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'Gave our best'

Omar Abdullah Completes One Year As J&K Chief Minister

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Says alliance with Congress intact, expecting Centre's flood relief package

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said the National Conference (NC) government has performed to the best of its ability under the challenging circumstances in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a press conference after the completion of the government's one year in office, the Chief Minister, said that it would make no sense to remain satisfied with the government's work done in the past year, as ultimately, it is the people who decide after five years through their votes. "We want the people to be satisfied with our work. I believe we couldn't have done better under these circumstances, but we will do much better in the future," he said.

He said that the people can judge this government after the completion of five years. "The mandate has not been given to us for a period of ten months or a year. We have been given five years to serve. No government can fulfil all the promises in just one year," he said, adding that the government has fulfilled its promise of passing the resolution in the cabinet and bringing it to the Assembly.

Regarding the regularisation of daily wagers, Omar said the government has already started work in this regard, and only today, the Education Department has regularised 860 CPWs, who were earlier working on meagre remuneration. "We are sticking to our promises, and all of them will be fulfilled in the five-year period. The report card on all the promises made by the government will be before the people," he said.



Abdullah said that working in the Union Territory is a different experience. "We were expecting the restoration of statehood in the first year of governance, but we will not stop here; we will continue to fight for it," he said.

> "If we are being **forced** to include them in the **government**, then I want to make it clear that **statehood** is not going to be restored in the next four years. We will not allow **BJP** to come into power," he added.

The Chief Minister said he believes all the issues can be resolved once statehood is restored. "I want to appeal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah to fulfil the promises made to the people in Parliament and in the Supreme Court regarding the restoration of statehood," he said.

Omar added that all means and ways are open for them to seek the

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Omar Abdullah announces revival of Darbar Move in J&K

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JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday announced the resumption of the traditional biannual Darbar Move practice after a gap of more than four years. The practice was halted by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha in 2021.

Addressing a press conference here, the CM said, the cabinet has given nod for the revival of the century-old practice. "The file was sent to the Lieutenant Governor and has been approved. The government is reviving the practice soon," he said.

The Cabinet had recommended a return to the full-fledged Darbar Move in September this year.

Following the Chief Minister's

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Youth of J&K Deeply Engaging with Nation's History, Values: LG

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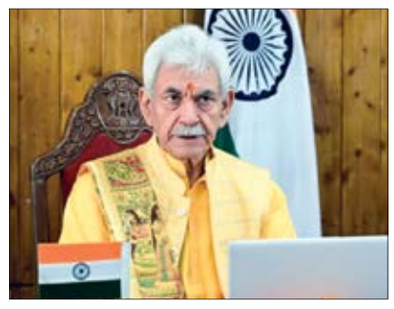
Inaugurates Veshaw Literary Festival at Kulgam

SRINAGAR: "Youth of Jammu Kashmir are now deeply engaging with the country's history, values and aspirations," the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Thursday. He said youth are forging bond with diversity, heritage and fostering a shared cultural identity for nation-building. The Lieutenant Governor was addressing the inaugural function of Veshaw Literary Festival at Kulgam, through video conferencing.

The two-day lit fest is celebrating literature by bringing together writers, artists and readers to share and discuss books, new ideas and to promote a variety of creative and literary works.

"The lit fest will also explore the region's unique spirituality and cultural significance and provide a platform for women writers and young authors to share their creative works. The event will foster appreciation for literature and strengthen the community bond," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that



the writings of prominent literary figures from Jammu Kashmir have inspired generations.

"Kulgam stands as a testament to a rich spiritual and intellectual tradition. Kulgam is a confluence of nature,

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1614 J&K Policemen laid down their lives fighting Pak: DGP

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR : Stating that more than 1,614 Jammu and Kashmir Policemen laid down their lives during the past three decades while fighting Pakistan and its proxies in the Union Territory, Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat,



on Thursday reiterated the commitment of the force to safeguard peace and stability in the region.

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'Ek Saal Nakami ki Misaal': BJP on Abdullah govt's first year

SRINAGAR: The BJP on Thursday launched a blistering attack on the Omar Abdullah-led National Conference (NC) government, terming its first year in office as a year of 'exemplary failure'.

BJP spokesperson Altaf Thakur said the Abdullah government's one-year reign was "Ek Saal Nakami ki Misaal", a year of broken promises and mounting public distress.

Thakur accused Abdullah of "fooling" the people of Jammu and Kashmir with a "false manifesto" and hollow assurances.

"Where are the 12 free LPG cylinders, the 10 kilograms of ration per month, the 200 units of free electricity, and the one lakh jobs promised within six months? Not a single commitment has been fulfilled," Thakur said.

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'Op Sindoor' glowing testimony to India's growing indigenous prowess: Rajnath

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Stating that Operation Sindoor demonstrated India's growing indig-



enous defence capability, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said that under PM Modi's leadership India has turned earlier challenges into measurable outcomes.

Speaking at the convocation ceremony of Symbiosis Skills and Professional University in Pune, the Defence Minister said, "The government is committed to building a self-reliant defence manufacturing ecosystem and make India one of the most powerful countries in the world."

While tracing India's journey towards self-reliance in defence, he said that the country had been heavily dependent on other nations for weapons since independence. "Under PM Modi's leadership, we pledged to transform the defence sector because, since independence, we lacked the political will and enabling laws to manufacture in India. That required a change," he said.

The Defence Minister said the bravery of Indian soldiers during 'Operation Sindoor' was supported by a significant amount of equipment produced in India. He added

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Nehru Denying Free Hand To Patel Resulted In PoJK: Dr Jitendra

FE NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA : Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh flagged off the inaugural 'Unity March Ek Bharat, Akhand Bharat' "Padyatra" here today as part of the nationwide initiative honouring the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Dr Jitendra Singh was joined by a large number of students, NCC cadets, public representatives and local people during the March which began from Dream Land Park and culminated in the premises of Government Degree College (GMC). The Sardar@150 Unity March is aimed at awakening the spirit of unity, patriotism, and duty among the youth.

Addressing a news conference after the culmination of the Unity March at Degree College Kathua, Dr Jitendra Singh said, had Sardar Patel been given a free hand, the issue of Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir(POJK) would not have arisen and, the history of J&K ,



indeed that of India, would have been different.

He said, the then PM Jawaharlal Nehru not allowing his Home Minister Patel to handle J&K the same way as was handling other princely States of the country led to the creation of PoJK. And when the Indian forces were about to retrieve the part of J&K captured by Pakistan, Nehru without consulting Patel or

> **Union Minister** Said That Drawing Inspiration From Sardar Patel, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Had **Resolved** To Carry Forward The Great Leader's Legacy And Rekindle The Spirit Of **Unity And Patriotism** Among The Youth...

other cabinet colleagues, went to the radio and declared unilateral ceasefire, he added.

Hailing Sardar Patel for integrating more than 560 odd

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CM Omar Abdullah hands over regularisation orders to 863 CPWs

FE NEWS NETWORK

Launches Vidya Samiksha Kendra in Jammu

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah handed over regularisation orders to 863 Contingent Paid Workers (CPWs) of the School Education Department from multiple districts of Jammu province.

The occasion also witnessed the formal inauguration of the Vidya Samiksha Kendra under Samagra Shiksha and the launch of a suite of new ICT and analytics platforms aimed at strengthening the education ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir.



The ceremony was attended by Cabinet Minister for Health, Medical Education, School Education, Higher Education & Social Welfare Sakina Itoo; Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani; Members of Legislative Assembly Pyare Lal and Er. Khurshid Ahmed; Secretary, School Education Department Ram Niwas Sharma; Project Director, Samagra Shiksha Bhawani Rakwal and Director, School Education Jammu Naseem Chowdhary.

In his address, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed satisfaction over the fulfilment of a long-pending demand, commending the dedication and patience of CPWs awaiting regularisation. He lauded Minister Sakina Itoo, the School Education Department and the administrative leadership for their coordinated efforts in achieving this milestone.

The Chief Minister announced that nearly one thousand infrastructure works are currently underway in the education sector, with approximately 450 crore earmarked for civil works under the School Education Department. He stated that by March 2026, all Higher

> Chief Minister announced that nearly one thousand infrastructure works are currently underway in the education sector, with approximately ₹450 crore earmarked for civil works under the School Education Department...

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21st century belongs to India, country to "Viksit Bharat" by 2047: PM Modi

FE NEWS NETWORK

KURNOOL(ANDHRA PRADESH): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that the 21st century belongs to 140 crore Indians and that the country will become "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India) by 2047 even as he attacked the Congress saying the grand old party neglected the power sector.

Hailing the country's Make in India ecosystem, he said, "we saw the might" of home-made "things" in Operation Sindoor, the military offensive launched at crossborder terror launchpads in Pakistan, post the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack.

Referring to the recent developments such as the hike in Income Tax exemption to Rs 12 lakh and GST rate reforms, Modi said the vision of the NDA government is "citizen-centric development" and pointed out that continuous reforms are being taken up to make people's lives easy.

"As (Andhra CM) Chandrababu Naidu said, by 2047, the centenary year of independence, Viksit Bharat will happen. I can say confidently that the 21st century is going to be India's century. The 21st century



belongs to 140 crore Indians," the PM said in his address after inaugurating and laying the foundation stones for projects worth over Rs 13,000 crore.

Modi said today the world is seeing India as a new manufacturing centre of the 21st century and the basis of this success is the vision of a self-reliant India even as Andhra

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Zero tolerance against criminals operating from foreign lands: Amit Shah

NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said a ruthless approach must be adopted towards economic offenders, cyber criminals, those involved in terror activities and all other fugitives to ensure they are brought before the Indian justice system.

Addressing a conference on 'Extradition of Fugitives – Challenges and Strategies', organised by the CBI here, Shah also said that a zero tolerance approach must be adopted not only against against corruption, crime and terrorism, but also against those criminals who are operating from outside India.

Efforts must be made to bring all fugitives within the ambit of the law and to establish a definite mechanism for this, he said.

"Whether they are economic offenders, cyber criminals, those involved in terrorist activities or part of organised crime networks, a ruthless approach must be adopted against every fugitive to ensure they are brought before the Indian justice system.

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Poshan Maah activities conclude in Reasi with grand valedictory event

DC flags off poshan rally, inspects nutrition stalls

REASI: Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik on Thursday chaired the grand valedictory ceremony of the 8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2025, which was observed from September 17 to October 16 to promote nutrition awareness, community participation and behavioural change.



During the month-long campaign, a total of 26,523 activities were conducted across the district, engaging over 3.11 lakh individuals. The activities included healthy recipe competitions, identification of SAM/MAM children, awareness sessions on healthy lifestyles, recipe demonstrations featuring low-fat, low-sugar meals and yoga activities.

Among others present at the event included ADDC Sukhdev Singh Samyal; PO POSHAN Sudershan Kumar; ACD Vijay Kumar; CDPO Arnas Shahid Iqbal; CDPO Reasi Suninderjeet Kour; CDPO Pouni Lekha Bhasinand Anganwadi Sanginis and Sahayikas from across the district.

The Anganwadi workers presented a cultural program and a thematic skit highlighting the crucial role of Anganwadi Centres in improving child nutrition and early education.

A short documentary produced under the Poshan Project Reasi was also screened, showcasing the functioning and positive impact of Anganwadi Centres in the district.

Speaking on the occasion, DC Nidhi Malik commended the efforts of the POSHAN Department and acknowledged the dedicated contribution of Anganwadi workers, who led impactful activities throughout the month aimed at promoting health, hygiene and nutrition at the grassroots level.

On the occasion, the DC gave away 26 engagement orders to newly appointed functionaries, including 4 Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and 14 Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs) under Poshan Project Reasi and 8 AWHs from Poshan Project Pouni.

The DC also inspected Nutrition Stalls set up by the Anganwadi Centres, which displayed locally prepared nutritious food items and distributed IEC material to promote healthy eating habits.

Later, DC Nidhi Malik flagged off a "Poshan Rally", organized to raise community awareness on the importance of balanced nutrition, good health and hygiene practices.

DC Kishtwar approves 78 start-up projects under Mission YUVA

KISHTWAR: The District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) under the Mission YUVA scheme met today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma to review and approve applications submitted.

