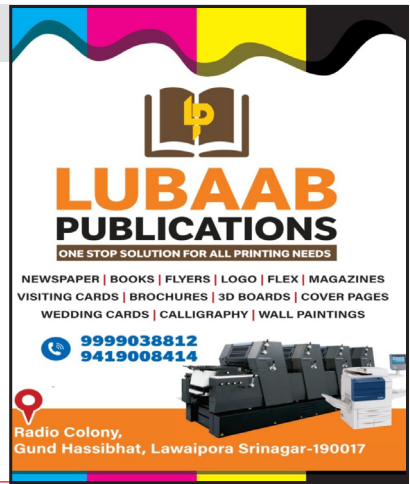


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HEADLINES TODAY

Voice To The Voiceless



Inclusion of Divyangjans Is the Foundation of Equitable Development: LG Sinha

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 03: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday reaffirmed the UT administration's commitment to building a fully inclusive society, declaring that "Inclusion of Divyangjan is the foundation of equitable development." He was speaking at the International Day of Persons with Disabilities event organised at Padma Shri Padma Sachdev Government College for Women, Gandhi Nagar, by the Composite Regional Centre (CRC) Jammu.

Addressing a large gathering, the Lt Governor said, "I salute the resilience,



determination and potential of Divyangjans. We are committed to building a system that aligns with their dreams and aspirations, eliminating all challenges and barriers."

This year's global theme "Fostering disability-inclusive societies for advancing social progress" was echoed in the programme's local theme, "Celebrating Ability, Preserving Culture."

Calling upon government officials and social organisations to safeguard and promote the rights of persons with disabilities, the Lt Governor stressed the need for a collective, sensitive and aware approach. "We must

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LG Manoj Sinha Unveils Sacred Shri Sukrala Mata Coin for Devotees

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 03: In a significant spiritual milestone, Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha on Tuesday unveiled the sacred coin of Shri Sukrala Mata Ji, crafted by the Shri Mall Mata Sukrala

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Omar Abdullah Vows Fast-Track Relief as He Hands Over Compassionate Appointment, Regularisation Orders

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 03: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday reaffirmed his government's resolve to fast-track compassionate appointments and clear long-pending cases under SRO-43 and the Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme (RAS-2022), promising a more transparent and simplified system for distressed families.

Addressing a large gathering at the Convention Centre here, the Chief Minister personally handed over appointment letters to beneficiaries under SRO-43 and RAS-2022, and issued long-awaited regularisation orders to Contingent Paid Workers (CPWs) of the School Education Department.

The function was attended by Minister Sakina Itoo, Minister Satish Sharma, Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, Commissioner Secretary GAD M. Raju, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar, Secretary School Education Ram Nivas, Deputy Commissioner Jammu Rakesh Minhas, besides hundreds of beneficiaries and their families.

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Success of Mission YUVA Will Feed on Itself: CM Omar Abdullah Reviews Youth Entrepreneurship Push

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 03: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday chaired a high-level review meeting on Mission YUVA, asserting that the flagship initiative aimed at empowering young entrepreneurs in Jammu and

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Kashmir Freezes as Sub-zero Temperatures Drop Further

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 03: The cold conditions intensified across Kashmir as the minimum temperature dropped further below the freezing point, and a thick layer of fog engulfed most parts of the valley, officials said on Wednesday.

Srinagar recorded a low of minus 4.4 degrees Celsius on Tuesday night, down from minus 2.5 degrees Celsius the previous night, they said.



A thick blanket of fog wrapped Srinagar and other places in the valley, especially around water bodies.

The Shopian town in south Kashmir was the coldest place in the valley with a minimum temperature of minus 5.9 degrees Celsius, according to officials.

The gateway town to the valley, Qazigund,

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Inclusive education key for specially-abled: DIG Pandey

Says crackdown on drug peddlers intensified

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, DEC 03: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police, Central Kashmir, Rajeev Pandey on Wednesday said that specially-abled persons should not be segregated from mainstream education and society, emphasising the need for inclusivity to ensure their overall development.

Speaking during a World Disability Day event in Ganderbal, DIG



Pandey, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the term "disabled" should be avoided and that "specially-abled" individuals deserve equal opportunities and participation.

"If we create separate schools for them, that in itself becomes discrimination. It is better that they study and grow with other children and are accepted as they are," he said.

DIG Pandey added that inclusive

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J&K Owes ₹196.29 Cr Under MGNREGS: Centre

■ HT NEWS DESK / KNO

NEW DELHI, DEC 03: Jammu & Kashmir has pending liabilities of Rs 196.29 crore under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

(MGNREGS), according to data presented in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

Responding to a question on funds owed to States under the scheme, Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan,

according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said the Union Territory has dues of Rs 5.48 crore under the wage head, Rs 188.50 crore under material costs and Rs 2.31 crore under administrative expenditure as on

November 26, 2025.

The Minister said wage payments are issued daily by the Centre through the Public Finance Management System (PFMS) after receiving fund transfer orders from States and UTs.

He added that all admissible wage liabilities up to FY 2024-25 have been cleared across the country, except in the case of West Bengal.

On the release of funds for

● Turn on Page 2

Nowpora blaze damages 5 houses, leaves 4 orphan sisters homeless

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 03: A destructive fire swept through Nowpora, Srinagar, on Wednesday afternoon, leaving five homes damaged and families grappling with sudden loss.

Officials said the fire began in the attic of one house and quickly spread to neighboring

homes, sending thick smoke across the area. The fire call was received at 1:46 PM.

"By the time we arrived, three houses were already ablaze. We managed to contain the fire, but five houses were damaged and several others suffered indirect damage due to water," an official from Fire and Emergency Services (F&ES) told the news agency—

Kashmir News Observer (KNO). Eyewitnesses described a scene of chaos and despair. "The fire was so thick that you could barely move. People ran from house to house, trying to save whatever they could," said Bilal Ahmad, a resident.

Among the worst affected is a family of four orphan sisters living with their mother. Their home, including all dowry

belongings for their sister's upcoming wedding, was completely destroyed. "Everything... gone. All our hopes, our memories, our wedding preparations... it's all ashes," the mother said, tears streaming down her face.

Another resident expressed the financial burden layered on top of the disaster. "We

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Pre-Dawn Crash Near Chingus Claims Two Lives, Leaves Three Injured in Rajouri

■ M S NAZKI

JAMMU, DEC 3: In a tragic pre-dawn accident, two persons were killed and three others injured after a Swift car (JK12D-7568) lost control and crashed into a parapet near Chingus in Rajouri

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Centre reviewing J&K's hydro projects; Sawalkote awaits final forest clearance

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI, DEC 03: The Union Government said it is reviewing all major hydroelectric projects in Jammu and Kashmir, including the 1,856 MW Sawalkote project on the Chenab basin, which is currently awaiting its final Stage-II forest clearance.

Union Power Minister Manohar Lal tabled the details – accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) – in response to a question by MP Sat Paul Sharma.

According to the Ministry, Jammu and Kashmir presently has 3,360 MW of installed hydroelectric capacity, while 3,052 MW is under execution

and another 2,449 MW is at the planning stage.

The Sawalkote project falls in the category where most statutory clearances are completed except the Stage-II forest approval, the Minister said. Administrative approval is also pending. The project was transferred to NHPC under a Build-

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J&K Unveils Unified Ex-Gratia Policy, Standardises Relief for Civilians, Forces, Govt Staff

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 03: In a major overhaul of its compensation framework, the Jammu and Kashmir administration under Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has introduced a unified and comprehensive ex-gratia policy aimed at bringing all relief measures under one structured umbrella.

The policy, notified through Govern-

ment Order No. 1716-JK(GAD) of 2025 by the General Administration Department (GAD), clearly defines compensation slabs for deaths, disabilities, and injuries occurring during law-and-order situations or hostile incidents across the Union Territory.

According to the revised structure, the families of magistrates will receive ₹2 lakh in the event of death, while

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Srinagar Police Arrests Fraudster; Recovers 12 ATM cards

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 3: Srinagar Police has arrested a fraudster in Bemina area and

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J&K a key focus for 100% 4G coverage: Centre

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 03: Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya M Scindia Wednesday informed the Parliament that Jammu and Kashmir remains a key focus area through the expansion plan of 100 percent 4G coverage under the Prime Minister's Digital India vision.

