations to every corner of the country. Moving a step closer towards normalising discussions around mental health is crucial to reducing stigma and highlighting mental health as an integral aspect of public health in India." (ANI)

Macron is set to appoint new French prime minister in last-ditch move to tackle turmoil

PARIS: After a week of intense political turmoil, French President Emmanuel Macron is set to appoint a new prime minister on Friday in his latest bid to break the political deadlock that has gripped the country for more than a year, as France struggles with mounting economic challenges and ballooning debt.

The appointment is widely seen as the president's last chance to revive his second term, which runs until 2027. With no majority in the National Assembly to push through his agenda, Macron faces increasingly fierce criticism, even from within his own camp, and has little room to manoeuvre.

Outgoing Prime Minister Sebastian Lecornu abruptly resigned on Monday, only hours after unveiling a new Cabinet. The shock resignation prompted calls for Macron to step down or dissolve parliament again. But they remained unanswered, with the president instead announcing Wednesday that he would name a successor within 48 hours.



Over the past year, Macron's successive minority governments have collapsed in quick succession, leaving the European Union's second-largest economy

mired in political paralysis as France is faced with a debt crisis. At the end of the first quarter of 2025, France's public debt stood at 3.346 trillion euros (USD 3.9 tril-

lion), or 114 per cent of gross domestic product.

France's poverty rate also reached 15.4 per cent in 2023, its highest level since records began in 1996, according to the latest data available from the national statistics institute. The economic and political struggles are worrying financial markets, ratings agencies and the European Commission, which has been pushing France to comply with EU rules limiting debt.

Uncertainty surrounds the choice of the next PM

Macron may turn to a figure from the left, who managed to form a coalition in the 2024 legislative elections, or opt for a technocratic government to sidestep partisan deadlock. In any case, the new prime minister will have to seek compromises to avoid an immediate vote of no confidence and may even be forced to abandon the pension reform that gradually raises the retirement age from 62 to 64. Macron fought fiercely for the

deeply unpopular measure, which was enacted into law in 2023 despite mass protests. Lecornu argued that Macron's centrist bloc, its allies, and parts of the opposition could still rally to form a working majority. "There's a majority that can govern," he said. "I feel that a path is still possible. It is difficult."

The stalemate stems from Macron's shock decision in June 2024 to dissolve the National Assembly. The snap elections produced a hung parliament, with no bloc able to command a majority in the 577-seat chamber. The gridlock has unnerved investors, infuriated voters, and stalled efforts to curb France's spiralling deficit and public debt. Without stable support, Macron's governments have stumbled from one crisis to the next, collapsing as they sought backing for unpopular spending cuts. Lecornu's resignation, just 14 hours after announcing his Cabinet, underscored the fragility of the president's coalition amid deep political and personal rivalries. (PTI)



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Sector/Products	Old GST Rate	New GST Rate	Sector/Products	Old GST Rate	New GST Rate
Cartons, Boxes and Cases of Corrugated/Non-Corrugated Paper or Paper Boards	12%	5%	Handcrafted candles, carved wood products, handbags including pouches and purses	12%	5%
Paper pulp moulded trays	12%	5%	Stone art ware, stone inlay work, tableware and kitchenware of clay and terracotta	12%	5%
Chamois leather and composition leather with a basis of leather or leather fibre	12%	5%	Glass statutes, artware of iron, aluminium, brass/copper	12%	5%
Leather after tanning/crusting	12%	5%	Commercial goods vehicles (trucks, delivery vans)	28%	18%
Footwear (≤ ₹2,500 per pair)	12%	5%	Prepared/preserved vegetables, fruits, nuts	12%	5%
Supply of job work in relation to hides, skins and leather falling under Chapter 41	12%	5%	Man-made fibres (MMF)	18%	5%
Rice husk/glassfibre reinforced gypsum/ cement bonded particle/jute particle/ bagasse/sisal fibre boards	12%	5%	Man-made yarns	12%	5%
Sheets for veneering, bamboo flooring, casks, barrels, vats, tubs of wood.	12%	5%	Toys and sports goods	12%	5%
Idols (wood, stone, metals)	12%	5%			

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Brook:

Cummins' Ashes doubts 'play into England's hands'

Harry Brook is ever the straight-talking Yorkshireman. He will fly to New Zealand on Friday night to captain six white-ball internationals but knows that there is one question occupying England fans' minds more than any other: when he returns home from Australia in January, will he bring the Ashes urn with him? His response: "Bloody hopeso."

England's recent record in Australia is dreadful, but their quiet optimism about this winter's series has been reinforced by the revelation that Pat Cummins is increasingly unlikely to play in the first Test. Australia have played down the severity of his back injury, but Andrew McDonald conceded on Friday that Cummins is "running out of time" before November 21.

Cummins' absence would be a shame for the series, but can only be seen as a boost to England's chances. Brook said that Australia have "a hell of a lot of good bowlers" who could deputise, but Cummins' package of leadership, pace and skill is impossible to replicate and England know as much.

"He is an amazing bowler and has been for many years," Brook said at Thursday night's PCA awards ceremony, in partnership with Toyota. "He bowls at high pace, with high skill. With him out of their side for the first game, from what we've seen, hopefully that plays into our hands... [But] we can't take anybody lightly."

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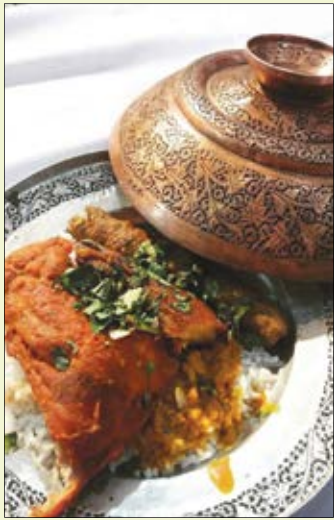
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