A total of 78 applications, duly verified by the Small Business Development Units (SBDUs) were presented to the committee. Each proposal was assessed based on eligibility, project feasibility



and the socio economic background of the applicant.

After detailed scrutiny, the committee approved 76 applications for financial assistance and handholding support, while two applications were rejected as they had submitted their application under the wrong scheme, as verified by the J&K Bank Manager, Cluster Head, Kishtwar.

The DC emphasized the importance of empowering youth to drive local economic growth. He directed the AD Employment to ensure that all approved cases are forwarded to banks at the earliest, so that applicants can receive timely benefits under the scheme.

He also directed banks to sanction and disburse loans without delay and to provide regular mentorship to support the new entrepreneurs.

Mission YUVA continues to play a vital role in creating livelihood opportunities and promoting self reliance among the youth of Kishtwar district.

The meeting was attended by ADC Pawan Kotwal; PO ICDS Dr. Rishi Sharma; AD Employment Mamta Sudershan; DSWO Tariq Parvez Qazi, EO MC and other concerned officers.

DC Samba reviews Health Services scenario

Emphasizes inclusive patient care, good governance

FE NEWS NETWORK

SAMBA: Deputy Commissioner Samba, Ayushi Sudan conducted an extensive review



of the Health Department's performance and ongoing initiatives in the district here at a meeting.

The meeting underscored the administration's unwavering commitment to prioritizing health services, promoting good governance, and achieving universal healthcare coverage for all sections of society, particularly the vulnerable and marginalized populations.

The Deputy Commissioner laid special emphasis on accelerating efforts under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP), directing officials to achieve the ambitious target of screening 70,000 vulnerable individuals for TB in the district.

Recognizing TB elimination as a top priority, DC Sudan stressed the critical importance of community engagement through Nikshay Mitras, the dedicated community volunteers who serve as a vital bridge between TB patients and healthcare services. She asked Community Health Officers (CHOs) to work in close coordination with Nikshay Mitras to proactively identify potential TB cases, deliver effective treatment support, and diligently monitor patient outcomes to ensure complete recovery.

In line with the administration's vision of inclusive healthcare, the Deputy Commissioner directed immediate saturation of the district's population aged 70 years and above with ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Health Account) cards, thereby ensuring that senior citizens have unhindered access to quality healthcare services and benefits under government schemes.

To expedite the creation of digital health identities and promote the adoption of digital health initiatives across all demographics, the DC instructed officials to actively engage with private sector operators for generating ABHA IDs, thereby leveraging public-private partnerships for enhanced service delivery.

Addressing another critical aspect of healthcare governance and social welfare, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Chief Medical Officer to organize a comprehensive workshop to acquaint medical fraternity with the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act.

"The initiative aims to create awareness about preventing sex-selective practices, combating gender discrimination, and promoting the survival and well-being of the girl child, thus reinforcing the administration's commitment to gender equality and women's healthcare," she added.

Concluding the review, Deputy Commissioner Ayushi Sudan emphasized that achieving TB elimination goals and ensuring comprehensive healthcare coverage requires collective efforts, sustained awareness campaigns, extensive screening drives and robust treatment support mechanisms.

She called upon all stakeholders, including Nikshay Mitras, Community Health Officers, private healthcare operators, and departmental officials, to work cohesively towards strengthening healthcare services and building a healthier, TB-free society.

The meeting was attended by Chief Medical Officer Dr. Vidhi Bhatial, Block Medical Officers of Nud, Ramgarh and Purmandal, District Health Officer, District Immunization Officer, all Nodal Officers and other senior officials of the Health Department, reflecting the administration's comprehensive approach towards good governance and people-centric healthcare delivery.

JKACS organises 5 KM Red Run to spread awareness about HIV/AIDS

JAMMU: In continuation to its efforts for the prevention and control of HIV in Jammu and Kashmir, the J&K AIDS Control Society (JKACS), H&ME Department, Government of J&K organized the second leg of the five Kilometre run for generating awareness on HIV/AIDS and related issues. Control Organization in the country on August 12, 2025, concluded today at the sports ground of University of Jammu.

Earlier, the activity started with the flagging-off of 2 KM walkathon on the university campus on October 15 2025 by the Chief Guest -, Director, Sports & Physical Jehangir Bakshi, in collaboration with the Directorate of Sports & Physical Education, University of Jammu.



The event Red Run – 2025 was organized in collaboration with the Directorate of Sports & Physical Education, University of Jammu for College and University level students with a special focus on youth wellbeing and channelizing their energies in a positive direction. The event, which was part of the two month long Intensified IEC Campaign launched by National AIDS Education, University of Jammu Dr. Daud Iqbal Baba in presence of Guest of Honour Principal, SPMR College of Commerce Dr. Rajinder Singh and Special Guest, Deputy Director (Finance) JKACS Madan Lal. Around two hundred and fifty students participated in the walkathon.

The whole event was organized under the guidance of Project Director JKACS Dr.

Members of Red Ribbon Clubs from Jammu University and different Colleges of Jammu took part in the walkathon which was followed by the main activity of 5 KMs Red Run on the athletic track of the university campus witnessing participation of 110 students. The run for girls was held on October 15, 2025 and for boys on October 16, 2025. The winners of the Red Run were awarded by the Chief Guest alongwith other guests present on the stage. First position was bagged by Parul Sharma in women's category from Directorate of Sports & Physical Education, University of Jammu and Karamat Ali in men's category from GDC, Paloura respectively. The winners from J&K will participate in the National Level Running Competition to be organized by NACO at Chumoukedima (Dimapur), Nagaland on October 30, 2025.

Later a felicitation function was also held in which mementoes were presented to the guests, nodal officers of the Red Ribbon Clubs and other concerned officials from the participating departments.

Anchoring of the program was done by Lakhshika Jamwal & Yamneesh Thakur students from Sports and Physical Education Department, University of Jammu.

Closing ceremony of 8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah held at GDC Women Kathua

MLA Dr B. Bushan, DC stress on balanced nutrition for well being of family

KATHUA: The closing ceremony of the 8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah was held at Government Degree College for Women Kathua. MLA Kathua, Dr. Bharat Bhushan, attended the event as the Chief Guest, while Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma was the Guest of Honour.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Dr. Bharat Bhushan lauded the ICDS Department for successfully observing Poshan Maah across the district. He said that the Poshan projects play a crucial role in promoting health and nutrition awareness, especially among women and children. He added that the initiative provides vital support by encouraging the use of fresh vegetables and local by available nutritious food, which helps improve family health and well-being. The MLA further said that such sustained efforts have a direct impact on reducing Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), contributing to the vision of a healthy and self-reliant nation.

Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma, in his address, said that the Poshan Abhiyaan holds immense importance in ensuring nutritional care for pregnant women, lactating mothers and young children. He emphasized that community participation is essential to achieve the objectives of the campaign and urged



all stakeholders to work in coordination to ensure the delivery of nutritional and health services at the grassroots level. The DC appreciated the efforts of ICDS staff, Anganwadi Workers and community volunteers for spreading awareness and implementing various activities under the Poshan Maah with dedication.

The key focus areas of this year's Poshan Maah included awareness on limited intake of sugar and edible oils to reduce obesity, promotion of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) integrating nutrition with learning, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices, mainstreaming men's participation in nutrition and childcare, promotion of locally available nutritious food resources, and integrated action through digitisation.

A Theme based Nukkad Natak was also presented, highlighting the government schemes like Laadli Beti Yojana, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Gender Equality and Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana.

The MLA and Deputy Commissioner also handed over appointment orders to 11 newly appointed Anganwadi Helpers.

Among others present included PO ICDS, Mohammad Syeed Khan; CMO Dr. Vijay Raina; DEPO Anjana Manyal; CDPOs of Kathua, Bani, Duggan, Lohai-Malhar, Hiranagar, Basohli, Billawar and Barnoti; Supervisors, Anganwadi Workers and Helpers.

The programme concluded with a pledge by all participants to continue spreading awareness on nutrition, health, and gender equality in their respective communities.

J&K Bank donates traffic barricades to District Administration Kishtwar under CSR

KISHTWAR: As part of its ongoing commitment towards community welfare and public safety, J&K Bank donated traffic barricades to the District Administration Kishtwar here at a programme held in the DC Office complex.

The CSR initiative, undertaken under the overall guidance of Deputy Commissioner Pankaj



Kumar Sharma, aims to strengthen traffic management and road safety measures in the region.

The barricades were handed over by Cluster Head, J&K Bank Khurshid Ahmed Akhoon to ARTO Tasleem Wani, who received them on behalf of the District administration.

Speaking on the occasion, the Cluster Head said the initiative forms part of the bank's broader Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme, focusing on public safety, environmental responsibility and sustainable community development.

"This contribution is a small step towards promoting safer roads and assisting the administration in managing traffic more effectively. As a responsible corporate institution, we are proud to be part of community development and safety initiatives" -he stated.

Expressing appreciation, the ARTO thanked J&K bank for its valuable contribution and noted that such partnerships between public institutions and responsible Corporates play a key role in improving civic infrastructure and ensuring public welfare.

The event was attended by officials from the Transport Department and bank representatives.

Quality education top priority of District Admin: DC Kishtwar

KISHTWAR: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today said that the promotion of quality education has been flagged as a top priority of the District Administration.

He was addressing staff and students of Adarsh Bal Niketan High School, which celebrated its 65th Annual Day today. The DC attended the inaugural session as the Chief Guest.

The Deputy Commissioner lauded the institution for its commitment to imparting quality education and promoting co-curricular activities among students. He assured the school administration of every possible support from the District Administration for the welfare of the students.

Earlier, the Head of the Institution highlighted the school's achievements in academic and co-curricular activities.

President Managing Committee of the School Sri Krishan Sharma, Senior Member Prof. Surinder Sen also spoke on the occasion.

R.N Jhor Group Senior Manager CVPP Pakkal Dul Hydro Electric Power project was the chief guest at the Second sitting of the day.

The students presented a vibrant cultural program, showcasing the rich cultural heritage and patriotism. The event was attended by a galaxy of intellectuals, including senior district officers, Principal, managing committee members, parents and a large number of students.

DC Kathua reviews physical, financial progress of PHE, Irrigation & Flood Control works

KATHUA: Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma chaired a meeting to review the physical and financial progress of works being executed under the Public Health Engineering (PHE), Irrigation and Flood Control sectors in the district. The meeting was attended by ADDC, Chief Planning Officer, Executive Engineers and officers of line departments.

The DC took a detailed review of the status of borewell and tubewell works besides assessing the progress of projects being executed under AMRUT 2.0 and Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). He also reviewed the progress of works being implemented under UT and District Capex budgets. The DC further reviewed the status of mechanical works and ongoing works on electric substations, besides taking note of the new works undertaken by the Flood Control Division Kathua under UT Capex and NABARD. The meeting also discussed the progress of works under the Irrigation Division Kathua being implemented under District Capex, UT Capex and CDS 2025-26.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers to ensure timely execution of all approved works while maintaining the prescribed quality standards. He further instructed the departments to keep the District Administration regularly informed about the progress of ongoing works and report any issues or bottlenecks for timely resolution.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah interacts with several public delegations, individuals in Jammu

SMVD University contributes over 11 Lakh to CM's Flood Relief Fund

JAMMU: Several individuals and public delegations met Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at his official residence here and apprised him of various developmental and public welfare issues.

On the occasion, a delegation from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) faculty presented a cheque of over 11 lakh towards the Chief Minister's Flood Relief Fund. The contribution, made by the employees of SMVDU, was appreciated by the Chief Minister, who lauded their spirit of compassion and solidarity.

Raj Kumar Choudhary, Chairperson of the J&K Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission, also called on the Chief Minister and discussed issues pertaining to the power sector.

A delegation from IDPS Ghou Manhasan, comprising students and staff, met the Chief Minister and discussed bridging the rural–urban education gap and inspiring students to become responsible future leaders. The Chief Minister also released the school's newsletter on the occasion and encouraged the students to pursue excellence with dedication and integrity.



Similarly, a delegation led by Dr. Sandeep Gupta, Regional Director of IGNOU Jammu, briefed the Chief Minister about the University's ongoing programmes on disaster management, emphasizing their relevance in present times.