The minister informed that the government is steadily moving toward achieving complete 4G saturation across India as part of the Prime Minister's Digital India vision.

Minister Jyotiraditya, while responding to

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J&K's 80 pc daily waste goes untreated, govt data reveals

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 03: Jammu and Kashmir generates 1,470.3 tonnes of municipal solid waste every day, but only 283.5 tonnes, less than 20 per cent, is scientifically treated, official figures reveal.

According to data submitted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in the Lok Sabha and accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), nearly all waste generated in urban areas is collected by municipal bodies. It reveals that the Union Territory faces a

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CS discusses proposal with stakeholders for establishing CoE in AI

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 03: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today chaired an extensive meeting with Nasscom to deliberate on the establishment of a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Secretary IT, CEO JaKeGA; Chief Innovations Officer, IIT Jammu; senior leadership from Nasscom including its Head and Director for AI; and other officers of the IT Department.

During the deliberations, the

Chief Secretary stressed the need for close coordination among all stakeholders to ensure timely and effective operationalization of the CoE in the UT. He called for developing a clear and well-defined governance framework outlining roles, responsibilities, and collaborative mechanisms among participating institutions.

Emphasizing that the CoE should begin with a focused but ambitious roadmap, the Chief Secretary remarked that J&K possesses unique strengths, particularly in terms of rich

datasets and diverse inputs, which can significantly contribute to the success of the initiative.

He highlighted the transformative potential of AI in sectors such as education, startup ecosystem development, governance, and planning. He also underscored the importance of leveraging AI to enhance technological self-reliance and reduce dependence on major global players.

Secretary IT, Dr. Piyush Singla, informed the meeting that a preliminary Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been prepared

in consultation with IIT Jammu, aligned with MeitY's guidelines for the CoE scheme. He stated that this DPR forms the foundational blueprint for establishing a Centre of Excellence tailored to the UT's needs, in partnership with premier higher educational institutions and industry leaders.

Prof. N.T. Arvind, Chief Innovations Officer, IIT Jammu, emphasized that the upcoming CoE must be designed to serve real industrial requirements to ensure its long-term sustainability and to enable seamless

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Div Com Kashmir chairs meeting with DCs; Reviews Progress on Multiple Administrative Matters

HT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DEC 03: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, chaired a meeting with all Deputy Commissioners (DCs) to review the progress on several important matters, including appointments under SRO-43 for families of terror victims, implementation of self-employment schemes, land transfer cases involving security agencies, and construction of houses for families affected by terrorism and cross-border shelling.

The meeting also assessed the status of under-construction

BSNL towers, public grievance disposal, and revision of stamp duty rates across districts.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioners apprised the Divisional Commissioner of the current status of all pending and ongoing cases in their respective districts.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the DCs to expedite the processing of SRO-43 cases to ensure timely appointments for eligible family members of terror victims. He also emphasized the need to motivate affected families, including



minorities, to take full benefit of available self-employment schemes.

Issuing separate instructions regarding land transfer cases to security agencies, Garg asked the DCs to strictly adhere to the relevant provisions of land mutation laws.

He further instructed the officers to prioritize the disposal of public grievances received through the e-office platform.

Reviewing the progress on BSNL tower installation in shadow zones, the Div Com directed DCs to ensure timely completion of all related works.

Also, the Deputy Commissioners of Budgam, Baramulla, Srinagar, and Bandipora were asked to adopt a uniform policy for relocation of transmission poles affected by the Ring Road alignment.

Garg also instructed the officers to club families of terror victims with those affected by cross-border shelling for providing benefits under the housing construction scheme.

With respect to annual revision of Stamp Duty, the Div Com called for changes in considering market rates and land acquisition issues.

KU observes International Day of PwD with awareness programme

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 3: The Special Cell under the aegis of the Department of Students' Welfare (DSW), University of Kashmir (KU), organised a day-long programme at the Main Campus to observe the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

The event aimed to promote a deeper understanding of disability issues, encourage respect for the dignity and rights of Persons with Disabilities (PwD), and raise awareness on creating inclusive academic and social environments.

In her message, Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, said, "An inclusive institution must ensure



that every student, regardless of ability, feels supported, respected, and able to participate fully. Our commitment is to strengthen facilities and create a campus that removes barriers rather than reinforces them."

Dean Academic Affairs KU, Prof. Shariefuddin Pirzada, said that the University continues to prioritize student support systems and added that efforts must focus on accessibility, empathy, and collaborative problem-solving.

Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, said that the observance is a reminder to recognise the needs of people with special needs beyond symbolic gestures. He said that sustained initiatives and policy-level interventions are essential for meaningful inclusion.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Dean DSW KU, Prof. Pervez Ahmad, said that the University will continue to expand support services under the Special Cell and work closely with stakeholders to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities.

The programme included the distribution of aids and appliances among PwD, panel discussions, and technical sessions led by experts working in disability support, rehabilitation, and inclusive education.

The event was coordinated by Shaheel Mohammad, Coordinator, Special Cell, DSW KU.

It was attended by various heads of departments, faculty members, PwD participants, special educators, invited experts and students.

Tributes Paid to Prof. Ghulam Muhammad Shad at SET College Bijbehara

Organized by the J&K Cultural Academy & Maraz Adabi Sangam

JAMEEL ANSARI

BIJBEHARA, DEC 03: A prestigious literary event was organised at SET Paramedical College Bijbehara in memory of renowned writer, poet, and critic Prof. Ghulam Muhammad Shad, jointly by the Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages and Maraz Adabi Sangam. The participants paid rich tributes to Prof. Shad and presented detailed talks highlighting his remarkable literary contributions and various aspects of his life. The programme consisted of two sessions.

The first session was presided over by eminent poet and former President of Maraz Adabi Sangam Ejaz Ghulam Muhammad Lalo, while Prof. Shad's son Mohammad Mahboob-ul-Aarifien, former President Maraz Adabi Sangam Ali Sheida, current President Dr. Mohammad Shafi Ayaz, and Assistant Editor Cultural Academy Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Rather graced the presidium.

The session began with a welcome address by Dr. Mohammad Shafi Ayaz, who expressed his views on the significance of the event. Prominent poet, critic, researcher, translator, and fiction writer Yousuf Jahangir presented a comprehensive paper on Prof. Shad's academic and literary services. He stated that Prof. Shad was a versatile personality who authored numerous works in Urdu, Kashmiri, and Persian. "He was not only an outstanding poet but also excelled in research, translation, and historiography," he remarked.

On the occasion, Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Rather presented a well-researched paper written by Ghulam Nabi Aatish on Prof. Shad's literary journey and achievements, which received warm appreciation from the audience.

In his presidential address, Ejaz Ghulam Muhammad Lalo said, "Prof. Shad has illuminated the literary identity of Kashmir at the global level. His intellectual



legacy shall continue to inspire the younger generation."

While expressing his views, Ali Sheida praised the efforts of the Cultural Academy and Maraz Adabi Sangam and stated that every word written by Prof. Shad reflects his scholarly insight. "He was not just a teacher but an entire

institution who nurtured the literary talents of hundreds of youths," he added.

During the programme, the English translation of Ali Sheida's Urdu and Kashmiri poems titled "Wounds and Whispers" by young poet and writer Touseef Raza was officially released. Touseef

seef Raza was also felicitated by Maraz Adabi Sangam with a shawl and memento. The session was compered by Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Rather, while Ali Sheida delivered the vote of thanks.

The second session featured a poetry recital chaired by Basheer Zair, accompanied by distinguished poetess Hameeda Shah Akhtar. Poets who mesmerised the audience with their verses included: Izhar Mubashir, Hameeda Shah Akhtar, Basheer Zayir, Ejaz Ghulam Muhammad Lalo, Rahman Badri, Dr. Sheida Hussain Sheida, Mushtaq Mazroob, Muzaffar Ahmad Zabu, Mushtaq Salfi, Ghulam Muhammad Shoaq, Sheebaz Yaqoob, Mudassir Rida, and Ghulam Muhammad Sheikh.

Dr. Sheida Hussain Sheida conducted this session with his unique and engaging style.

