ASEAN 2025: Why Summit Matters for India

Senior journalist Manish Chand highlighted how deepening trade, technology, and tourism ties with ASEAN's 11 nations are shaping India's Act East Policy

■ VIJAY GUPTA

KUALA LUMPUR: The ASEAN Summit 2025, held in Kuala Lumpur, has once again underscored the strategic and economic significance of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for India.

Despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi's absence due to domestic commitments, India's engagement with the regional bloc continues to deepen, spanning trade, technology, tourism, and people-to-people ties.

Editor in Chief Young Bites Vijay Gupta & Team covering ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

While talking to Young Bites, senior journalist Manish Chand highlighted that ASEAN remains one of India's most vital economic partners, with bilateral trade and investment exceeding USD 130 billion.

"ASEAN's collective GDP now stands at over USD 1 trillion, and with the inclusion of Timor-Leste as the 11th member, the region's economic and geopolitical importance has grown further," Chand observed. "For India, a USD 3 trillion economy, ASEAN represents both a vast market and a gateway to the Indo-Pacific."

India and ASEAN are bound by Goods and Services Trade Agreements, which have provided a strong foundation for regional economic integration. Chand points out that the "Tiger Economies" of Southeast Asia, such as Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia, offer immense potential for investment, infrastructure collaboration, and digital partnerships.

Editor in Chief Young Bites Vijay Gupta while talking to senior Journalist Manish Chand.

This year's summit placed a special emphasis on emerging and critical technologies, especially Artificial Intelligence (AI). "Countries like Singapore have advanced AI infrastructure and robust digital ecosystems," Chand noted. "India, stands to benefit immensely from AI collaboration with ASEAN states. Joint innovation and partnerships could redefine the digital landscape."

Hosting the summit, Malaysia showcased its world-class infrastructure and growing importance as a tourism and investment hub. "Malaysia is a city of soaring skyscrapers and vibrant multiculturalism,. "For Indian tourists, it feels like home, from Little India in Kuala Lumpur to the sacred Batu Caves, linked to Lord Shiva."

He added that Malaysia's Tamil community, which makes up around 25 percent of the population, plays a significant role in strengthening India-Malaysia ties. "The cultural and emotional bond between India and Malaysia is special. Prime Minister Modi's tourism outreach could very well focus on Malaysia in the coming months," Chand suggested.

Malaysian investors, according to Chand, are "highly optimistic" about India's economic reforms and infrastructure push..

As the ASEAN 2025 Summit is progressing, the message is clear: India's partnership with ASEAN is not just about trade, it's about shared prosperity, cultural affinity, and a common Indo-Pacific vision.

ASEAN is central to India's 'Act East' policy and Indo-Pacific outreach. While the Prime Minister could not attend this year, India's commitment to ASEAN's growth story remains unwavering. The future lies in closer collaboration-on technology, trade, and trust.

Green initiative takes a step forward at Mumbai Central; Organic Waste Converter installed

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

MUMBAI: In a significant step to support environmental sustainability, Western Railways', Mumbai Central Division has installed an Organic Waste Converter (OWC) Machine at the Divisional Railway Manager, Office Staff Canteen, Mumbai Central.

This eco-friendly initiative marks a key milestone in the Division's efforts to manage food and kitchen waste responsibly, reflecting its ongoing commitment to fostering a greener and cleaner ecosystem within railway premises. According to a press release issued by Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railway, Vineet Abhishek, this eco-friendly Organic Waste Converter machine will promote Western Railways commitment to reduce food waste and develop a greener and more eco-friendly ecosystem within railway premises. The Organic Waste Converter is a fully automatic, compact, and made of stainless steel, designed to process wet and kitchen waste generated by the canteen. Using in-vessel dehydration technology, the machine transforms organic waste into soil supplements or compostable biomass, which can be utilized for gardening and landscaping purposes within the office premises.