A delegation from Markazi Jama Masjid, Talab Khatikan, Jammu, led by Shahi Imam Mufti Anayatullah, also called on the Chief Minister and discussed issues related to the Jama Masjid and the local Madrassa.

Among others, DDC Member Dansal Shameem Begum, MLA Bani Dr. Rameshwar Singh, and Jammu Province JKNC President Rattan Lal Gupta also met the Chief Minister and raised several developmental and people-centric issues concerning their respective areas.

The Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to all the visiting delegations and assured them that their genuine concerns would be duly examined and addressed by the government.

Satish Sharma visits Pampore, takes first-hand assessment of facilities available at key sports grounds

Also interacts with local youth, sportspersons, representatives of sports bodies

SRINAGAR: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, and Youth Services & Sports, Satish Sharma conducted an extensive visit to two key sports grounds at Tanchabagh and Kadalbal, Pampore to gather first-hand assessment of the sports facilities available and review requirements for their upgradation.

During the visit, the Minister interacted with local youth, sportspersons, and representatives of sports bodies who apprised him of various issues related to sports infrastructure, availability of equipment, and organization of regular sports activities in the area.

Responding to the demands and suggestions put forth by the locals and Sports persons, Satish Sharma announced that both Tanchabagh and Kadalbal grounds will soon be equipped with mass floodlights to enable day and night matches, along with the construction of modern washrooms, changing rooms, and players rest areas. He assured that the Youth Services & Sports department will provide all necessary assistance to ensure these facilities are developed in a time-bound manner.



The Minister emphasized that the Government is fully committed to strengthen sports infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir and particular focus is being laid on developing playgrounds at grassroots level to provide a platform for talented youth to showcase their abilities.

He further stated that sports not only promote physical fitness but also instil discipline, teamwork, and leadership among youth, adding that such facilities will contribute significantly to community engagement and social harmony.

The Minister was accompanied by MLA Pampore, Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi and senior officers from the District Administration and Department of Youth Services and Sports, who briefed the Minister about the current status of sports infrastructure and ongoing initiatives in the area.

Later, the Minister witnessed the final match of a local cricket tournament organized at the Pampore Ground, where he appreciated the enthusiasm and sportsmanship displayed by the players. He also distributed prizes among the winning and runner-up teams, lauding the organizers for their efforts in promoting sports activities among the youth.

The Minister reiterated that the Government under the leadership Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah is working on a comprehensive roadmap to uplift sports infrastructure, empower young talent, and ensure that every district has adequate facilities for training and competition.

Minister Rana applauds CM Omar Abdullah's revival of Darbar Move

SRINAGAR: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, has extended heartfelt appreciation to Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah for taking what he described as a "bold and visionary step" in reviving the historic Darbar Move, a centuries-old tradition that has been an enduring pillar of Jammu and Kashmir's socio-administrative fabric.

Minister Rana emphasized that the Darbar Move is far more than an administrative exercise; it is a symbol of cultural integration, emotional unity and regional inclusivity.

He noted that by reinstating this practice, Chief Minister has reaffirmed a tradition that has historically helped bind the diverse regions of Jammu and Kashmir together.

"The Darbar Move is not just an administrative practice, it is a vital engine for Jammu's economy and a cherished symbol of cultural interaction and integration between regions," Rana stated.

Rana further underlined the economic importance of the Darbar Move to Jammu, noting that the seasonal shift in the administrative headquarters provides a significant boost to the local economy, supporting thousands of livelihoods.

Calling it a "time-tested tradition" that reinforces trust and maintains equilibrium between regions, Javed Rana praised the Chief Minister's commitment to inclusivity and balance.

He reiterated that the symbolic presence of the administration in both Jammu and Srinagar is vital for reinforcing public confidence, regional equity and emotional integration.

Secretary Health reviews status of ongoing recruitment process, vacancy referral to recruiting agencies

SRINAGAR: In order to strengthen and streamline the process of filling of vacant posts and timely referral of vacancies, Secretary, Health & Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah today chaired a meeting to assess the status of referral of vacancies of Gazetted and Non-Gazetted posts in the department to recruiting agencies.

The meeting was attended by Principals of all Government Medical Colleges, SKIMS Medical College, Government Dental College, AYUSH Colleges, Director Planning, Director Finance, and other officers of the department handling recruitment and establishment matters.

During the meeting, the Secretary took detailed college/department wise assessment, with focus on procedural and structural bottlenecks affecting timely referral of vacancies to recruiting agencies. He also reviewed the status of Non-Gazetted vacancies referred to the Jammu & Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB).



The Secretary called upon the officers to maintain due coordination with JKPSC and JKSSB for expediting recruitment process against already referred posts.

He also stressed upon all the officers to work in synergy and ensure timely referral of vacancies.

The Secretary also instructed the officers for timely finalisation of recruitment rules. He asked them to maintain coordination with ARI & Trainings department to expedite the vetting process of the rules.

The meeting was informed that the recruitment rules have been consolidated and are currently under review in consultation with institutional heads and finalisation of these rules is being actively pursued with the designated department and other relevant stakeholders.

It was also given out in the meeting that 105 newly created posts of Assistant Professor-15 each across seven new GMCs-have been formally referred to JKPSC for recruitment.

The Secretary was also informed that due to increasing patient load and expanding services and responsibilities of effective patient care, the Department is working to address the challenges faced in both teaching and clinical domains, and accordingly efforts are underway to ensure that the doctor-patient ratio remains maintained as per norms and guidelines.

CPR Awareness cum Demonstration held at GDC Ganderbal



GANDERBAL: As part of the nationwide Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Awareness Week, a CPR Awareness and Demonstration Program was conducted at Government Degree College (GDC) Ganderbal, in collaboration with the Health Department Ganderbal. The session aimed to raise awareness about the importance of CPR and to train students and faculty in essential life-saving techniques. The demonstration was conducted by healthcare professionals who provided a detailed and practical demonstration of Basic Life Support (BLS), including chest compressions, rescue breathing, and emergency response steps. The event was highly appreciated by the Principal of GDC Ganderbal, who lauded the efforts of the Health Department, NSS, NCC, and Health Committee in organizing such a meaningful and potentially life-saving program. The Principal emphasized the importance of equipping young students with emergency response skills and encouraged more such awareness initiatives in the future. Such programs are vital in creating a prepared and responsible society, capable of responding effectively in critical situations where every second counts.

Tribals being made active stakeholders in planning and development by Omar Abdullah led Government: Javed Rana

Meets several Tribal delegations at Srinagar

SRINAGAR: Several tribal delegations from Bandipora and Kupwara districts called on Tribal Affairs Minister, Javed Ahmed Rana in Srinagar to discuss key issues concerning the welfare and development of tribal communities.

The delegations highlighted several critical concerns, including infrastructure development, healthcare, education, livelihood opportunities and other welfare initiatives aimed at improving the living standards of tribal populations.

The Minister assured the delegations that the government is committed to addressing these issues in a comprehensive manner. He outlined plans for infrastructure upgrades and implementation of welfare schemes under the Tribal Affairs department, aimed at promoting holistic development and creating sustainable opportunities for tribal communities.



He emphasized that the government is focused on safeguarding the rights of tribal communities through the implementation of various flagship schemes and targeted welfare initiatives.

"These flagship schemes and initiatives are aimed at bridging the developmental gaps, improving living standards and ensuring the socio-economic empowerment of tribal communities across Jammu and Kashmir " he said.

Javed Rana reaffirmed the commitment of the Omar Abdullah-led government to inclusive development, underscoring that tribal welfare and empowerment remain a top priority in all policy and development efforts.

He said that all initiatives will be implemented with transparency and efficiency, ensuring that tribal communities are active stakeholders in planning and decision making processes. Minister highlighted that the government's approach to tribal welfare will focus on the effective implementation of welfare schemes to ensure that the intended benefits reach every member of the community.

World Food Day: What we eat today shapes our health tomorrow, say doctors

'Fried, processed foods linked to obesity, heart ailments, cancer; fruits, vegetables, whole grains good for health'

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar: Health experts have underlined the growing role of food habits in determining an individual's risk of developing chronic diseases such as heart problems, diabetes, obesity, and certain forms of cancer.

They said that modern dietary patterns, marked by high consumption of fried, processed, and sugar-laden foods, are directly contributing to the rising burden of lifestyle-related diseases across the country, including Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), doctors and dietitians said that diet is one of the most important factors influencing long-term health outcomes.

They said poor dietary choices not only lead to obesity but also increase the likelihood of high blood pressure, cholesterol, insulin resistance, and metabolic disorders. "What we eat every day determines how our body functions. Unhealthy foods disturb metabolism, increase fat accumulation, and trigger inflammation that contributes to heart disease, diabetes, and even some cancers," said Dr Aadil Ahmad, a senior physician posted in south Kashmir.



He added that foods high in refined sugar, trans fats, and sodium, such as bakery items, sugary drinks, instant noodles, and fried snacks, are among the major culprits.

"Fried foods are particularly harmful because repeated oil heating produces toxic compounds that damage blood vessels and increase bad cholesterol," he said, adding that excessive intake of fast food and soft drinks among the younger generation is alarming.

Nutritionist Dr Nazia Jan said that processed and packaged foods, though convenient, are often loaded with preservatives, artificial flavours, and unhealthy fats. "These foods are low in fibre and essential nutrients but high in calories, which promotes obesity and digestive issues," she said.

She further noted that obesity itself is a major risk factor for several diseases. "Excess body fat, especially around the abdomen, increases the risk of type-2 diabetes, fatty liver disease, hypertension, and certain cancers, including breast and colon cancer," she explained.

Doctors warned that frequent consumption of red meat and charred food items can contribute to cancer risk. Instead, they recommend a balanced diet that includes fruits, vegetables, pulses, whole grains, lean proteins, and plenty of water.

"Natural foods have protective antioxidants and fibre that reduce cholesterol, maintain blood sugar, and prevent cell damage," said Dr Nazia. She urged people to reduce salt and sugar intake, avoid overeating, and eat home-cooked meals.

Experts stressed maintaining portion control and regular physical activity. "A balanced lifestyle with daily exercise, adequate sleep, and minimal stress is as important as diet in staying disease-free," they said.

They suggested that people follow the principle of moderation. "You don't have to completely cut off your favourite foods, but limit fried and processed foods to occasional treats rather than daily meals," they advised. "What we eat today shapes our health tomorrow, so people must eat accordingly."—

Secy IT reviews progress on major telecom, digital connectivity projects across J&K

SRINAGAR: Secretary Information Technology (IT), Dr. Piyush Singla, chaired a comprehensive review meeting here to assess the progress of major telecom and digital connectivity projects being implemented across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting brought together senior officers from Administrative departments, Divisional Commissioners Office (Jammu and Srinagar), JPDCL/KPDCL, LSA and BSNL who participated in detailed deliberations on the status and pace of implementation of different projects.

The review focused on the ongoing initiatives under the 4G Saturation Project, BharatNet Phase-III, Vibrant Villages Programme, and preparatory activities for 5G rollout. The meeting also reviewed initiatives under the Samriddh Gram Panchayat (SGP) pilot project, aimed at enhancing broadband access to schools, health institutions, and government offices.

Dr. Singla emphasized on the importance of close coordination among departments to ensure timely execution and resolution of site-specific and administrative bottlenecks. He directed implementing agencies including BSNL, LSA, and concerned line departments to adhere to prescribed timelines for implementation of projects and remove bottlenecks on a case-to-case basis.



The Secretary stressed the need for sustained inter-departmental coordination to ensure early execution and completion of all connectivity projects across J&K.

Dr. Singla commended the efforts of all departments for their commitment to digital empowerment and directed that pending issues be resolved on priority. He reiterated that the Government of Jammu and Kashmir remains dedicated to bridging the digital divide, ensuring universal telecom coverage, and fostering inclusive growth in alignment with the Digital India Mission.

The deployment of the "Call Before You Dig (CBuD)" application was appreciated by Secretary for ensuring the safety of underground telecom infrastructure through better coordination among various implementing agencies.