A large number of writers, poets and intellectuals attended the event, making it a memorable tribute to Prof. Ghulam Muhammad Shad.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr. Milind Pralhad assumes Office as Chairman, Board of Governors, NIT Srinagar

Says will take the institute to new heights and toward stronger academic excellence

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 03: Padma Shri awardee and distinguished entrepreneur Dr. Milind Pralhad Kamble on Wednesday formally assumed charge as the Chairman of the Board of Governors (BOG) of the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar, marking the beginning of a new chapter of leadership for the premier engineering institution.

Dr. Milind was accompanied by Cmdr. Kesavan Baskaran (Retd.), Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of IIM Jammu. They were received at the Srinagar International Airport by Deputy Registrar (Administration, Director's Office) Faisal Irshad Ganai, and later accorded a warm welcome on the campus.

After taking charge, Dr. Milind chaired an interaction-cum-review meeting with all Deans, Heads of Departments, Heads of Centres, and senior administrative officials. The meeting was attended by Director Prof. Binod Kumar Kanaujia, Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman, and other senior officers.

Director Prof. Kanaujia presented a comprehensive overview of the institute's functioning, covering academic performance, research initiatives, financial progress, infrastructural development, and future opportunities. Dr. Milind was briefed on the institution's priorities and ongoing developmental plans.

In his maiden address as Chairman, Dr. Milind lauded NIT Srinagar's rich legacy and its role in shaping technical education in the region.

"NIT Srinagar has always been a beacon of knowledge and a hub of

intellectual vibrancy. As I take on this responsibility, I am fully conscious of the institution's rich legacy and immense potential," he said.

Outlining his vision, Dr. Milind announced focused efforts to strengthen the Incubation Centre, enhance placement outcomes, deepen industry-academia collaboration, and improve the institute's NIRF ranking. He emphasized that research enrichment, better student support, and expanding innovation-driven initiatives would remain key priorities.

"My goal is to take NIT Srinagar to new heights. This can only be achieved through collective effort and a shared commitment to excellence," he added. He further noted that the institute would work toward advancing research culture, improving student outcomes, and elevating its national standing through strategic planning and teamwork.

Welcoming the new Chairman, Director Prof. Kanaujia expressed confidence in his visionary leadership. "We look forward to working under Dr. Milind's dynamic guidance so that NIT Srinagar achieves new academic and national milestones," he said.

Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman also extended greetings and reaffirmed the institute's commitment to supporting the Chairman's development roadmap.

"NIT Srinagar will continue to be a symbol of innovation, learning, and progress," he added.

Later, Dr. Milind toured the campus, visiting the Evaluation Centre, New Guest House, Administrative Block, and several other key facilities to review ongoing works and assess

future requirements.

Dr. Milind has been a pivotal figure in promoting entrepreneurship, affirmative action, and the representation of SC/ST business leaders in national economic frameworks. He founded the Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICC) and was conferred the Padma Shri in 2013 for his remarkable contributions to trade and industry.

In 2019, he assumed charge as Chairperson of the Board of Governors of IIM Jammu, where he led major institutional advancements, including academic expansion, infrastructural upgrades, improved placements, international accreditations, and a strengthened NIRF ranking. He has also served on the Board of IIM Kashipur.

Dr. Milind was a member of the National Curriculum Framework Steering Committee (2021) under NEP 2020 and presently serves as Co-Chair of the CII National Task Force on Affirmative Action.

Since 2016, he has chaired the Advisory Committee of the Ministry of MSME's National SC/ST Hub, supporting more than 1.45 lakh entrepreneurs and facilitating business execution worth over ₹3,564 crore.

During India's G20 Presidency (2023), he contributed to global discussions on inclusive growth as part of the B20 India Steering Committee and the International Advocacy Caucus.

His notable recognitions include the Bhim Ratna Award (2010), Marathwada Udyog Bhushan Award (2011), Maharashtra Times Nayak Award (2011), Padma Shri (2013), and Samaj Bhushan Award (2015).

International Day for Persons with Disabilities Observed in Poonch

M S NAZKI

POONCH, DEC 3: The International Day for Persons with Disabilities was observed in Poonch with the participation of more than 250 specially abled individuals. Deputy Commissioner Ashok Kumar Sharma and the Additional DC attended the programme and assured full support from the district administration.

District Social Welfare Officer Khalil A. Banday briefed the participants on various welfare schemes and reiterated the department's commitment to assisting persons with disabilities.

Chairman of the All Specially Abled Persons Association, Mohd Fareed Malik, presented a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner, highlighting key demands of the community. He, along with Abdul Rasheed Shahpuri, also addressed the gathering.

The event was kept simple as a mark of respect for the martyrs of Operation Sindoor and in mourning for the passing of Late Ateeqa Jan, Hon'ble DDC Member Mandi. The stage was managed by noted anchor Parddeep Khanna. As a gesture of care, blankets were distributed among specially abled participants.

Javid Ahmad Dar reviews RDD functioning, calls for transparent, people-centric reforms

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DEC 3: Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today said that assets developed under rural programs must serve the public interest, adhere to the stipulated annual timelines and genuinely reflect the needs of local communities.

During a review meeting in Jammu, the Minister evaluated progress on key programs, including the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin, SBM-G including O&M Policy, RGSA, WDC-PMKSY-2.0 (IWMP), Infrastructure for DDC/BDC and DDU-GKY-Himayat.

The Minister stressed that any reform required in the RDD would be taken up immediately to meet people's expectations, adding that "70 percent of public sentiment revolves around the performance of rural development programmes and we cannot afford any compromise."

Javid Dar expressed concern over issues faced by the marginalised families under MGNREGA. He directed the

officials to ensure timely payments, 100% e-KYC completion and strict monitoring of works. He highlighted persistent water scarcity in the upper Jammu kandi belt and said that MGNREGA could be used effectively to create water conservation structures, improve irrigation channels and support land development.

"Water collected through conservation works must be channelled into productive assets and livelihoods," he maintained.

The Minister noted that several beneficiaries under IAY/PMAY(G) had not received payments saying that the matter would be taken up with the Union Ministry for Rural Development. He directed the department to clear bottlenecks in delayed houses and ensure that genuine beneficiaries are not deprived.

Calling for seriousness and transparency at all levels, Dar said that the RDD must function with a "zero-compromise approach" towards corruption, delays and service inefficiencies.

Under MGNREGA, the Minister reviewed district-wise performance on timely payments, e-KYC completion, Aadhaar-based attendance, social audit coverage and asset creation.



The officials presented details of irrigation channels, panchayat paths, cattle sheds, wells, ponds, compost pits and desilting works executed during the current financial year.

The Minister stressed that MGNREGA must prioritise water conservation, land development and livelihood-oriented assets, particularly in drought-prone kandi areas.

Reviewing Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (Phase-II), the

Minister examined ODF-Plus model village verification, door-to-door waste collection and construction of assets for solid and liquid waste management.

The officers apprised the Minister about the finalisation of J&K's O&M Policy and FSSM Policy, both currently placed before the Cabinet for approval. He stressed that rural sanitation must improve through community waste systems, greywater management and 100%

functional waste collection in all blocks.

Under the Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA), progress on Panchayat Ghars, land identification, Panchayat Learning Centres, People's Plan Campaign (PPC) and fund utilisation under SNA-SPARSH was reviewed.

The Minister noted improvement in construction and upgradation of Panchayat Ghars but called for faster

execution. He emphasized timely submission of data for the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI-2.0) and capacity-building programmes to strengthen grassroots governance.

The meeting discussed watershed development projects covering 69,493 hectares across 17 districts. The officials highlighted progress on natural resource management works, production systems, spring rejuvenation DPRs and integration with the treasury under SNA-SPARSH.

The Minister was informed about MoUs with Kashmir University, SKUAST-K and NIRDPR for spring mapping, DPR preparation and mid-term evaluation. He directed for timely tendering and execution of watershed works. He stressed the community participation under the Janbhagidari Watershed Cup initiative.

The Minister reviewed the physical and financial achievements under the DDC and BDC infrastructure development plan.

He directed that all district-level and block-level council buildings must adhere to quality standards and be fast-tracked to ensure functional spaces for

grassroots governance.

Under Himayat, the Minister examined the physical and financial progress in placement-linked skill training programmes conducted for rural and urban youth.