The advanced converter operates without the need for additives such as sawdust or bacteria. It is equipped with features like odour control, pressure sealed processing and zero gas emission, eliminating the requirements for exhaust or drainage system. The machine is capable of handling various types of waste, including kitchen scraps, bakery items, tissues and garden waste, ensuring efficient and hygienic waste management.

By implementing this innovative in-house solution, Western Railways' has successfully eliminated its dependence on external waste collection services and significantly reduced its carbon footprint. This initiative is in line with Indian Railways' broader vision of environmental sustainability, self-reliance and resource conservation

Western Railway reaffirms its commitment with this milestone in creating a cleaner, greener and more sustainable ecosystem, setting an example for eco-conscious operations across the Railway network.

Nagrota's youth unite, pledge resounding support for Devyani Rana

Youth empowerment cornerstone of Nagrota's growth: BJP

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NAGROTA: Pradesh Vice President Bharatiya Janata Party and Prabhari for the upcoming by-elections to the Nagrota Assembly Constituency Sham Lal Sharma today said that youth empowerment will be the cornerstone of vision in line with the party's broader national agenda of creating opportunities, nurturing talent, and promoting entrepreneurship among young population.

Addressing enthusiastic gathering of youth workers from Nagrota, seeking vote and support for the party candidate Devyani Rana in the upcoming by-election, the Prabhari said that the BJP under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has consistently championed the cause of youth through transformative initiatives like Skill India, Start-Up India, Digital India, PM Vishwakarma Yojana, and Mudra Yojana, which have opened new avenues for self-employment and skill enhancement.

Sharma said that these national initiatives would be implemented and localized in Nagrota with renewed focus and determination.

Pradesh Vice President BJP and Prabhari for upcoming by-elections to the Nagrota Assembly Constituency, Sham Lal Sharma addressing public rally.

Speaking on the occasion, Jammu and Kashmir President Bhartiya Yuva Morcha Arun Prabhat envisioned a comprehensive roadmap for youth empowerment in the constituency, focused on initiatives in key sectors like education, employability, entrepreneurship, and engagement.

"This is a national agenda and the BJP will strive for achieving these by pushing for implementation of these initiatives at all the levels", Prabhat said.

Reiterating the BJP's philosophy of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, and Sabka Prayas, Devyani Rana said that empowerment must reach every section of society, particularly the youth and their energies are needed to be channelised towards positive pursuits.

Paying homage to her late father, Devender Singh Rana, the former MLA of Nagrota, Devyani Rana said that she draws inspiration from his commitment to education, youth welfare, and economic upliftment. "Rana Sahib always believed that empowered youth are the foundation of a strong society", she said, adding that she is determined to continue his mission and vision on same lines.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice President BJP J&K UT, Bharat Bhushan made a fervent appeal to the electors, to wholeheartedly vote and support, Devyani Rana, and reiterated that the by-election is an opportunity to reaffirm Nagrota's commitment to strengthening the progressive and youth oriented policies of the BJP.

RSS Raghunath Nagar Mandal holds Route March in Jammu to mark 100 years of Selfless Service

RSS Raghunath Nagar Mandal volunteers taking out a Route March in Jammu.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Raghunath Nagar Mandal, organized a grand Route March (Path Sanchalan) in Jammu to commemorate 100 years of the organization's selfless service to the nation and society.

The march commenced from the historic Shri Ranbireshwar Temple, and, after passing through various areas of Jammu city, culminated at the same venue amid patriotic fervour.

The march, held as part of the centenary celebrations, showcased the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's legacy of discipline and service, and involved volunteers in their traditional uniform marching through the city.

This event aligns with the larger nationwide celebrations commemorating the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's founding in 1925.

Satish inaugurates first digital weighbridge at Lethpora FSD

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

PAMPORE: In a major step towards enhancing transparency and efficiency in Public Distribution System, the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) on Sunday rolled out first-ever digital weighbridge in Jammu and Kashmir at Food Storage Depot (FSD), Lethpora here.