During the meeting, it was informed that significant progress has been made in extending 4G services to far-flung and previously unconnected habitations, providing much-needed access to reliable digital communication. It was also given out that the BharatNet project is further laying a strong foundation for high-speed internet connectivity to every Gram Panchayat, supporting e-governance, education, and health services at the grassroots level.

IIM Jammu hosts thematic session under Civil–Military Fusion Capsule- Jammu 2025

JAMMU: A thematic session under the ongoing Civil–Military Fusion Capsule, Jammu 2025 was conducted today at IIM Jammu on the topic "Technical Infusion for Military Capability Enhancement – Focus on Niche and Contemporary Technologies."

The event aimed at strengthening collaboration between the armed forces, academia, civil administration, and security agencies to drive innovation and enhance national defence preparedness.

The session witnessed participation from the Army, the CRPF, IIM Jammu, IIT Jammu, and representatives from the District Administration Jammu, J&K Police, and SIB.



Eminent speakers from the Army and IIM Jammu delivered insightful talks on integrating cutting-edge technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Drones, and Cyber Systems into operational frameworks to enhance combat effectiveness and efficiency. Deliberations also highlighted the importance of public–private partnership, academic collaboration and technological adaptation to build a self-reliant and agile defence ecosystem in line with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat. The session concluded with an interactive discussion emphasizing the vital role of continuous dialogue and innovation between military establishments and knowledge institutions to develop futuristic solutions for India's evolving security landscape.

Editorial

Darbar Move Return

In a step that can only be classified as a backward leap into the past, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has declared the revival of Darbar Move. Halting the positive flow of administrative reform is a clear misallocation of priorities and a heavy burden on the state treasury that the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir can yet afford.

The Darbar Move, a practice first established by Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1872, existed in an age before connectivity became reliable or climate control commonplace. It was already questioned by economists, environmentalists, and experts in governance, to say nothing of its usefulness in the 21st century. Moving the UT capital two times annually, and with it thousands of employees, and countless truckloads of records, was impractical and entirely out of step with the 21st century. This process represented an enormous waste of resources, and the costs to the treasury were in the hundreds of crores annually. All of that money could have been reinvested in healthcare, education, and infrastructure, to say nothing of potentially improving public employee performance.

The actions of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha in 2021 offered a strikingly positive contrast. When he banned this wasteful habit, the LG's administration demonstrated fiscal restraint and a new way of doing things. His actions were not an attack on the past, but an embracing of efficiency. In one swift move the government not only saved taxpayers money, but avoided a major logistical nightmare, and sent the message that the government was in the business of the people, not an expensive carnival of the past.

The rationale presented by the current government lacks clarity and relies heavily on vague references to "century-old practice." It doesn't even address the absolute economic absurdity of the exercise. The order from the government explained it all: each employee will receive a Special Move Travel Allowance, the entire JKRTC fleet will be mobilized; police will escort the dignitaries; cranes and an ambulance will follow along their route. And this merely scratches the surface. The associated costs run deep, such as diminished productivity elsewhere, the wear and tear on the roads and infrastructure being used, and most importantly, thousands of new vehicles re-running on the road each day.

The suggestion that this practice facilitates integration between the two regions of Jammu and Kashmir is a sentimental fallacy. In the 21st century, integration is achieved through equitable development and digital services, not shifting the government every six months. A modern government should be investing in digital infrastructure so it could operate from a single location to the benefit of all citizens in both regions.

By bringing back the Darbar Move, the government led by Omar Abdullah has indicated it prefers symbolism over substance, and tradition over systems. It is a decision directed toward a privileged class of bureaucracy at the expense of the average citizen. While Lieutenant Governor Sinha looked ahead, this government has turned back. The citizens of Jammu and Kashmir deserve a government that is in stewardship of their resources, not a curator of dusty traditions. The action is not a celebration of history; rather, it is a huge step backward in governance of the Union Territory.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and His Critics ...

A Modern Reappraisal Of A Misunderstood Visionary



MUSKAN SHAFI MALIK

Being a student of AMU and celebrating 17 October as Sir Syed Day, also called Eid-e-Alig. As we celebrate his 208th birthday, his struggles are remembered, especially on this day. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was born in 1817 in Delhi into a noble Muslim family and received traditional Islamic education, including Persian and Arabic. Early in life, he developed a keen interest in modern science and Western knowledge. He joined the British administration as a subordinate judge in Ghazipur, where his work exposed him to the social, political, and educational conditions of Indian Muslims. Witnessing the decline of Muslim society after the fall of the Mughal Empire and the growing gap with the British rulers, he became deeply concerned about the community's future. Even before the Revolt of 1857, he began advocating for Muslims to adopt modern education, learn English, and embrace scientific knowledge, laying the foundation for his later social and educational reforms.

In the silence that followed the Revolt of 1857, India's world had collapsed. Delhi was a ghost city, the Mughal crown had crumbled, and the Muslims of North India found themselves stripped of power, property, and pride. Out of those ruins emerged a quiet reformer Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who saw that the battle for dignity would now be fought not on the battlefield, but in the classroom.

For Sir Syed, the road to revival ran through the mind. His vision was not of rebellion but reconstruction to rebuild a wounded community through education, reason, and dialogue. Yet the same pragmatism that made him a visionary also made him a target. To his critics, he was a loyalist too close to the British, an elitist who ignored the poor, and a thinker whose emphasis on Muslim identity paved the way for future communal division.

A century later, as India debates education, identity, and secularism once again, his life invites a fresh appraisal.

After 1857, Muslims were treated as the main conspirators of the rebellion. Sir Syed, who had witnessed the chaos in Delhi firsthand, realised that his community could not afford another confrontation. His pamphlet Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind (The Causes of the Indian Revolt) was bold for its time: he blamed the uprising on British administrative arrogance and cultural insensitivity, not simply native "fanaticism". Yet he couched his critique in reason, not rebellion.

He concluded that the only path forward was education. In 1875, he founded the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, which would later become Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). Its mission was revolutionary: to blend Western sciences with Islamic ethics,



producing a generation confident in both faith and reason.

Through his journal Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq, he called upon Muslims to abandon superstition and embrace rationalism. For him, science and religion were not opposites. "The Quran", he wrote, "invites man to study nature, for both are works of God." This reconciliation of faith with reason became his intellectual signature.

Sir Syed's reforms angered both conservatives and nationalists. The orthodox ulema of his time condemned him as a heretic for questioning literal interpretations of miracles and angels. The Deoband movement, founded around the same period, argued that his ideas diluted Islam under the influence of the West.

From the nationalist camp, figures like Bal Gangadhar Tilak and later Maulana Azad accused him of dividing India along religious lines. His refusal to join the Indian National Congress in 1885 which he saw as premature and dominated by the Hindu elite was read as a precursor to the "two-nation theory."

Even sympathetic historians such as Bipan Chandra saw him as too accommodating to colonial authority. Others labelled him an elitist reformer who worked only for the upper classes, not for the masses.

To view Sir Syed's loyalty to the British as servility is to ignore the world he lived in. The rebellion had destroyed Muslim social capital; thousands had been executed, lands confiscated, and jobs lost. His cooperation with the British was not ideological but strategic – an act of survival. He believed political confrontation without education was suicide.

His advice that Muslims should first acquire knowledge before entering politics was not an act of retreat but of preparation. His message, in essence, was: "Read before you rule." He wanted Muslims to adapt to the new order, not vanish under it.

Far from being a communal thinker, his emphasis on Muslim identity was cultural, not separatist. He envisioned India as "a beautiful bride, one eye Hindu, the other Muslim. Damage either, and the vision is lost." The later communal politics of the 20th century cannot be laid at his feet; they were distortions of a message that originally sought coexistence.

Syed belonged to a wider 19th-century movement of Islamic modernism, alongside Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh. But his approach was uniquely Indian, pluralist, dialogic, and reformist.

He argued that true faith could never contradict reason, for both come from the same divine source. In this, he was reviving the rationalist spirit of early Islamic thinkers like Ibn Sina and Al-Farabi, who saw knowledge as an act of worship. His reinterpretations of scripture were less rebellion than renewal, an attempt to align eternal truths with new realities.

In a world where religion and science often clash, Sir Syed's synthesis feels astonishingly relevant. He saw the divine not as an obstacle to reason, but as its inspiration.

Today, Sir Syed's legacy extends beyond the red-brick halls of Aligarh. His life remains a lesson in how to modernise without losing one's roots and how to engage the state without surrendering self-respect.

His insistence that progress must begin in the classroom is a warning to contemporary India, where educational inequality and politicisation of learning threaten both excellence and equity. His model of education, rational yet ethical, modern yet moral still feels like a lost ideal.

Sir Syed's vision of cultural confidence, not separatism, is crucial in an age where identity politics often hardens into hostility. He believed that Muslims could be faithful to Islam and loyal to India, seeing no contradiction between the two.

His belief in reasoned dialogue over confrontation offers a lesson for India's polarised society. He may have avoided the Congress in his lifetime, but his intellectual descendants included both nationalists and reformers who fought for India's freedom.

As historian Francis Robinson later observed, the Aligarh Movement indirectly created the educated Muslim middle class that would later fuel India's national awakening even among those who disagreed with Sir Syed's cautious politics.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was not perfect, no reformer is. He could be conservative in temperament, cautious in politics, and limited by class bias. Yet he was, above all, a man who thought ahead of his time.

He did not preach revolution, but transformation. He did not reject faith, but reinterpreted it. And he did not seek separation, but survival through understanding.

In an age of noise and certainty, his voice of measured reason sounds almost prophetic. He once wrote, "When the Quran invites man to think, it is not commanding disbelief it is commanding understanding." That single sentence sums up his life's philosophy: that belief without thought is stagnation, and thought without belief is emptiness.

More than a century later, as India wrestles with questions of identity, education, and harmony, Sir Syed's message still whispers across time: progress begins in the mind, but it must never end at the cost of the soul.

Author is Pursuing MA History at AMU. She can be mailed at muskanshafimalik@gmail.com

Beyond the Blaze: Solutions for Farmers and the Environment in North India



DR. PRIYANKA SAURABH

Every year, during the rice harvest season, smoke from the fields of Punjab and Haryana fills the sky with haze. These aren't just field fires, but a searing reflection of India's agricultural policies, economic inequality, and environmental imbalances. Delhi and its surrounding areas are blanketed in this smoke, and air quality plummets to extremely poor levels.

Burning of stubble is legally prohibited, yet farmers repeat it every year because there are many social and economic reasons behind it.

The primary cause of stubble burning is the paddy stubble left in the fields. Once the paddy crop is harvested, farmers have neither the time nor the resources to remove the residue. The agricultural systems of Punjab and Haryana are primarily based on rice and wheat. The Green Revolution of the 1960s transformed these states into the nation's granary, but also made agriculture monotonous and water-intensive. To prevent excessive groundwater exploitation, the Punjab Sub-Water Conservation Act was enacted in 2009, dictating that paddy planting be completed by the end of June to benefit from monsoon rains.

As a result, the gap between paddy harvesting and wheat sowing is only ten to twenty days. Farmers cannot prepare their fields by collecting or rotting the stubble in such a short time, so they resort to the fastest and cheapest solution—burning it.

Another major reason is economic. The machines required to remove or dispose of stubble—such as the Super Straw Management System, Happy Seeder, Baler, or Rotavator—are extremely expensive. Small and marginal farmers with land holdings of less than three hectares are unable to purchase or rent these machines. For example, the rental of a Happy Seeder costs around two to three thousand rupees per acre, while burning stubble costs only a matchbox and some diesel. This practicality is deeply ingrained in this problem.

The third reason is the low utility value of straw. Most rice varieties grown in Punjab and Haryana are ordinary, with high silica content. This straw is not usable as animal feed, nor can it be easily converted into biofuel or fertilizer. While rice straw is used as animal feed in eastern Indian states, this use is limited in Punjab and



Haryana. Therefore, straw does not provide any economic benefit to farmers here.

The fourth reason is labor shortages and fragmentation of land holdings. The number of migrant laborers is declining, and small farms lack the capacity to deploy machinery. Short on time and labor, farmers burn stubble in a hurry to sow the next crop.