The officials reported ongoing training, placement performance, fund utilisation and targets approved under DDU-GKY 2.0.

The Minister called for strengthening counselling, ensuring quality skill training and improving placement support so that more youth become economically independent.

Secretary, RDD, Mohammad Ajaz Asad, briefed the Minister on the status of ongoing initiatives and schemes aimed at rural development and improving rural life in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was also attended by the Secretary in Department of RDD&PR, DG Rural Sanitation, J&K, Special Secretary, RDD, Director, Panchayati Raj, Director, RDD, Kashmir and Jammu, Chief Executive Officer, IWMP (PMKSY), Additional Secretary RDD, Assistant Commissioner(s) Development and Assistant Commissioner(s) Panchayats while Kashmir based officers participated through video conferencing.

DC Bandipora Inaugurates Centre for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, DECEMBER 03: As part of the celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib inaugurated a Centre for Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities at the old Hospital Bandipora to facilitate registration of beneficiaries under the NIRAMAYA Health Insurance Scheme under National Trust Act.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the participation of stakeholders and stressed the importance of ensuring easy access to welfare schemes for persons with disabilities across the district.



The Deputy Commissioner also stressed upon the concerned officers to ensure that the newly established centre remains fully functional at all times, with adequate staff availability, so that visitors and beneficiaries do not face any inconvenience while availing services under the rehabilitation and Niramaya health scheme.

During the event, Niramaya Health Cards were distributed to registered beneficiaries, enabling them to access annual health coverage provided for persons with disabilities under the scheme.

During the programme, speakers delivered awareness sessions on various welfare schemes, including the provisions of the NIRAMAYA Health Insurance Scheme of the National Trust, which offers up to 1 lakh annual coverage for therapies, treatments, diagnostics and related health needs without pre-medical screening.

DC Srinagar reviews progress of works under District Capex Budget

Directs timely physical, financial completion of all sanctioned developmental projects

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR DECEMBER 03: To review the progress of the developmental works being executed under District Capex Budget 2025-26 in the District, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo today chaired a comprehensive meeting of all District/Sectoral Officers here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

Besides, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Joint Commissioner SMC, Sajad Kawoosa



the meeting was attended by Executive Engineers of R&B, PHE, KPDCL, SMC, Assistant Commissioner Panchayats, Block Development Officers, District/Sectoral Officers, Engineers and other concerned.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed review of ongoing works taken up as well as new works allotted under District Capex Budget during financial year 2025-26.

On the occasion, the DC directed all line departments to accelerate the pace of works to ensure timely

physical and financial completion of the developmental projects. He stressed the importance of regularly updating progress on the E-Nigrani Portal for effective monitoring and transparency. He further instructed departments to immediately start all remaining allotted works, keeping in view the limited working season.

The DC further called upon all Engineering divisions and concerned departments to intensify efforts to meet public expectations by achieving 100% completion of targets within stipulated timelines.

J&K KVIB convenes Divisional Level Bankers Meeting to Strengthen PMEGP, JKREGP Implementation

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 3: The Division Office of Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB), Srinagar, today organized a Divisional level Bankers Meeting at the Conference Hall, Sannat Ghar, Bemina, to review and strengthen the implementation of the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) and Jammu & Kashmir Rural Employment Generation Programme (JKREGP) in Kashmir Division. The meeting, chaired by Additional Commissioner Kashmir, Akramullah Tak, was attended by General Manager Convenor Bank, Ashutosh Sareen; Managing Director J&K Cooperative Bank, Deputy General Manager Agri & MSME Credit, State Director KVIC, Deputy General Manager SBI, Deputy General Manager UTI, B.C. Regional Manager J&K Grameen Bank, Assistant Manager PNB, District Officers of KVIBs, LDMS and Director RSETIs of Kashmir Division, Cluster Heads of J&K Bank, besides representatives from various other leading financial institutions operating in Kashmir Division. The meeting focused on enhancing coordination between KVIB

and banking partners to accelerate employment generation and foster entrepreneurship across the region.

While applauding the performance of J&K KVIB Kashmir Division, Additional Commissioner Kashmir appreciated KVIB's mandate to identify and mobilize prospective entrepreneurs, provide training and handholding support throughout the application process, facilitate project formulation with techno-economic viability assessments, and ensure timely submission of complete applications to banks and sanctioning of the application within the TAT period fixed.

He further directed the Banking partners to expedite processing and sanctioning of eligible loan applications within stipulated timelines, conducting thorough field visits and due diligence, and ensuring transparency in credit disbursement.

It was informed that during the year 2025-26, Margin Money to the tune of Rs 4268.80 crore was released for establishment of 2164 units thereby creating employment opportunities for 17042 entrepreneurs under PMEGP and JKREGP till ending November. During the last five years

(2020-2025) under both the schemes (PMEGP/JKREGP) Margin Money to the tune of Rs 79127.64 crores was released for establishment of 35902 units creating employment for 35902 persons and out of which 13940 number of units (39%) are only Women entrepreneurs.

The meeting identified critical implementation gaps requiring immediate attention and cooperation between Government agencies and Banks.

The meeting resolved to implement a fast-track approval process for complete applications, conduct regular credit camps in potential clusters to increase outreach, and develop a common digital platform for seamless application tracking and monitoring across all stakeholders.

General Manager Convenor Banks reaffirmed commitment of the banks to work in close coordination with implementing agencies to achieve the twin objectives of employment generation and entrepreneurship development in Jammu & Kashmir. He assured best cooperation of the banks for successful and effective implementation of JKREGP and PMEGP.

Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul visits Court Complex Baramulla, Reviews it's functioning

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BARAMULLA, DECEMBER 3: Judge, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, and the Administrative Judge for District Baramulla, Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul, today conducted an administrative visit of District Court Complex Baramulla.

During the visit, the Justice inaugurated the newly constructed Senior Lawyers' Facilitation Lounge in the District Court Complex Baramulla in the presence of District and Sessions Judge, Baramulla, Jawad Ahmad; Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa; SSP Baramulla, Gurinderpal Singh, Col. Bindu Nair, 173 Engineer Regiment (TA); President Bar Association Baramulla, Advocate Neelofar Masood, and other officers from the District Administration.

The aesthetically designed structure is aimed at providing senior advocates of Bar Association Baramulla a comfortable resting space within the district court complex Baramulla for the efficient delivery of their services.

Following the inauguration, the Justice held an interaction with members of Bar Association Baramulla and representatives of other Bar Associations of the District.

The participating advocates presented several demands and concerns, to which Justice Koul assured the legal fraternity of full support from the judiciary and expressed commitment to promptly addressing the issues raised.

The Justice also held a detailed review meeting with the District Administration regarding ongoing court infrastructure projects in Baramulla and stressed the need for timely completion of the projects and expeditious transfer of land so that judicial infrastructure across the district may be strengthened at the earliest.

Later, the Justice convened a separate meeting with all Judicial Officers posted in district Baramulla and emphasized speedy and efficient disposal of cases, reduction of pendency, and adherence to timelines for disposal of priority and targeted matters.

The visit of Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul concluded with the strong message of strengthening court infrastructure including coordination between Bar and Bench and ensuring better and faster delivery of justice in District Baramulla.

DSWO Kulgam Observes International Day of Specially-Abled Persons

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KULGAM, DECEMBER 03: The District Social Welfare Office (DSWO) Kulgam, in collaboration with the Tehsil Legal Services Committee D. H. Pora, today observed the International Day of Specially-Abled Persons by organising a programme at the Court Complex, D. H. Pora.

During the program, speakers highlighted the rights of specially-abled persons, the responsibilities of society, and the importance of awareness and education in fostering

an inclusive environment. Specially-abled participants also shared their experiences and raised various issues and concerns before the authorities.

Chairman of the Tehsil Legal Services Committee, Nisar ul Haq Khan, emphasised key provisions related to the rights and welfare of specially-abled persons and underscored the need for creating a more inclusive and supportive system. He assured that the Legal Services Authorities/Committees will continue to extend full assistance and directed the line departments



to take timely measures to address their grievances.

District Social Welfare Officer Kulgam, Snobar Altaf Wani, deliberated on the welfare schemes, prosthetic aids, and benefits being

provided by the Social Welfare Department. She added that the department is committed to ensuring the wellbeing and upliftment of specially-abled persons.