The weighbridge was inaugurated by Minister for FCS&CA, Transport, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, Satish Sharma, in presence of MLA Pampore, Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi. Senior officers from the FCS&CA department, officers from district administration, and local representatives were also present during the inauguration ceremony. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Sharma said that the installation of digital weighbridge marks a significant milestone in the government's efforts to bring technological transformation in essential service sectors. "This initiative will ensure accuracy in weighing, prevent pilferage, and enhance transparency in food grain handling and distribution operations," the Minister maintained.

Minister for FCS&CA, Satish Sharma inaugurating digital weighbridge at Food Storage (FSD), Lethpora.

He further added that the government is committed to introduce digital tools and automated systems across all major food storage depots to ensure efficiency, accountability, and better service delivery to the citizens.

MLA Hasnain Masoodi appreciated the department's efforts and lauded the leadership of the Minister for driving modernization and transparency in the FCS&CA sector.

The commissioning of the digital weighbridge at Lethpora is expected to serve as a model for similar installations across the Union Territory, promoting accuracy and accountability in the management of food grains and essential commodities.

Dogra Khatri Saddar Sabha celebrates Diwali Milan in Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Dogra Khatri Saddar Sabha (DKSS) celebrated its Diwali Milan on Sunday at its Head Office in Pacca Danga, Jammu.

The event witnessed the presence of all Sabha heads from Jammu along with prominent dignitaries, including Sat Sharma, BJP State President, Ashok Koul, State Organisation Secretary BJP, Priya Sethi, Ex-Minister & State BJP Vice-President and Anil Masoom, Ex-Corporator.

The occasion also saw participation from various office bearers and special invitees from the local community and religious organizations.

The programme began with a warm welcome from the DKSS office bearers, including Parmod Kapahi, President, Vijay Gandotra, Senior Vice President, Lal Chand Gandotra, Vice President, and Sanjay Pandoh, General Secretary, along with executive members.

Senior BJP leaders with DKSS members at Diwali Milan.

They expressed gratitude to the dignitaries for taking out time to attend the function and reiterated the Sabha's commitment to social welfare and community development. The proceedings were conducted by Inder Jeet Sawhney.

In his address, Ashok Koul emphasized the importance of working for society and the nation, transcending affiliations to different Sabhas.

He highlighted that collaborative efforts among Sabhas can significantly contribute to societal welfare and development.

Sat Sharma, in his remarks, urged all Sabha presidents to work in unity and focus on initiatives that benefit society. He appreciated the DKSS leadership, especially Parmod Kapahi, for organizing the event and fostering a spirit of cooperation among Sabhas. Sharma emphasized the vision of "Sab Ka Saath Aur Sab Ka Vishwas", calling for collective action to achieve social harmony, development, and a sense of shared responsibility.

The event concluded with a message of unity, social responsibility, and continued collaboration among all Sabha members for the welfare of the community.

TRAVEL TIME!

Jammu to Srinagar	
IndiGo	10:05 AM - 10:45 AM
SpiceJet	11:10 AM - 12:00 PM
Air India Express	12:50 PM - 1:40 PM
Air India Express	1:35 PM - 2:45 PM
IndiGo	1:55 PM - 2:35 PM
IndiGo	6:40 PM - 7:20 PM
Srinagar to Jammu	
IndiGo	11:45 AM - 12:35 PM
Air India Express	12:10 PM - 1:05 PM
SpiceJet	12:35 PM - 1:30 PM
Air India Express	2:20 PM - 3:35 PM
IndiGo	3:15 PM - 4:05 PM
IndiGo	5:20 PM - 6:10 PM

FIND TRAIN SCHEDULE

11078 Jhelum Express
Departure : 23:35 from Jammu Tawi
Arrival : 11:15 at New Delhi

12426 Jammu Tawi - New Delhi Rajdhani Express
Departure : 21:25 from Jammu Tawi
Arrival : 05:55 at New Delhi

12446 Uttar Sampark Kranti Express
Departure : 21:50 from Jammu Tawi
Arrival : 06:55 at New Delhi

Train 26401 - Katra to Srinagar (Morning Service)
Departure : 8:10 AM from Katra
Arrival : 11:10 AM at Srinagar
Intermediate Stop : Banihal at 9:58 AM
Fare:
Chair Car (CC): 715
Executive Chair Car (EC): 1,320
Booking: Available on IRCTC