Stubble burning has become a socially accepted practice over the years. Farmers believe it's the easiest and most traditional way to clear their fields. Despite laws and fines, the practice persists because enforcement is lax and political pressure prevents the administration from taking strict action. In 2023, nearly 60,000 stubble burning incidents were recorded in Punjab, despite both fines and monitoring measures.

Now the question is what could be the permanent solution to this problem?

Clearly, bans or penalties alone will not solve this problem. It is essential to adopt a strategy that combines both farmer livelihoods and environmental protection.

The first solution is crop diversification. The land in Punjab and Haryana is tired of the continuous rice-wheat cycle. Water levels are also falling. Therefore, maize, pulses, oilseeds, and horticultural crops should be promoted. If the government ensures minimum support prices, insurance coverage, and assured procurement for these crops, farmers can gradually reduce their dependence on rice. Haryana's "Bhavantar Bharpai Yojana" is a good example in this direction, compensating farmers for price differences.

Another solution is mechanization and shared resources. Machines should be made available to farmers for shared use. Custom hiring centers should be established at the panchayat or cooperative level, where farmers can rent machines like the Happy Seeder or Super Straw Management System at a low cost. Under the central government's "Crop Residue Management Scheme," more than 100,000 machines have been distributed in Punjab and Haryana, but they haven't reached all farmers. If community mechanized centers were established in every village, farmers would avoid burning stubble.

The third solution is to use stubble industrially. Stubble should be viewed as a resource, not waste. It can be used to produce bioenergy, ethanol, paper, packaging, and construction materials. For example, Indian Oil Corporation's Panipat biorefinery produces ethanol from approximately 200,000 tons of stubble annually. If such projects were established in every district, stubble would become a source of income for farmers and the need for burning would be reduced. The government should develop policies to provide transportation assistance, procurement contracts, and sustainable markets.

The fourth step should be agro-ecological timing. Adopting short-duration rice varieties, such as PR-126 or DRR Dhan-44, could give farmers a few extra days between harvesting and sowing. This time could be used for stubble management.

Along with this, precision agriculture i.e. use of precise technical means, improvement in water irrigation system and use of organic fertilizers will also provide environmental benefits.

Fifth, community encouragement and public awareness. Farmers who do not burn stubble should be given financial incentives, village-level

Stubble burning has become a socially accepted practice over the years. Farmers believe it's the easiest and most traditional way to clear their fields. Despite laws and fines, the practice persists because enforcement is lax and political pressure prevents the administration from taking strict action. In 2023, nearly 60,000 stubble burning incidents were recorded in Punjab, despite both fines and monitoring measures.

competitions should be held, and "zero-burn villages" should be declared. In Delhi, Punjab, and Haryana, stubble is being converted into compost in the field using an organic solution called "Pusa Decomposer." If this technology is adopted on a large scale, stubble burning will be eliminated.

Sixth, administrative coordination and policy coherence. There should be coordination between the central and state governments so that the departments of agriculture, environment, and energy work under a common plan. Stubble management can be integrated with rural employment schemes, bioenergy missions, and climate change programs. For example, stubble collection or work in biofertilizer units could be linked to employment under MNREGA.

Seventh, urban-rural partnerships would also be useful in this direction. Metropolises like Delhi, where pollution is most prevalent, should provide financial assistance to farmers in Punjab and Haryana through their social responsibility funds. This would foster a sense of shared responsibility between the source of pollution and the affected area.

In addition, technical monitoring systems should be strengthened. Satellite-based data can provide rapid information about stubble burning incidents, enabling local authorities to intervene in a timely manner. However, this intervention should be collaborative, not merely punitive.

The aim of all these measures is to make farmers partners, not culpable. Farmers burn stubble because they lack viable alternatives. When they find alternatives that are affordable, profitable, and environmentally friendly, they will become part of the solution.

Ultimately, it must be understood that stubble burning is not only an environmental crisis but also a result of socio-economic imbalance. To prevent this, a coordination of farmer welfare, policy reform, and technical support is essential. If stubble is used for energy, industry, and organic fertilizer, it can become a tool for development rather than a source of pollution.

The solution to the problem of stubble burning will lie not only in bans and penalties, but in sensitive policy, farmer participation, and technological innovation. Only when crop diversification, mechanization, industrial use of stubble, and community incentives work together will both clean air and safe agriculture be possible. This balance is the only way to free North India from stubble burning and move towards sustainable agricultural development.

Author is a Research Scholar in Political Science. He can be mailed at priyankasaurabh9416@gmail.com

Javid Dar Inaugurates Two Days National Seminar On Scientific Honey Beekeeping At IUST

FE NEWS NETWORK

AWANTIPORA: Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Departments, Javid Ahmad Dar inaugurated two day National level Seminar on "Scientific Honey Beekeeping Integrated with Oilseed Mission" at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) here.



The Minister, who was Chief Guest on the occasion, appreciated IUST's initiatives in promoting innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly through programs that link science and technology to socio-economic development. He emphasized on economic and ecological importance of beekeeping in enhancing agricultural productivity, biodiversity conservation and improving rural livelihoods. The Minister also visited the i-Factory Lab, Design and Development Lab, Fab Lab, and Ultratech Cement Lab. He assured Government's full support to the University's innovation-led initiatives aimed at advancing agri-tech development.

Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof. Shakil A. Romshoo, in his address highlighted IUST's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem and reiterated the university's commitment to translating ideas into impactful solutions. He noted that the region's rich biodiversity and favourable climate provide ideal conditions for high-quality honey production, making beekeeping a high-value livelihood with strong potential for export-oriented MSME growth.

Professor at the Sant Longowal Institute of Engineering and Technology (SLIET), Punjab, Prof. Vikas Nanda spoke about recent advances in apiculture research and how technological interventions can improve honey quality and production efficiency.

Founder and CEO of the Academy for Global Business Advancement (AGBA), Washington D.C, Prof. Zafar U. Ahmad stressed the need for branding, quality enhancement, and international promotion of Kashmiri honey to make it a globally recognized product.

Dean Academic Affairs, IUST, Prof. A. H. Moon, appreciated the relevance of the seminar in linking research with practice.

Earlier, in his welcome address, CEO, CIED-IUST Foundation, Prof. Parvez A. Mir highlighted the activities of the Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (CIED) and its role in promoting skill-based and sustainable enterprises. The event sponsored by Ni-MSME Hyderabad brings together experts, policymakers, researchers and entrepreneurs to explore the scientific, economic and entrepreneurial dimensions of apiculture and its integration with the National Oilseed Mission.

Inter-departmental coordination...

Advance arrangements essential for effective winter preparedness: Div Com

FE NEWS NETWORK

Reviews developmental scenario of district Anantnag

ANANTNAG: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg visited Anantnag and reviewed the developmental scenario and preparedness for the ensuing winter along with implementation of various govt schemes and welfare initiatives in the district in a comprehensive meeting with the concerned officers at Dak Bungalow Khanabal.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, SF Hamid, Director Horticulture (P&MD) Kashmir, ADCs, SP, GM DIC, ACR, ACD, SDMs, sectoral and district officers along with the representatives from NHIDCL, BRO, Oil & Gas Companies and other departments attended the meeting.

At the outset, the DC presented a detailed overview of the overall developmental landscape and welfare schemes besides the progress of the district on key initiatives like Mission Yuva, NMBA, TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan, HADP, PMSGMBY and JK Samadhan, among others.

He briefed the chair about the status of social security, financial inclusion and beneficiary oriented schemes along with ongoing infrastructural projects in Health, Education, RDD, R&B, PHE, Power, and other key sectors.



Addressing the meeting, the Div Com emphasised that inter-departmental coordination and advance arrangements are essential for effective winter preparedness adding seamless flow of information is vital for mounting prompt response to any eventuality during the forthcoming winters.

He issued instructions for making the Winter Control Rooms fully functional and updating their roasters besides supplementing them with officials of all concerned departments for efficient operation.

Garg also called for enhancing the real time and area level coordination among concerned civil departments and security forces, police & SDRF units especially during emergencies.

Div Com also directed the concerned officers to ensure adequate stocking of Transformers, Ration, Fuel and LPG so the people don't face any inconvenience or shortage of essential commodities during the winter season.

Instructing the officers to ensure saturation of various Central and UT-Sponsored Schemes, Div Com said these schemes are vital for extending essential benefits to the people. He noted initiatives like PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna, Mission Yuva and HADP are highly beneficial and the concerned departments should strive for their target oriented implementation.

Calling youth empowerment a top priority, Garg stressed for result oriented implementation of self-employment schemes, adding the banks should expedite the credit lending and loan disbursal process to generate meaningful livelihoods for youth.

DC Doda Encourages Students To Strive For Excellence

FE NEWS NETWORK

DODA: Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh encouraged the students to strive to achieve big and contribute positively to the society.

He was addressing the students and staff at the annual day function of Faridia Model Higher Secondary School, where he was the Chief Guest. The event marked a significant occasion to acknowledge school's academic excellence and the holistic growth of its students.

Former Minister, Khalid Najib Suharwardy and Patron of the school was the Guest of Honour. The Deputy Commissioner Doda lauded the school for imparting quality education and fostering discipline, creativity and moral values among students. He encouraged young learners to strive for excellence and contribute positively to society.

The celebration featured a colourful cultural programme including Naats, debates and skill-based performances, showcasing diverse talents and creativity of the students. Prizes and awards were distributed among meritorious students for their achievements in academics, sports and extracurricular activities.

On this special occasion, a book titled "Roshni Ka Safar" was also released, highlighting school's journey, achievements and contributions in the field of education.

Principal Shahida Khan expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Chief Guest, the Patron, parents and guests for their continued support and encouragement, which have been instrumental in the school's growth and success.

Joint Director Education Ashfaq Khanji; PO ICDS Akhter Qazi; Ex-Chairman Municipal Council and former teachers and parents of students were also present.

NIFT Srinagar organizes 3-Day 'Craft Bazar' at KU to celebrate artisan excellence

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) Srinagar inaugurated a three-day event titled "Craft Bazar – Artisan Awareness Workshop and Craft Demonstration" at the University of Kashmir.

The event was inaugurated by Vice-Chancellor of University of Kashmir, Prof. Nilofer Khan, Registrar University of Kashmir Syed Azhar, Joint Director NIFT Srinagar, faculty members, students and several dignitaries from both institutions.

In her inaugural address, Vice-Chancellor lauded the efforts of NIFT Srinagar in organizing such a meaningful event, describing the craftsmanship of Kashmiri artisans as having "no match in the world." She appreciated NIFT Srinagar for creating a platform that celebrates and preserves Kashmir's rich craft heritage through awareness, education, and innovation.



Prof. Khan requested the management team of NIFT Srinagar to collaborate with the University of Kashmir to jointly provide every possible platform and support for artisans. She emphasized that the University of Kashmir is fully committed to collaborating with NIFT in initiatives that promote the region's crafts and artisans.

She further announced that the University would take initiatives to explore how exhibitions could be organized in different parts of the country to showcase the artistic excellence of Kashmiri crafts.

Prof. Khan urged NIFT Srinagar to help the University in setting up stalls and exhibitions during major festivals such as Eid and other cultural occasions, enabling artisans to market their work directly and gain economic empowerment.

The "Craft Bazar" features an array of traditional Kashmiri crafts including Kani, Pashmina, Tweed, Willow Wicker, Copperware and Sozni embroidery, among others. The event is part of NIFT's celebration of 40 years of excellence in fashion education and craft innovation. The three-day programme includes artisan awareness workshops, live craft demonstrations, and exhibitions that highlight NIFT Srinagar's ongoing commitment to fostering sustainable design practices, skill development, and artisan engagement.



World Food Day 2025 celebrated by Division of Community Science SKUAST-K

FE NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: The Division of Community Science, Faculty of Horticulture, SKUAST-Kashmir, commemorated the World Food Day at Shalimar Campus, in alignment with this year's global theme "Hand in Hand for Better Foods and a Better Future."

The event was chaired by Vice-Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, underscored the significance of sustainable food systems, healthy lifestyles, and collective responsibility toward achieving food and nutritional security for all.

He elaborated on the vision for achieving a healthy and food-secure future through scientific innovation, local empowerment, and community participation and reaffirmed SKUAST-K's commitment to promote Awareness and Action toward realizing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger.