Principal of Model Higher

Secondary School D. H. Pora highlighted government initiatives aimed at supporting specially-abled individuals. SHOPS D. H. Pora briefed the gathering on the assistance being provided by the police and assured full cooperation in all matters concerning the welfare of specially-abled persons. The event witnessed participation from specially-abled persons, officials from the Social Welfare Department, ICPS, police officials, lawyers, civil society members, PLVs, teachers, and students.

Constant efforts being made to create inclusive, accessible environment for SAPs across J&K: Sakeena Itoo

Attends International Day of Persons with Disabilities event at Jammu

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DEC 03: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today said that the Government led by Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah is very particular about rights and needs of specially abled persons and constant efforts are being made to create an inclusive and accessible environment for Specially Aabled Persons (SAPs) across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister stated this while addressing a grand event held at Convention Centre here to commemorate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, under the theme 'Fostering disability-inclusive societies for advancing social progress'.

Addressing the gathering, Sakeena Itoo reaffirmed the Government's unwavering commitment to creating an inclusive and accessible environment for persons with disabilities, highlighting that empowerment, dignity, and equal opportunity remain at the core of all programmes undertaken by the Government.

"The Government is consistently working to ensure that persons with disabilities receive the support, care, and opportunities they rightfully deserve," Minister Sakeena said.

She underlined that Government is consistently improving the



facilities for Children with Special Needs (CWSNs) in schools to ensure a conducive atmosphere for their educational purposes.

The Minister also stressed the importance of community participation and inter-departmental coordination in enabling persons with disabilities to lead independent and fulfilling lives. She called on all stakeholders to maintain a collective and

compassionate approach, aligned with global best practices and the principles of universal inclusion.

She called upon the education department and social welfare department to conduct a detailed survey regarding the achievements of persons with Disabilities, adding that such achievements need to be highlighted in events like these to inspire others.

Appreciating the Specially Aabled

Children of various schools for presenting colourful cultural performances, Minister Sakeena asked them to consider themselves stronger than your challenges and never consider disability as an obstacle for success.

The Minister further highlighted that the present Government led by Omar Abdullah is of the people and for the people, the Government will do everything for the upliftment

of Specially Aabled Persons.

Addressing the gathering, Minister for Youth Services and Sports, IT and Transport, Satish Sharma said that equality must be championed in every sector and this Government remains committed to give equal opportunities for all specially abled persons. He added that under NEP-2020, education has been made compulsory for Children with Special Needs.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Secretary School Education, Ram Niwas Sharma highlighted about the significance of this event, adding that this day is dedicated to promote rights and needs of persons with disability.

During the event, the specially abled school children of various schools presented mesmerizing cross regional cultural performances in Kashmiri, Hindi, Dogri, Punjabi, Shina, Pahari and other languages, which was highly appreciated and recognised by the audience.

Earlier, Sakeena Itoo also inspected stalls established by various Government Schools of Jammu showcasing innovative products and projects created by Children with Special Needs.

The Minister interacted with them and commended them for their innovative ideas in making these unique products. She assured them all possible assistance and support from the Government.

DC Srinagar chairs Annual General meeting of Zila Sainik Board

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR DECEMBER 03: Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, who is also the President Zila Sainik Board today chaired Annual General Body Meeting of Zila Sainik Welfare Board here at Conference Hall of DC Office Complex.

The meeting was attended by General Manager DIC, Superintendent of Police, District Social Welfare Officer, Deputy Director Employment, Assistant Labour Commissioner, Executive Engineer PWD/R&B Division Rajbagh, District Postmaster, Deputy CEO, District Health Officer, Zila Sainik Welfare Officer, Colonel Veteran's DPDO, Defence Veteran's and



representative of Member Parliament Srinagar Constituency.

While Nodal Officers from Anantnag, Kulgam, Pulwama, Shopian, Budgam, Ganderbal districts participated in the meeting virtually.

At the outset, the DC reviewed the overall functioning of the Zila Sainik Welfare Board and the status of welfare initiatives. He was given a detailed presentation, outlining the functioning of the Board, which has jurisdiction over seven districts of Kashmir Division. A comprehensive discussion was also held on agenda points related to welfare of Ex-Servicemen families.

The DC reaffirmed that the District Administration remains committed to extending all possible support to the Zila Sainik Welfare Board with the aim of further strengthening its functioning and upgrading infrastructure.

On the occasion, the DC approved several measures meant for the welfare of Ex-Servicemen, War Widows and their Next of Kin (NoKs) which included both infrastructural projects and implementation of existing schemes. He assured the Board members that all issues concerning veterans will be addressed on priority in coordination with all line departments.

Emphasizing the need for synergy, the DC called for better coordination between all line departments and the Zila Sainik Welfare Board to ensure effective functioning and enhanced welfare services for veterans.

DLSA Pulwama Celebrates 'International Day of Persons with Disabilities'

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

PULWAMA, DECEMBER 03: In compliance to the directions of JK Legal Services Authority, District Legal Services Authority Pulwama under the Chairmanship of Malik Shabir Ahmad, Chairman District Legal Services Authority (Pr. District & Sessions Judge), Pulwama and under the supervision of Mudasar Farooq, Secretary DLSA Pulwama organized awareness programmes on "International Day of Persons With Disabilities" in collaboration with TLSCs Tral, Awantipora



and Pampore at their respective jurisdictions.

On the occasion Asst. LADC from DLSA Pulwama gave special address to the participants regarding "International Day of Persons With Disabilities" legal rights and entitlements of persons with disabilities under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, along with welfare schemes reservations benefits and the role of legal services institutions.

Moreover, other speakers delivered an informative lectures on disability related health issues, early diagnosis, and rehabilitation and highlighted various government health schemes available for persons with disabilities. The programmes were attended by medical officers, special abled persons, Asha Workers, Students, staff members and PLVs of District Legal Services Authority Pulwama. The programmes were concluded with the message that specially abled persons must be helped and encouraged at each and every stage of life.

DC Shopian reviews Birth & Death registration system

Calls for accuracy in registration, timely dispensing of services

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, DECEMBER 03: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today chaired a meeting of the Inter-Departmental Coordination Committee on Births and Deaths here at Mini-Secretariat to review the performance, recent reforms and overall registration process across the district.

District Statistics & Evaluation Officer (DSEO) presented a detailed briefing regarding current status, recent



improvements and issues faced at field level.

The DC emphasized the critical

importance of timely, accurate and error-free registration of every birth and death, as entries form the basis of multiple legal, social and developmental processes.

He highlighted that linkage of Aadhaar at the time of birth, ensuring proper documentation and maintaining complete, verified data are essential for smooth service delivery. He directed for daily updating and monitoring of birth & death entries, zero pendency and strict adherence to timelines.

District admin Budgam marks International Day of Persons with Disabilities with enthusiasm

DC hands over 163 Niramaya Health Cards, ₹1.63 Cr cheques

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, DECEMBER 03: District administration Budgam today celebrated the International Day of Persons with Disabilities with great enthusiasm and active participation.

The event, themed "Fostering Disability-Inclusive Societies for Advancing Social Progress," was organised by the District Administration Budgam in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department, Wheelchair Association J&K and She Hope Society at Sheikh-ul-Alam Hall, Budgam.

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat presided over the function as the Chief Guest.

Besides, PO ICDS, Summer Naik, CPO Budgam, DSWO Budgam, Chairman Wheelchair Cricket Association, health

officials, NGOs and a large number of specially-abled persons, students from various schools of budgam attended the programme.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC highlighted the exceptional capabilities, strengths, and talents possessed by specially-abled individuals. He said these individuals are 'real gems', equipped with unique qualities bestowed by divine power.

Commending their achievements, the DC said they consistently excel in business, sports, academics, and various other fields.

Reiterating the commitment of the administration, the DC assured that all necessary support would be extended to help specially-abled persons realize their aspirations. He urged society to reject discriminatory attitudes and instead recognise their

potential and treat them at par with others.

The DC stressed the need for intensified welfare initiatives aimed at boosting the socio-economic upliftment of persons with disabilities. He emphasized that discrimination, especially in employment opportunities, must be eliminated entirely. "It should be our collective resolve to stand by these individuals when they need us the most," he said.