Train 26403 - Katra to Srinagar (Afternoon Service)
Departure : 2:00 PM from Katra
Arrival : 05:00 PM at Srinagar
Fare:
Chair Car (CC): 660
Executive Chair Car (EC): 1,270
Booking: Available on IRCTC

FIND CINEMA

EK DIWAANE KI DEEWANIYAT
WAVE ONE MOVIE JAMMU 10:45 AM / 1:45 PM / 5:40 PM / 08:00 PM / 10:50 PM
PVR KC JAMMU 10:05 PM / 01:05 PM / 04:00 PM / 10:30 PM

KANTARA (A LEGEND CHAPTER-1) (HINDI)
WAVE ONE MOVIE JAMMU 4:45 PM
PVR KC JAMMU 7:00 PM

GODDAY GODDAY CHAA 2 (PUNJABI)
WAVE ONE MOVIES JAMMU 09:30 AM / 3:00 PM / 8:20 PM

THAMMA -HINDI
WAVE ONE MOVIES JAMMU 10:00 AM / 12:05 PM / 1:00 PM / 4:00 PM / 7:00 PM/ 10:05 PM /10:45 PM
PVR KC JAMMU 10:15 AM / 1:25 PM / 4:35 PM / 7:45 PM / 10:55 PM

HELPLINE

TELPHONES	
Directory Enquiry	197
Fault Repair	198
Local Assistance	199
Trunk Booking	180
Trunk Assistance	181
International Trunk Booking	2447952, 2577951, 2573638
Billing Complaints	2543896, 2548415
Billing Complaints Computerize	1955
Change No. Announcement	1951
Gandhi Nagar Exchange	2451953, 2430953
HOSPITALS	
Government Medical College	2584290, 2484291
Psychiatry and Disease Hospital	2577444
Ambulance Rajouri	257147, 257084, 257357
Blood Bank/Eye Bank - SMGS Hospital	2547639, 2547637
Emergency	2549669
Blood Bank	2547637, 2547638
Chest Disease Hospital	2577064, 2548012
Dental Hospital	2544670
Govt Hospital Gandhi Nagar	2430041
Emergency	2431740
Child Hospital	2577023
Acharya Shri Chander College of Medical Sciences and Hospital	262270
AMBULANCES	
Indian Red Cross Society	2549413
Jammu University	2453165, 2543525, 2435248
FIRE STATIONS	
Gandhi Nagar	101, 2435283, 2457705
City	2544263
Canal	2554064
Roop Nagar	2597522
Gangyal	2480026
Bari Brahmana	220020
Akhnoor	252481
Kathua	234313
Samba	243280
Katra	232451
Udhampur	270897
Police Control Room	100, 2542001, 2545481-82
Police Exchange	2547621-22, 2547624
Civil Defence Control Room	2549100, 2548645, 2544920
Civil Defence	2548645, 2549100, 2544920
Hot Line	383
TOURISM	
Tourist Officer, Airport	2431917
Tourist Officer, Railway Station	2430078
Tourist Reception Centre	2579554
BUS SERVICES	
JKSRTC General Manager	2435262
JKSRTC Bus Stand	2577475
JKSRTC Jammu Srinagar, Service	2576562
Punjab Roadways	2542782
WATER SUPPLY	
Company Bagh	2542582
Parade	2544979
Bakshi Nagar	2543557
Panjthirthi	2547501
Narwal	2430031
ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPLAINTS	
Canal	2554147, 2554199
Parade	2542289, 2543398
Nanak Nagar	2430776
Gandhi Nagar	2430180
Shastri Nagar	2430781
Janipur	2543828, 2579258
Satwari	2452816
FIRE SERVICE : (Control Room)	101
CIVIC SERVICES	
Municipality	2547846, 2542192
Health Officer	2547440
Garbage / Carcass Removal	2547440