He also addressed to the participants to become aware about SDG's Human Development Indexes, use technology for the betterment of the Agriculture and food related challenges.

Speaking at the occasion, Dean, Faculty of Horticulture, Prof. Neelofar Banday, highlighted the pivotal role of education, research, and innovation in shaping the future of global food systems and achieving food security for all.

Professor & Head, Division of Community Science, Dr. Tabasum Ara, emphasized the importance of food sustainability, mindful consumption and the need to preserve traditional food wisdom in view of their nutritional and cultural significance.

A booklet titled 'Hand in Hand for Better Foods and a Better Future', which encapsulates the vision of collaboration, sustainability, innovation in food systems and community empowerment was also released at the event.



Ahead of festive season, security forces increase vigil along LoC, IB

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Ahead of Diwali and the upcoming festive season, security forces have increased surveillance and patrolling along the Line of Control (LoC) and the International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Thursday.



An official said, that BSF is working in close coordination with the Indian Army to monitor the LoC effectively. "So far this year, forces have foiled two infiltration attempts. Advanced surveillance tools and equipment have strengthened control over sensitive border areas," he added.

Another official said that the heightened vigilance covers key sectors including North Kashmir's Gurez, Uri, Karnah, Tangdhar, and Sunderbani in Jammu. "Along the International Border, BSF personnel are maintaining a close watch through round-the-clock patrolling, digital surveillance, and other measures to prevent disturbances," he added.

"Troops have stepped up surveillance and patrolling along the LoC. Forces are alert and ready to respond swiftly to any infiltration attempts," the official said, as per KNO.

Another senior official said that all necessary resources have been deployed and advanced technology is being leveraged to maintain full control. "The Indian Army has installed smart fencing systems at critical points and deployed robotic surveillance devices to provide real-time intelligence across difficult terrain," he said.

Officials said quadcopters and drones equipped with high-resolution cameras and night vision capabilities are being used extensively for continuous monitoring. Bulletproof vehicles and all-terrain transport allow troops to move quickly across challenging areas, ensuring rapid deployment when needed.

The officials added that troops regularly undergo training drills simulating infiltration attempts, bunker attacks, and coordinated responses to maintain operational readiness.

Another official said the forces are continuously refining methods to stay ahead and ensure the safety of civilians living near the border.

He added that maintaining dominance along the LoC is essential and troops remain committed to preserving peace through constant vigilance.

He said that the Jammu and Kashmir Police have strengthened security across border areas and tightened checks at entry and exit points to ensure effective area control. The coordinated effort between the BSF, Indian Army, and local police aims to prevent any untoward incidents and ensure uninterrupted security for civilians during the festive season—(KNO)

Omar Abdullah

restoration of statehood, but he believes that these issues cannot be resolved or achieved by issuing threats and other measures. "We are still hopeful that the promises will be fulfilled without bloodshed and through other peaceful means," he said.

While replying to a query, the CM said it would be unfortunate to deny people their right to statehood due to BJP's defeat here. "The Centre had not promised the restoration of statehood only when BJP came to power. They had promised delimitation, elections, and then statehood. There were no 'ifs' and 'buts,'" he said.

"If we are being forced to include them in the government, then I want to make it clear that statehood is not going to be restored in the next four years. We will not allow BJP to come into power," he added.

Regarding the reservation issue, the CM Abdullah said that in Wednesday's cabinet meeting, the Cabinet Sub-Committee submitted its final report, which has been approved by the cabinet. "The Social Welfare Department has been asked to prepare a cabinet memo, which will be sent to the cabinet ministers for necessary actions and subsequently to the Lieutenant Governor for approval. We hope the process will be completed in the next 3–4 days," he added.

The Chief Minister further said that the alliance between the National Conference and Congress is intact. "There are no differences. I have met the Congress General Secretary in New Delhi and told him that it would be 3 and 1 in the Rajya Sabha elections. The fourth seat for Congress could have helped secure votes from the other legislators," he said, adding, "The talks with Congress are ongoing regarding the by-elections for the Nagrota and Budgam seats. We are ready to give Congress the Nagrota seat if they have a better candidate."

Regarding the government's measures after the floods in Jammu and Kashmir, the CM said that through SDRF and the CM Relief Fund, the government has done everything possible according to the guidelines.

Regarding reconstruction and other issues, Omar said the Centre has sent teams that have assessed the situation. "We are expecting a comprehensive package for J&K to repair the losses, as more than 300 roads were damaged, many bridges collapsed, crops were destroyed, and houses were damaged," he said as per KNO

He said the government is in the process of ensuring 5 marla plots for pe

ople under the existing government scheme, for those who lost their houses along with the land. "The process is ongoing, and we expect the papers will reach the cabinet soon. Those who lost their land will receive 5 marlas of land and further assistance for house reconstruction," he assured.

Moreover, CM Abdullah said the government has sought assistance from the Centre to conduct a survey to identify crowd-prone areas vulnerable to cloudbursts and assess the situation, keeping in view the topography, climate, and other factors, so that the government can stay prepared for the future.

Regarding support from bureaucrats, the CM said it would not have been possible for the government to perform without their support. However, he added, "Not all officers are the same; some are willing to work, and they do, while others choose not to."

Asked about Mehbooba Mufti's statement regarding PDP's support to the NC candidate in the Rajya Sabha elections, the Chief Minister said that Dr Farooq Abdullah had talked to her and sought her party's support to fight against BJP in the elections. "If the vote is not cast in our favour, then it will benefit BJP, and abstaining from voting is also akin to supporting BJP. However, as far as her conditions are concerned, it is the Speaker who has to decide on the bills. Nobody other than the Speaker can decide on it. Once it comes to the assembly, we will have no issues creating hurdles," he said—(KNO)

Youth

spirituality, culture, and literature, making this sacred land an important part of Jammu Kashmir's heritage," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted the importance of creating opportunities for young talent. He said such efforts will not only expand human creativity but also ensure that literature serves as a mirror, reflecting societal and global changes.

"Science, spirituality, and literature are the three powerful forces for a progressive and vibrant society. Writers, thinkers, and poets must promote the literary, scientific and spiritual heritage, enrich the folk traditions, and strengthen social harmony. They must also shed light on pressing public issues and become the voice of the marginalized," the Lieutenant Governor said.He also called upon the writers and poets to effectively counter the false narratives in Jammu Kashmir and introduce the new generation to the brighter reality and offer them new perspectives.

Mohd Afzal Parray, Chairman District Development Council Kulgam; Anshul Garg, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Javid Iqbal Matoo, DIG SKR Anantnag; Athar Aamir UI Shafi Khan, Deputy Commissioner Kulgam; Anayat Ali Choudhary, SSP Kulgam; Prof. (Dr.) Mohd Abass Shah, Principal, GDC Kulgam; senior officials, prominent literary personalities and youth in large number attended the inaugural ceremony. (DIPR)

Omar Abdullah

announcement, the J&K Government ordered the transfer of government offices from Srinagar to Jammu for the winter season 2025–26.

According to the order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD) on October 16, 2025, offices observing a five-day work week will close in Srinagar on October 31, while the six-day offices will close on November 1. All departments will reopen in Jammu on November 3 (Monday).

The order specifies that offices listed in Annexure A will move to Jammu "in full", while those in Annexure B will move "in camp" with one-third of their staff or at least ten officials.

The Jammu and Kashmir Road Transport Corporation (JKRTC) will provide adequate buses on November 1 and 2 for transporting employees, with advance ticketing from October 27, according to the order. Each convoy will be escorted by J&K Police with cranes, empty buses, and mobile workshops accompanying the movement to prevent inconvenience.

Medical aid facilities will be arranged at Qazigund, Banihal, Ramsu, Ramban, Chenani, Udhampur, and Jhajjar Kotli by the Health and Medical Education Department.

Employees will receive a Special Move TA of Rs 25,000 while those who fail to move within the prescribed dates will forfeit the allowance, the order states. The salary for October will be disbursed on October 31, and advance pay may be sanctioned for non-gazetted staff.

The order further directs that no employee shall occupy government accommodation without proper allotment. The Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department will ensure ration supply at Jammu residential colonies.

The Winter Secretariat will function at the Civil Secretariat in Srinagar during the move. The Estates Department has been tasked with providing accommodation to officers and staff as per past practice.

Office timings in Jammu will be 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 pm for the Civil Secretariat and 10:00 am to 4:30 pm for other departments observing a six-day work week.

The Darbar Move practice was initiated in 1872 by Maharaja Gulab Singh to move the capital between Jammu in the winter and Srinagar in the summer—(KNO)

1614

Addressing the closing ceremony of the 10th All India Police Games Judo Cluster at Indoor Stadium here, DGP Prabhat, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Supreme sacrifices of police martyrs stand as a testimony to the unwavering courage and commitment of the J&K Police."

He said, "The J&K Police has played a pivotal role in fighting the enemies of peace. Our men continue to work with utmost dedication to ensure the safety and security of the people."

He said that the Police have not only remained at the forefront of counter-terrorism operations but have also been actively engaged in youth outreach and sports activities across the Union Territory. "We conduct such programmes so that our connection with the locals remains strong and meaningful," he added.

Referring to 'Jashn-e-Dal' and other sporting events organized by J&K Police, DGP Prabhat said that thousands of people, including youth from different districts, participated in these initiatives, which have become platforms for community bonding and talent promotion.

Expressing gratitude to the Union Home Ministry, the DGP said, "I am thankful to the Ministry for sanctioning Rs 100 crore for sporting events and youth engagement programmes. This support will further strengthen our efforts to channel the energy of young people in positive directions."

DGP Prabhat also praised the achievements of J&K policemen who have won medals in various national and international events, bringing laurels to the force and the Union Territory.

He reiterated the department's commitment to fostering a peaceful and progressive society, rooted in mutual trust between the Police and the people—(KNO)

Ek Saal

He said while the people are battling skyrocketing prices, power cuts, and unemployment, the NC government is busy with self-praise and PR exercises.

"Instead of addressing the grievances of the poor, they are busy celebrating fake anniversaries of failure. This government has lost the moral authority to rule," he said.

Thakur accused the NC government of thriving on photo opportunities while ignoring the pain of ordinary Kashmiris. He said the chief minister has failed to maintain even basic governance standards.

"Look at the power scenario - massive outages, inflated bills, and zero accountability. This is the reality behind their slogans," he said. (PTI)

Amit Shah

The time has come for this," he said.

The home minister asserted that the Narendra Modi government has undertaken foolproof measures to ensure that no offender escapes the grip of law.

"Under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, a strong India is moving forward to ensure not only security of its borders but also strengthening rule of law," he said.

Shah said no matter how swift the tactics of crime and criminals, the reach of justice must be even swifter.

He also asked all states to set up at least one prison cell of international standards in their respective state to counter plea of poor standards of jails given by fugitives in foreign courts. (PTI)

CM Omar

Secondary and High Schools in Jammu and Kashmir would be equipped with smart classrooms and laboratories, enabling students to compete with their peers nationwide.

Reflecting on the government's first year, the Chief Minister said the journey had presented challenges but also immense satisfaction in achieving meaningful reforms. He called upon the newly regularised employees to dedicate themselves to public service, reiterating that "the future of the next generation depends on the quality of education we deliver today."

He also felicitated 25 NEET and JEE achievers from the Jammu region, presenting them with certificates and tablets, and encouraged them to continue striving for academic excellence.Minister Sakina Itoo described the regularisation as a "moment of relief and recognition for hundreds of families." She credited the Chief Minister's steadfast determination for making this day possible. She said that in Kashmir, about 400 CPWs have already been regularised, with pending cases being processed expeditiously.

Reviewing the government's first-year achievements, she highlighted accelerated disposal of DPCs and staff promotions, fast-tracking of recruitment in Higher Education, and revival of dormant colleges. Under Samagra Shiksha, she stated, around 600 development works are underway, including smart labs and infrastructure improvements aligned with the National Education Policy.

Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani described the day as historic, symbolising one year of constructive governance under CM Omar Abdullah. He praised the CPWs' unwavering dedication and reaffirmed the government's resolve to accelerate governance and service delivery. Wani observed that regularising CPWs is a testament to the government's commitment to justice and inclusivity.