Highlighting the ongoing efforts, the DC said that various welfare schemes of the Social Welfare Department including the provision of tricycles, hearing aids, mobility scooters, and other assistive devices have significantly empowered persons with disabilities.

He added that the district administration is actively identifying and mapping all

individuals with disabilities to ensure transparent and need-based distribution of benefits in the future. The DC urged society to avoid discrimination and treat Divyangjans with dignity, equality and respect.

Speakers from participating organisations also addressed the gathering, appreciating the district administration's proactive approach and calling for broader community involvement in promoting an inclusive society.

The highlight of the event was the distribution of 163 Niramaya Health Insurance Cards to specially-abled beneficiaries. These cards provide a health cover of up to 1 lakh. Achievement Certificates were also awarded to outstanding Divyangjan achievers from across the district.

On the occasion colourful cultural performances were

presented by school children, adding vibrancy and joy to the celebration.

The DC also distributed awards and commendations to NGOs and organisations working for disability welfare.

An amount of 1.63 crore was handed over via cheques to She Hope Society Ganderbal and the District Social Welfare Office Budgam for their dedicated services towards specially-abled persons.

On the Occasion the DSWO announced that 234 assistive devices will be distributed among Divyangjans across Budgam from December 4, 2025, to enhance mobility and independence.

The programme concluded with a message of dignity, inclusion and the district's continued commitment to creating an accessible and supportive society for all.

SWD celebrates World Disability Day at Abhedananda Home, Solina Srinagar

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 3: The Department of Social Welfare today observed the International Day of Persons with Disabilities by organizing a special programme at Abhedananda Home, Solina Rambagh, Srinagar.

This year's global theme, "Fostering Disability-Inclusive Societies for Advancing Social Progress," guided the day's proceedings.

Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare Department, Sarmad Hafeez, was the chief guest on the occasion.

In his address, the Commissioner Secretary reaffirmed the department's commitment towards building an inclusive society where every individual can live with dignity, access their rights and enjoy equal opportunities.

He highlighted several ongoing government initiatives aimed at addressing the needs and aspirations of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), emphasizing the goal of empowerment, socio-economic upliftment and social integration. "Inclusion is not charity; it is a fundamental right," he stated, calling for collective action to dismantle

physical, social and attitudinal barriers that limit the opportunities for persons with disabilities.

During the programme, Sarmad Hafeez engaged in an interactive session with the staff, management, students and parents. He asked the staff to work with renewed dedication and compassion.

The Commissioner Secretary also felicitated "15" Distinction Holders and staff members with Appreciation Certificates in recognition of their outstanding academic achievements and service.

A series of cultural activities



were presented by the students of Abhedananda Home, including the National Anthem in Indian Sign Language, various cultural performances, a Ladakhi song in Sign Language and a play depicting inclusivity and talent.

Prominent speakers, including Shabir Khan, SP South, and Dr. Khair-un-Nisa, Chairperson CWC Srinagar, delivered insightful deliberations on the protection of rights of persons with disabilities under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016.

Other dignitaries present

included the Director, Social Welfare Kashmir, District Social Welfare Officer, Srinagar, Principal BHSS Jawahar Nagar, among others.

The event concluded with a collective call to action, urging all stakeholders to work together to build a more inclusive, accessible and equitable society.

Following the programme, the Commissioner Secretary inspected the infrastructure and facilities at Abhedananda Home to assess requirements for further improvements, ensuring enhanced care and quality education for specially-abled students.

HT EDITORIAL

Give Specially Abled people their due share in society

As part of the international disability day functions, seminars, symposia, debates and workshops were held. Similar programmes were held in the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir with the experts highlighting the problems being faced by the disabled. There is no harm in observing a day, but at the same time it is important that the problems are properly addressed so that they don't feel deprived at the end of the day.

Over the years the disabled people of the union territory have been at the receiving end and they have accused the successive governments of turning a blind eye to their genuine problems. The disabled people under the banner of Jammu & Kashmir Handicapped Association have over the years projected the demands before the people at the helm on multiple occasions. Unfortunately the successive governments have not done anything worthwhile for disabled people of the union territory.

The Handicapped Association demanded a reservation of three percent in the government jobs so that these people get a chance to work in the government sector and contribute towards the livelihood of their respective families. Up to this moment of time the union territory government has not taken any decision with regards to the reservation for the disabled people. Even though reservation has been announced and implemented for the different categories in Jammu & Kashmir the disabled people have been kept out of this purview.

It is important that the Omar Abdullah led union territory government takes the corrective measures in this regard and makes a difference. Once the privileges due to the disabled people are provided one can say that the present government is quite aware about the problems being faced by the hapless lot. Some years back an unfortunate incident took place when the police personnel flexed their muscles on disabled people while they were carrying out a protest in support of their demands on the international disability day in Srinagar.

Once the police force uses power against the people who are deprived in one respect or other then one can say that the society as a whole is not sensitive with people concerned about their individual welfare. This mindset needs to be changed by both the common masses and the dispensation. Once there is a change in the mindset then people can hope that the situation would undergo a change. Only then it is expected that disabled people would get their due share in the society.

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THE GUSTS OF THE WILD HEART



■ HILAL AHMAD MIR

Review written by Poet and Translator Lebanese-Brazilian TAGHRID BOU MERHI

The bias towards writing is the most suitable thing to preserve our memories, and we still hold onto hope. It fulfills our suspended wishes and scattered dreams, as we continue to seek beauty. The literary ecstasy felt by the writer propels him towards nobility and elevation, turning the chaos of actions and words into a delightful disorder that inspires creativity and enjoyment. It's an ideal state that we are desperately in need of. The book "The Gusts of the Wild Heart" oscillates between poetry and philosophy, and if the expression is correct, it is a collection of contemplations in a high poetic and eloquent language. The author navigates through his experiences in life, expressing them skilfully in his verses:

Dear son, let me go. I devolve this world to you.
I have completed my days of duty here dear.
Take care of yourself, never be allured by this world.

This world is zip, we have to renounce tutto here.
Bondad and maldad will go along with us there.
Do good, act upon His rules and regulations.

These palaces, mansions, thrones, riches do not please us there.

Your deeds are observed, not your charming green fields.

Call on your brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, kins, friends, all.

Never forget me, remember me all the sands.
Sow the seeds of sympathy, fraternity and love.

Dere nobody, make whole the smarts of all the beings

Never love this fugacious world infatuatedly.
Always remember the ageless dwelling place.

Work hard here, you have to take schwierig test there.

This fleeting world is nothing, but an earning place.

Never love this fugacious world infatuatedly.
Always remember the ageless dwelling place.

Work hard here, you have to take schwierig test there.

This fleeting world is nothing but an earning

We see clearly that it is the news of life, offering advice to his son, not just words but life lessons and experiences. The poem feels alive, accompanying your emotions, expressing what's within you. This is poetry of emotion and purpose, not just arranging words. In his poetry, Mr. Hilal wears the garments of a philosopher, critic, rhetorician, and grammarian. His verses are adorned with beauty, splendid style, and wisdom. If the expression is correct, his book "The Gusts of the Wild Heart" is a work of confidence and authority, possessing the tools of poetry. Listen to him as he says:

place.

We see clearly that it is the news of life, offering advice to his son, not just words but life lessons and experiences. The poem feels alive, accompanying your emotions, expressing what's within you. This is poetry of emotion and purpose, not just arranging words. In his poetry, Mr. Hilal wears the garments of a philosopher, critic, rhetorician, and grammarian. His verses are adorned with beauty, splendid style, and wisdom. If the expression is correct, his book "The Gusts of the Wild Heart" is a work of

confidence and authority, possessing the tools of poetry. Listen to him as he says:

What are you relentless death?
Why do you plume upon yourself?
Of Him and do what He bids.
Even breathe at His behest.
You stoop to accidents, wars,
Waters, fires, suicides, diseases,
Hopelessness or frustration.
No step can you take sine them.
Quit this overweening job.
You, ruthless! Be friends with us
And play the game of this world.
See! How it goes on hither.
Are you not weary of job,
The horrific and saucy?
"THE GUSTS OF THE WILD HEART"

The title of the book itself exudes passion—a passion for a vivid imagination where reality intertwines with fantasy. "It conceals within it the secret of existence, as love is the first threshold of the temple of love, the elixir of life and its essence." This is my quote and philosophy on love. Every moment of life is lived with passion, like a brushstroke coloring every scene of the film of our lives. The absence of passion is void and perishable, and the spirit of the heart only emanates through the breath of passion. What comes from the heart pierces hearts, and what comes from the tongue does not surpass the ears.