At the outset, Secretary Ram Niwas Sharma delivered the welcome address, highlighting the government's resolve to strengthen the education sector through institutional reforms, technological infusion, capacity building, and equitable access.

He noted that the regularisation of CPWs reflects the administration's commitment to providing stability and dignity to long-serving workers who have contributed selflessly to public service.

Simultaneously, the Chief Minister unveiled Vidya Samiksha Kendra, a holistic educational monitoring and analytics platform under Samagra Shiksha.

The School Education Department also rolled out several new ICT initiatives, including J&K Digilearn, Shikshak Sahayak, JK Edu Insights, JK MIS, JK CRM and Teachers Analytics Portal. (DIPR)

21st century

Pradesh is becoming a major centre for its success.

He alleged that 11 years ago, when the Congress government was in power, the per capita electricity consumption was less than 1,000 units and at that time, the country had to face challenges such as blackouts. Electricity poles were not even installed in our villages.

"Friends, from clean energy to the total energy production of the country, India is making new records in every sector. Today, electricity has reached every village in the country. Electricity consumption per capita has increased to 1,400 units," he said.

The PM further said Andhra Pradesh now has visionary leadership in Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and his deputy Pawan Kalyan and that there was full cooperation from the Central government to the state.

He said with Google's AI Hub investment, a new international sub-sea gateway will be developed in which several countries' undersea cable systems are linked. They will come up to Visakhapatnam on the eastern shore.

"Visakhapatnam will be established as an AI and connectivity hub. Not only India, but it will serve the whole world," Modi said.

"In the last 16 months, the vehicle of development is moving very fast in Andhra Pradesh and unprecedented progress is taking place in the double engine government," he said.

The PM said Andhra Pradesh is not only a land of self-respect and culture, but also the hub of science and innovation.

Several projects which were either inaugurated or laid foundation stone for today, will improve connectivity, support industries and better improve people' lives in the state, he further said.

"The (defense) equipment that is manufactured here (in Andhra) will not only increase India's defence exports, but we have seen the power of India's equipment in Operation Sindoor," Modi said.

Earlier, PM Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation for multiple projects worth Rs 13,430 crore here spreading across the state.

The projects span across key sectors such as industry, power transmission, roads, railways, defence manufacturing, and petroleum and natural gas.

He laid the foundation for the Transmission System Strengthening at Kurnool-III Pooling Station at an investment of over Rs 2,880 crore.

Likewise, he laid the foundation stones for the Orvakal Industrial Area in Kurnool and the Kopparthy Industrial Area in Kadapa, with a total investment of over Rs 4,920 crore.

Jointly developed by the National Industrial Corridor Development and Implementation Trust (NICDIT) and Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Ltd (APIIC), these modern multi-sectoral industrial hubs feature plug-and-play infrastructure and a walk-to-work concept.

These hubs are expected to attract Rs 21,000 crore in investments and generate approximately one lakh jobs, bolstering industrial development and global competitiveness in the Rayalaseema region of the southern state.

The PM laid the foundation stone for the six-lane greenfield highway from Sabbavaram to Sheelanagar at a cost of over Rs 960 crore.

Further, the PM inaugurated the four-laning of Pileru-Kalur section road, widening from Kadapa - Nellore border to CS Puram and the four-lane Rail over Bridge (ROB) between Gudivada and Nujella Railway Stations on NH-165.

Further, Modi laid the foundation for and inaugurated railway projects worth over Rs 1,200 crore.

In the energy sector, the PM inaugurated Srikakulam-Angul Natural Gas Pipeline of GAIL India Limited, which was built at a cost of around Rs 1,730 crore and stretched around 124 km in Andhra Pradesh and 298 km in Odisha.

Similarly, he inaugurated Indian Oil's 60 TMTPA (Thousand Metric Tonnes per annum) LPG bottling plant at Chittoor, established at an investment of around Rs 200 crore.

Further, PM Modi inaugurated the Advanced Night Vision Products Factory at Nimmaluru, Krishna district, established by Bharat Electronics Limited at an investment of around Rs 360 crore.

The PM inaugurated and laid these foundations after returning to Kurnool following a visit to Sri Bhramaramba Mallikarjuna Swamy Varla Devasthanam at Srisailam in Nandyal district. (PTI)

Dr Jitendra

princely States into Indian union, Dr Jitendra Singh stated Patel and Dr Syama Prasad Mokherjee are the most underrated leaders of Independent India. He said it was due to the timely intervention of Sardar Patel that the armed forces were deployed to repel the tribal raid on Kashmir Valley. Otherwise, the city of Srinagar might have also fallen to the tribal raiders. He said Sardar Patel was the Home Minister post- Partition and had the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru given him the freedom to handle J&K the same way as he was handling other princely states of the country, the history of J&K and indeed that of India would have been different.

Dr Jitendra Singh said just as Sardar Patel unified a fragmented India, the Unity March will carry forward that spirit so the youth can adopt the ideals of 'Ek Bharat Akhand Bharat' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat. He said during this journey, awareness will be raised about crucial issues like drug eradication, cleanliness (Swachhata) and promotion of indigenous (Swadeshi) products, aligning with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a self-reliant and united India.

The Union Minister said that drawing inspiration from Sardar Patel, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had resolved to carry forward the great leader's legacy and rekindle the spirit of unity and patriotism among the youth. He said, PM Modi got Statue of Unity built in Kevaria when he was the Gujarat CM, by appealing to all the countrymen across to donate iron for it. He said this Statue is a tribute to the Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who unified India after Partition.

Like Sardar Patel, Dr Mokherjee is another underrated leader who represents the spirit of nation first by sacrificing his life for the cause of integrating Jammu & Kashmir with the rest of India, said the Minister.

Sharing details about the Unity March Ek Bharat – Atmanirbhar Bharat, Dr Jitendra Singh said it has begun digitally on October 6, 2025, and is split into two phases: District Level Padyatras (October 31 – November 25, 2025) involving 8–10 km walks in every district, preceded by events like essay competitions, seminars on Sardar Patel's life, and pledges for a 'Drug-Free India' and "Proudly Swadeshi". The campaign, he added, will culminate with a historic march from Sardar Patel's birthplace Karamsad to the Statue of Unity, Kevadia on November 26—the Constitution Day, symbolizing the spirit of a united and self-reliant India envisioned by Sardar Patel and carried forward under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Sardar@150 Unity March is not merely an event, said Dr Jitendra Singh, but a nationwide campaign to awaken the spirit of unity and national pride among the youth. He informed that this initiative marks the 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and aims to connect young citizens with the ideals of national integration and self-reliance. He said that as part of this campaign, youth across the country are actively participating in digital competitions, social media activities and Young Leaders Program through the MY Bharat portal, creating a mass movement of awareness and inspiration.

Highlighting the second phase of the campaign, the Minister mentioned that from October 31 to November 25, district-level Unity Marches will be organized across the region, covering villages and towns of Kathua district. The marches will include yoga and health camps, debates, lectures, and awareness drives on Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyan and other youth-oriented initiatives.

The Nodal Officer Bhushan Gupta further informed that during these padyatras, youth from schools, colleges, NCC, NSS, and MY Bharat volunteers will walk together to promote the message of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat. (PIB)

Rajnath

that the operation showed both the courage of soldiers and the nation's technological capabilities.

Singh credited the private sector for contributing to defence production. He noted that annual production had increased from 46,000 crore to 1.5 lakh crore over the last decade, with the private sector accounting for around 33,000 crore. He said the government aims to achieve 3 lakh crore in defence manufacturing and 50,000 crore in defence exports by 2029.

Singh told the students that success is not only about acquiring degrees but also about applying knowledge for society. "We are no longer in the era of 'What do you know?' The world now asks, 'What can you do?' Skill is the bridge between learning and doing," he said.

On technology and artificial intelligence, Singh told students that AI will not replace humans, but those who use AI effectively will replace those who do not. He said technology should remain a tool and should not replace human values, ethics, and sensitivity. (KNO)

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B)
DIVISION TANGMARG.

FRESH NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER (MACADAM WORKS)

Fresh NIT No: 85 /R&B of 2025-26 Dated: 16-10-2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways sand other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor	Project Authority	Tender Call
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	11
1	Macadimazation of Pattan road to Kralpora.	8.78	600/-	17560/-	10 days	C&T 2025-26	D/C	R&B Deptt.	3rd

Position Of AAA: - Accorded
Position of T.S:- Accorded
Position of funds: - committed

1. The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q),Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below·-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	16-10-2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	16-10-2025
3	Bid submission Start Date	16-10-2025
4	Bid Submission End Date	22-10-2025 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	23-10-2025 11:00 AM

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan (Dated between bid submission start date and bid submission end date) with NIT No. , Serial No. and name of work to be deposited in M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Tangmarg (tender inviting authority)
3. All the bidders must upload Earnest money /Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Tangmarg (tender receiving authority)(The Date of earnest money/Bid security should be between the Bid Submission start date and Bid submission End date, otherwise bids shall be rejected).
4. The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security @ 5% of contract value in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Tangmarg (tender receiving authority)as per rule-171 (I) of GFR 2017. The earnest money/ Bid security @2% shall be released to the successful bidder only on receipt of Performance Security @ 5% of Contract value which shall be released after successful completion of DLP /maintenance period.
5. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Tangmarg (tender receiving authority).
6. *The earnest money/ Bid security in favour of unsuccessful bidder shall be released only after submission of original Treasury Challan.*
7. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 day s from the date of opening of Technical bids
41. All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25(Double agreement Form), NIT, GFR 2017 & JK PWD Engineering Manual 2020.
42. As per the Circular No. 01 (Adm) FD of 2025 Dated: 08-07-2025 issued by Finance Department of UT J&K "Every participating supplier/contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payments shall be released by the Government Department/Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder".

No: R&B / Divn./ Tang/5239-49 Sd/- Sd/-
Dated: 16-10-2025 Technical Officer Executive Engineer
R&B Division Tangmarg.

DIPK-7262/25 Dt: 16-10-2025

PM inaugurates development projects worth Rs 13,430 crore in AP

KURNOOL: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone, inaugurated, and dedicated to the nation multiple development projects worth approximately Rs 13,430 crore in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh, spanning sectors such as power transmission, roads, railways, industrial hubs, petroleum, natural gas, and defence manufacturing. Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister offered salutations to Lord Narasimha Swamy of Ahobilam and Shri Mahanandishwara Swamy of Mahanandi, and sought blessings from Guru Shri Raghavendra Swamy of Mantralayam for the wellbeing of all.

Reciting a verse from the Dwadasha Jyotirlinga Stotram — "Saurashtre Somnatham cha Srisaila Mallikarjunam" — Shri Modi highlighted the significance of sacred Jyotirlingas, noting, "It is my fortune to have been born on the sacred land of Somnath in Gujarat, to have served in Kashi, and now to receive the blessings of Srisailam." Following his visit to Srisailam, the Prime Minister paid tribute at the Shivaji Spoorthi Kendra, extending respects to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and offering salutations to revered Shaivite saints Allama Prabhu and Akkamahadevi, along with homage to freedom fighters including Shri Uyyalawada Narasimha Reddy Garu and Shri Hari Sarvottama Rao.

According to press Information Bureau (PIB), Modi described Andhra Pradesh as a land of pride, culture, and innovation, asserting that the state's youth and potential are being fully harnessed under visionary leadership, with the support of the Central Government. He emphasised that rapid development in the past



sixteen months, driven by joint efforts of the Union and State Governments, has accelerated progress in the state, and reaffirmed India's goal to become a developed nation by 2047.

In the energy sector, the Prime Minister inaugurated a transmission project at Kurnool-III Pooling Station worth over Rs 2,880 crore, featuring a 765 KV double-circuit transmission line to increase transformation capacity by 6,000 MVA, supporting large-scale renewable energy transmission. He also launched the Srikakulam–Angul Natural Gas Pipeline by GAIL, spanning 124 km in Andhra Pradesh and 298 km in Odisha, supplying gas to nearly 15 lakh households, and inaugurated Indian Oil's LPG Bottling Plant at Chittoor, with a daily capacity of 20,000 cylinders, serving over 7.2 lakh customers across Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka.