In the context of literature and creativity, the creator's work must be strong, fresh, and astonishing, fundamentally emanating from his passion, creativity, and enthusiasm for life, writing, and the pleasure derived from the creative author. It's a mutual and ancient passion—they say, "What comes from the heart reaches the heart," and that's what I felt as I passionately read the outstanding poet Hilal's book. Poetry is a reflection of the richness of human experience, a beacon of light in the vast sea of literature. It guides with its words in the darkness, ensuring that these luminous reflections reach all corners of the world. As we wander through the pages of this book, let's remember that poetry is not just a talent but a labor of love for literature, celebrating the richness of words in all languages. The poems of poet Hilal stand out for the beauty of poetic language, stunning poetic imagery, and human meanings. It is a great honor for me, "TAGHRID BOU MERHI," to write an introduction to this wonderful work and this sublime poetic experience.

Written by Taghrid Bou Merhi, a Lebanese residing in Brazil, a poet, writer, journalist, translator, and author of children's stories.

J&K Govt Forms High-Level Panel to Frame Transfer Policy for ReT Teachers



■ JAVAID BHAT

In a significant and long-awaited development, the Union Territory Government of Jammu and Kashmir has constituted a high-level committee to formulate a comprehensive transfer policy for Rehbar-e-Taleem (ReT) teachers. This move fulfills a decades-old demand of thousands of educators who have tirelessly served in remote, hilly, and far-flung regions of the UT.

For years, ReT teachers, now regularized as General Line Teachers, have been advocating for a humane and structured transfer mechanism. The constitution of this committee signals a transformative reform in the education landscape of Jammu and Kashmir.

The move is being seen as a major stride towards professional stability for educators, improved academic outcomes for students, and streamlined functioning for the School Education Department.

Stakeholders, education experts, and teacher forums have highlighted crucial aspects that the new policy must cover all the community but prioritize;

Marriage Grounds:

A large number of teachers especially female teachers have long sought transfers near their matrimonial homes. Ensuring marital grounds as a recognized criterion would enhance family stability, reduce safety concerns, and improve the emotional well-being of teachers.



This compassionate approach is expected to resolve some of the most pressing individual grievances.

Subject Specific Teachers:

Subject-specific teachers should be transferred to Higher Secondary Schools strictly on a need-basis to end the recurring cycle of annual deployments and relieving orders. This will ensure stability, continuity, and better academic outcomes. Subject-specific adjustments will bridge learning gaps, improve teaching standards, and ensure that schools receive qualified teachers in accordance with

their academic requirements.

Teachers across Jammu and Kashmir have welcomed the government's decision with optimism and gratitude. Many believe that this initiative will end the trend of periodical deployment practices and usher in an era of transparency and merit-based movement.

"This is a timely and progressive decision. A proper transfer policy will not only ease the distress of teachers but also improve the overall teaching-learning environment," remarked a senior education official, requesting anonymity.

Hopefully the committee is expected to submit its report within a defined timeline, following which the Department of School Education will finalize and notify the policy. Teachers, administrators, and stakeholders are hopeful that the UT administration will craft a fair, humane, and efficient framework that recognizes the challenges faced by ReT teachers and empowers them to perform better.

The writer is a teacher and UT awardee 2025; can be reached at javaid6@gmail.com

A Brief Biography of Shaykh Khwaja Ishaq Rumi Khatlani (RA) and His Meeting with Qazi al-Qudat Mir Syed Haji Muhammad Murad al-Bukhari Naqavi (RA)



■ SYED VAKAS UL HAQ BUKHARI NAQVI

Birth

735 AH — Khatlan (Turkistan/ROM)

Passing

14 Sha'ban 820 AH — Age 91 years

Lineage and Spiritual Background

Shaykh Khwaja Ishaq Rumi Khatlani (RA) was among the greatest masters of the Kubrawiyya Sufi order. Because of his deep spiritual association with the regions of Turkistan and Rum, he became known as "Rumi."

He was one of the most esteemed deputies of Ameer-e-Kabir Mir Syed Ali Hamadani (RA) and remained in his blessed company for 22 years. Upon Shah Hamadan's instruction, he personally trained Syed Muhammad Hamadani (RA) for two years.

Knowledge, Gnosis, and Sainthood

According to Mulla Bahauddin Matu, Shaykh Ishaq (RA) was unparalleled in Divine gnosis (ma'rifah).

In his youth he attained the light of Divine love,

renounced worldly kingship, embraced the poverty and simplicity of the Muhammadan path, and for this he was honoured with the title "Khwaja Buzurg" (The Great Master).

In one famous incident, he foretold a heavenly sign regarding the time of prayer, upon which Shah Hamadan (RA) confirmed the depth of his sacred knowledge and spiritual perfection.

Kubrawiyya Deputation and Propagation

Shah Hamadan (RA) granted him full khilafah (spiritual authority) in the Kubrawiyya order.

Through his efforts, thousands in Turkistan, Rum, Hamadan, and Kashmir embraced Islam.

His miracles, spiritual stations, and teachings are recorded in detail in Chiragh-e-Lataif.

Meeting with Qazi al-Qudat Mir Syed Haji Muhammad Murad al-Bukhari Naqavi (RA)

One of the most significant events of Shaykh Ishaq Rumi's life occurred during his journey to Baghdad, where he met:

Qazi al-Qudat, the Guide of the Kubrawiyya Order, a noble descendant of the Naqvi Sayyids,

Mir Syed Haji Muhammad Murad al-Bukhari (RA).

During this blessed meeting:

- **Haji Muhammad Murad al-Bukhari (RA) pledged spiritual allegiance (bay'ah) at the hands of Shaykh Ishaq (RA).**
- **The Shaykh granted him the knowledge of gnosis and spiritual path.**



- He clothed him with the sacred khirqah of the Kubrawiyya order.
- He bestowed upon him the Flag of Wilayah

(Alam) — the symbol of spiritual authority.

- And instructed him: "Return to Kashmir and spread the light of the true religion."

This is the first time that a documented, authentic research has been presented regarding the spiritual master of Qazi al-Qudat Haji Muhammad Murad al-Bukhari (RA).

This work is entirely my personal research.

Conclusion

Shaykh Khwaja Ishaq Rumi Khatlani (RA) was a saint who:

- **Strengthened the foundations of Islam in Turkistan**
- **Spread the light of spiritual knowledge in Hamadan and Kashmir**
- **And held an exalted rank within the Kubrawiyya order**

May Allah grant us the blessings of his spiritual legacy.

Compiled by:

This is my personal research compiled by Syed Vakas ul Haq Bukhari Naqvi, Kreeri, Baramulla, Kashmir, India.

Do not copy, reproduce, or publish this research without permission or without mentioning my name

Kreeri, Baramulla, Kashmir

Autumn 'HARUD'

Harud casts its shadow for the farmers

■ SAHIL MANZOOR BHATI

There are four seasons experienced in the Kashmir Valley. All are pleasant, winsome, charming, and lavish. The Almighty has endowed this beautiful valley with eminent blessings. That is why the valley is considered the heaven on earth. Spring starts from 21st March to 20th June. Summer starts from 21st June to 20th September. Autumn starts from 21st September to 20th December, and winter remains from 21st December to 20th March. This cycle continues throughout the year.

There are some amazing facts as well: the 21st of March and the 23rd of September are considered the equinox, where both day and night are the same. The 21st of June is considered the longest day of the year, and the 21st of December is considered the shortest day of the year.

Kashmir Valley is known for its luscious seasons throughout the globe. There are four seasons experienced by the people of the valley—summer, spring, autumn, and winter. All the seasons have their own importance. The autumn season lasts from mid-September to mid-November. Autumn is commonly called Harud by the native people of the valley. Harud starts when the leaves of trees, except the evergreen ones, turn brown. The days get shorter and colder while the leaves start falling from the parent tree. It is the season of paddy and apple harvesting.