Shri Modi highlighted the growth in electricity access, noting that per capita consumption has risen to 1,400 units, and every village now receives power, a significant improvement from conditions eleven years ago. He emphasised Andhra Pradesh's role as a hub in India's energy revolution, noting ongoing achievements in clean energy and overall energy production.

In infrastructure development, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for multi-modal projects enhancing connectivity from villages to cities and ports. This included the six-lane Greenfield Highway from Sabbavaram to Sheelanagar (Rs 960 crore) and six other major road projects worth Rs 1,140 crore, such as the four-laning of Pileru–Kalur section, bridges, bypasses, and overpasses. In the railway sector, he inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for projects worth over Rs 1,200 crore, including the Kottavalasa–Vizianagaram Fourth Railway Line, rail flyovers, and doubling of key sections, improving passenger convenience and industrial transport.

To strengthen industrial growth, Shri Modi laid the foundation stones for Orvakal Industrial Area (Kurnool) and Kopparthy Industrial Area (Kadapa) with a combined investment of Rs 4,920 crore. Developed jointly by NICDIT and APIIC, these multi-sectoral hubs feature plug-and-play infrastructure and walk-to-work concepts, expected to attract Rs 21,000 crore in investment and generate approximately one lakh jobs in Rayalaseema. (PIB)

Ayurveda Aahara integral part of global nutrition, will ensure disease-free future: Minister

NEWDELHI: As the world celebrates World Food Day 2025 under the theme "Hand in Hand for Better Foods and a Better Future", the Ministry of Ayush reiterates India's commitment to fostering a healthier and more sustainable planet through groundbreaking initiatives like 'Ayurveda Aahara' — India's unique food



philosophy rooted in balance, wellness, and nature. In a significant step forward, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), in consultation with the Ministry of Ayush, has recently released a definitive list of Ayurveda Aahara products under Category A, providing the first comprehensive reference framework for authentic Ayurvedic dietary preparations. The list, based on authoritative classical texts, is expected to drive growth, quality, and global confidence in Ayurveda-based nutrition.

Union Minister of State (IC) for Ayush and Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare, Prataprao Jadhav highlighted the significance of Ayurveda Aahara and said, "This year's World Food Day theme resonates deeply with India's traditional wisdom. Ayurveda Aahara is not merely food—it is a philosophy that unites health, sustainability, and compassion for nature. Through our collaboration with FSSAI, we aim to make Ayurveda Aahara an integral part of global nutrition, ensuring that better foods lead to a better, disease-free future."

The Ayurveda Aahara regulations, notified by FSSAI, are already setting new benchmarks in the integration of India's traditional health wisdom with modern food safety standards. Building on this foundation, the release of the definitive product list ensures that both consumers and food businesses have clear, validated references rooted in classical Ayurvedic knowledge.

Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, noted, "The growing global interest in Ayurveda-based food systems underscores India's critical contribution to holistic nutrition. The Ayurveda Aahara framework, now strengthened by the definitive list, brings clarity to manufacturers and trust to consumers. We see this as a major boost for startups and innovation in the health food sector—where Ayurveda's wisdom can help break the rising trend of diet- and lifestyle-related disorders that lead to non-communicable diseases."

Talking about the scientific and educational dimension of this initiative, Professor Anupam Srivastava of the National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA), Jaipur, said "By integrating Ayurvedic dietary principles into mainstream nutrition policy, India is showing the world how traditional knowledge can guide sustainable and mindful eating practices. The collaboration between Ayush and FSSAI exemplifies working 'hand in hand' for better foods and a better future".

India's traditional food systems — epitomized by the diverse and balanced Indian Thali — are now being globally recognized for their nutritional and environmental sustainability. By drawing from Ayurveda's time-tested dietary wisdom, these food models emphasize seasonal eating, local sourcing, and mindful consumption — aligning perfectly with the global call for sustainable food systems. (PIB)

Knowledge Sharing, Technology Co-Development Play Vital Role In Attaining Sustainability: Bhupender Yadav

NEWDELHI: Extending gratitude to the Republic of South Africa for leadering efforts for advancing the theme 'Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability', Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav, delivered India's statement at the G20 Environment Ministers' Meeting, in Cape Town, South Africa today. The Minister called on the delegates to tread the path of building a world united in purpose, equal in right and resources, committed to the planet.

In his address, Shri Yadav expressed satisfaction that as Paris Agreement completes 10 years, all countries came together to determine their NDCs, work towards them, and in many cases, like India, started attaining their goals even before the designated timelines.

Reaffirming the gathering that India is always a part of the solution, the Minister urged that the G20 must act as a bridge between ambition and implementation, ensuring that every nation's contribution is respected and every nation's capacity is enhanced. "We must reaffirm the principles of 'Common but differentiated responsibilities and Respective Capabilities'. Finance to developing countries to meet the vital environmental challenges needs to be honoured as an onerous duty rather than a mere promise because equality is not a privilege – it is a right", he added.

Shri Yadav reminded that Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, in his address last year at the G20 Summit, highlighted the relevance of going 'back to the basics' and the importance of integrating it with our 'march to the future'. "Ecosystem-based solutions and futuristic technologies must converge to create a sustainable future. Knowledge sharing, capacity building, technology co-development and transfer will play a significant role in attaining sustainability", he stated.

The Minister advocated a 'whole-of-the-society' approach and 'pro-planet lifestyle choices' of individuals shall be most relevant for achieving meaningful and tangible outcomes. "We sincerely appreciate and fully support the people-centric, holistic, integrated and collaborative approach proposed by the South African Presidency", he concluded. (PIB)



Indian Navy Organizes Seminar on Cybersecurity in Maritime Sector, Strengthening National Security and International Collaboration

NEW DELHI: The Indian Navy successfully organized a high-level seminar on the 'Impact of Cyber Attacks on Maritime Sector and Its Effects on National Security and International



Relations' at the Sushma Swaraj Bhawan in New Delhi.

The seminar aimed to enhance understanding of cyber threats in the maritime domain and foster collaboration among key stakeholders to strengthen India's national cybersecurity posture.

The event was inaugurated by Adm Dinesh K Tripathi, Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS), who welcomed the Chief Guest, Shri Jitin Prasada, Hon'ble Minister of State for the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and Commerce & Industry. In his keynote address, Shri Prasada emphasized the growing significance of cybersecurity in safeguarding the maritime sector and underlined the responsibility to build a robust, resilient, and responsive maritime cyber defence architecture.

Adm Tripathi, in his address, highlighted the government's focus on the maritime sector as central to India's economic and security goals. Under the vision of 'Samudra se Samriddhi', India's maritime development is guided by initiatives such as Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047, Sagarmala, and PM Gati Shakti. He stressed the importance of embedding cybersecurity into all maritime systems from their inception and fostering close coordination among stakeholders for rapid information sharing.

The seminar featured three panel discussions led by experts from key ministries and organisations, including the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG), National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), GAIL, Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH), CERT-In, NCIIPC, and the National Maritime Foundation (NMF), alongside leaders from private organisations. The panels focused on Global Cyber Threats to Maritime Infrastructure, Civil and Military Partnership, and Maritime Sector as Critical Information Infrastructure, highlighting the urgent need to recognise the maritime sector as an independent Critical Information Infrastructure (CII).

On the sidelines, a Tech Exhibition, organised in partnership with the Data Security Council of India (DSCI), showcased indigenous innovations in cybersecurity and defence technologies developed by start-ups from across India. The exhibition promoted Aatmanirbharta and aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Key outcomes of the seminar included the identification of vulnerabilities in the maritime digital ecosystem and the formulation of mitigation strategies to strengthen cybersecurity across maritime operations.

The seminar underlined the Indian Navy's continued commitment to enhancing maritime cyber resilience, fostering collaboration among policymakers, industry leaders, and technologists, and ensuring a secure and prosperous digital maritime future for India. (PIB)

Russia Confident Of Continuing Energy Trade With India: DPM Novak

MOSCOW: Russia is confident that its energy cooperation with India will "continue", Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said on Thursday, a day after US President Donald Trump claimed that New Delhi assured him to stop purchasing oil from Russia.

"We continue to cooperate with our friendly partners. Our energy resource is in demand. It is economically viable and feasible," Novak, who looks after Russia's energy sector, was quoted as saying by the independent Interfax news agency.

"....I am confident that our partners will continue to work with us, interact, and develop energy cooperation," he said.

Novak made the remarks in response to Trump's claim that Prime Minister Narendra Modi assured him that India would stop buying Russian crude. The US president claimed that while India may not be able to cut the procurement immediately, the process has started.

"We're only seeing signals in the press today that our partners are declaring that no one can dictate to them, and that they will choose their own path," Novak said.

In response to Trump's oil trade claims, India on Thursday said it is "broad-basing and diversifying" its energy sourcing to meet market conditions, stressing that its import policies are guided entirely by national interest.

Russia is among the top suppliers of crude oil to India.

On Wednesday, Novak said that India is mainly paying for Russian oil in roubles, but has started payments in the Chinese currency yuan.



Traditionally reliant on Middle Eastern oil, India significantly increased its imports from Russia following the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces. Western sanctions and reduced European demand made Russian oil available at steep discounts.

In the first seven months of 2025, Russian crude oil exports amounted to 87.5 million tonnes, or 36.4 per cent of India's total imports, according to Interfax.

Russian President Vladimir Putin recently said that he had ordered the government to take steps to mitigate the trade imbalance with India. (PTI)

China warns 'firm countermeasures' if US imposes sanctions over Russian oil imports

BEIJING: China on Thursday defended its oil imports from Russia as legitimate and lawful, warning the US that it would take "firm countermeasures" if it imposed unilateral sanctions affecting Beijing's interests.

The US' approach amounted to unilateral bullying and economic coercion, which severely undermines international trade rules and threatens the security and stability of global industrial and supply chains, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told a media briefing here.

China's normal trade and energy cooperation with countries around the world, including Russia, is legitimate and lawful, Lin said, responding to a question on US President Donald Trump's claim that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has assured him of not buying oil from Russia, and it was now time for China to do the same.

Trump told reporters in Washington on Wednesday that the US was "not



happy" about India's purchase of Russian crude, arguing such imports helped finance President Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine.

"Modi assured me today that they will not be buying oil from Russia. That's a big step. Now we've got to get China to do the same thing," he said.

Lin said China has always maintained an objective and fair stance on the Ukraine crisis, and its policy is open and above board for all to see.

"We firmly oppose the US' action of directing the issue at China, and we strongly oppose imposing illegal unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction on China," he said.

"If China's legitimate rights and interests are harmed, we will take firm countermeasures to safeguard our sovereignty, development, and security interests," Lin said.

India is the second-largest buyer of Russian fossil fuels behind China, according to the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA).

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent recently said China buys 60 per cent of Russian energy.

Besides oil, Russia also source most of its gas supplies from Russia through cross-border pipelines.

Reacting to Bessent's comments that Beijing's rare earth export curbs amounted to "China versus the world" and that the US will speak with its allies to prepare a "fulsome group response", Lin said the measures are in line with international common practice.

They are aimed at better safeguarding world peace and regional stability and to fulfil non-proliferation and other international obligations, he said.

China, which virtually holds a monopoly over the rare earth materials, recently announced further export controls for mining and processing the minerals, alleging that unnamed foreign firms are using its supplies for military purposes.

Beijing's move angered Trump, who threatened 100 per cent tariffs against Chinese goods.

"We're going to be speaking with our European allies, with Australia, with Canada, with India and the Asian democracies," Bessent told CNBC on Wednesday.

"And we're going to have a fulsome group response to this because bureaucrats in China cannot manage the supply chain or the manufacturing process for the rest of the world," he added.

China accounts for about 70 per cent of the world's rare earth mining and nearly 90 per cent of processing, making it the main supplier of the precious metals used in automobile, electronics, renewable energy, and defence industries.

China's rare earth metals are much in demand as the US, the European Union, and India are its top importers.

Separately, Commerce Ministry spokesperson He Yongqian said Beijing remained open to resolving trade issues with Washington through dialogue. Asked whether China would hold a new round of economic and trade talks before the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in South Korea, he said Beijing has always maintained an open attitude toward equal consultations based on mutual respect. (PTI)

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