Today, Kashmir is progressing in the field of apple production. There are a number of apple varieties grown here. Farmers are very hardworking and leave no gap in providing the best quality products to the country. At the same time, they boost the economy of the state and the country.

Two of the most attractive features of autumn in Kashmir that make it the best season are the flowering of saffron and the reddening of the leaves of chinar. The chinar trees wear a glowing look in this season, and a walk on the fallen chinar leaves creates a musical sound. Chinar trees are mainly found in Srinagar and other districts as well.

Winter sets in by late November till the start of spring. Winter is harsh yet beautiful. It is said that Almighty Allah paints in different colours, but He paints the best when He paints in white.

In winter, the entire Kashmir Valley is painted white with snow. Mountains, plains, trees, crevices, houses, vehicles—everything is covered with snow. The valley looks beautiful. The snow-covered mountains in the distance appear heavenly. The altitude mountains in Srinagar are covered with clouds,



giving you the feeling of being in the heavens. The temperature dips below zero, and you need warm clothes if you wish to come to the heaven-like valley of Kashmir.

Houseboats and hotel rooms are generally warm, with heating systems available. Despite the snow and the chill, life does not stop. The night temperature across the Kash-

mir Valley increases by several degrees, providing relief to the people from cold conditions, even as the valley remains engulfed under a thick layer of fog. A thick layer of fog continues to cover many areas in the valley, including the summer capital.

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The Killer is Among Us

"The killer is among us, shouted Saurav and I turned back to see....."

■ SIDHARTH P K

Neva was murdered on the 24th of January 2022, she was all pretty with a wavy hair falling down to the earth. She had a very powerful musical voice that echoed seemingly in the wind. I had just come to know her through my college and she was a good to have a friend. Her looks kept me attached to the old campus called Sacred Heart College. It was very traditional college with fabulous characters. I have found the beauty like poetry in every aspect of the brick and stone been constructed to suit the very own interest of the students.

It was an evergreen time when the sun was hosting at the horizon and clouds were gathering to it. I have met Neva while in college who have listened to my fables and other things

in a sarcastic way. She laughed at my jokes and did feel well to many puns. She was above all a good sister as I mentioned in my notes.

One day, as I and my friend Saurav were travelling to the spot of a murder scene. We discovered a young girl in mutilated pieces like a chopped wooden pieces. I heard about the killing while attending a function in Kochi and was on the way to witness the aftermath. I was crumbled like a leaf to see the spot, I was terrible, lost, given up in a moment's time. Binoy Ben was among the friend who called me and said about the tragedy. The girl's life has been taken away. I was stunned by blood..... (to be Continued)

The author is a Writer/Teacher/ Poet



Beauty in the Time of Pollution



■ SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

Living in metropolitan cities has its perks—vibrant culture, active lifestyle, luxurious life, and rapid urban development. The only flip side of its growth is the increase in pollution, which most people do not realise until it stares back at them in the mirror.

Healthy skin is not just about what you put on it, but also about how you protect it from the world around you.

Pollution isn't just a problem for the planet – it can harm your health, skin and hair as well.

Our bustling cities, while vibrant and full of opportunity, expose us to a complex mix of pollutants that can wreak havoc on our complexions.

Tens of millions of people living in India's metro cities are exposed to toxic air that can weaken the skin and trigger inflammation. Air pollution and skin have a direct correlation, with pollutants contributing to many skin problems.

This pollution can wreak havoc on your skin, causing irritation, dryness, dark spots and premature ageing. Pollution also accelerates hyperpigmentation and increases the risk of discolouration, dullness, roughness, acne, hives, and eczema.

Over time, this pollution weakens the skin's natural defence system, disrupts its moisture barrier, and promotes inflammation.

Pollution is everywhere, so there's no



way to completely avoid it. The good news is that you can defend your skin from pollution.

Minimise indoor pollution sources:

Usually, the most effective way to improve indoor air quality is to eliminate individual sources of pollution or to reduce their emissions. Burning of solid fuels like wood, coal, dung, and agricultural waste releases particulate matter (PM2.5), carbon monoxide (CO), and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Use Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems with HEPA and Carbon Filtration.

Wear N95 or N99 Respirators in high-pollution environments and limit time in poorly ventilated spaces. Limit activities

that can add pollutants to your indoor air, such as cooking with high heat, using harsh cleaning agents. Do not smoke, vape, or burn incense or candles indoors, as this releases harmful particles and chemicals. Natural ventilation, like window shading, opening windows and doors, can also improve indoor air quality by reducing pollutants that are indoors.

Avoid outdoor exercise:

Reduce outdoor physical activity during high pollution periods to prevent breathing in more pollutants. If you must go outside, try to go out during midday when the air quality may be better.

Eat a skin-protective diet:

Antioxidants help reduce pollution-

driven oxidative stress.

Vitamin C rich foods, jaggery and drink loads of fluids rich in antioxidants. Antioxidants can neutralize the effects of pollutants.

Lemon, orange, amla, green vegetables, grapefruit, tomatoes and potatoes are some examples of Vitamin C rich foods

They support skin, lungs, and overall immunity each day. These nutrients protect cells and improve natural resilience. Products with antioxidants protect against pollution by neutralising damaging free radicals, which are caused by environmental stressors like smog.

Eat plenty of antioxidant-rich foods each day, including fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, legumes and whole grains. Studies show that following a plant-based, antioxidant-rich diet lowers oxidative stress in your body. Vitamins C and E help neutralise free radicals from polluted air. These antioxidants protect skin from oxidative damage caused by PM and ozone. They reduce stress on keratinocytes and slow pollution-driven ageing. Green tea extract and resveratrol support the skin barrier during pollution exposure. Both contain antioxidants that reduce oxidative stress on surface cells. They help neutralise pollutants that settle on the skin.

Skin Care Strategies:

To protect your skin during high pollution, cleanse thoroughly twice a day to remove pollutants..

Nighttime is your skin's prime time to repair itself, so always cleanse your face before hitting the bed. To remove the day's buildup of makeup, dirt, oil, and pollutants, which prevents clogged pores, breakouts, and premature ageing.

Please be sure to look for a gentle, non-abrasive, alcohol-free cleanser to remove dirt and impurities without stripping

essential oils.

Look for ingredients like:Glycerin: A humectant that attracts moisture, Ceramides: Help restore the skin barrier. Or Aloe Vera which Soothes and calms the skin. Avoid harsh soaps or cleansers containing sulfates, which can dry out the skin.

After cleaning, apply a skincare product that contains one or more antioxidants, such as Green tea extract, Vitamin B-3, Niacinamide, and Coenzyme Q10, to protect the skin from damage, improve tone, and support collagen.

Protect your hair:

Every time you step outside —on your way to work, to go for a run, to walk the dog— soot and grime can settle with smoke and other airborne chemicals on your hair and scalp, drying it up, making it brittle, and prone to breakage.

As these pollutants build up, they can cause the scalp to become inflamed and your hair to become dry, dull and brittle

As pollution can compromise your hair quality, you must treat it with extra care. When detangling, use a wide-toothed comb and start at the ends of your hair, working your way up to the roots. Giving your hair a break from heat styling.

Wearing a hat, cap or scarf over your head to shield your hair from dust and smoke when you'll be outside for a long period of time is a fail-safe way to keep your strands shielded from pollution. Avoid exposing hair to direct sunlight and polluted air for long periods.

Even pulling your hair back into a knot or bun will provide some protection, as the hair wrapped in the bun is largely unexposed.

The author is international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India

Heavy Weight Of Expectations Leads To Heavy Lives



■ SURINDERPAL SINGH

Expectations are an integral part of human existence. They guide ambition, shape motivation and help individuals navigate life's uncertainties. However, when these expectations become excessively high or rigid, they begin to function like an invisible weight—one that burdens the mind, disturbs emotional balance and ultimately impacts physical health. Modern psychology and neuroscience reveal that unrealistic expectations not only fuel stress and anxiety but can also lead to burnout and depression. The goal, therefore, is not to abandon aspiration, but to cultivate flexible, adaptive and compassionate expectations that support growth rather than hinder it.

EXPECTATIONS AS COGNITIVE CONSTRUCTS

Expectations are formed through the brain's predictive processing system, shaped by past experience, cultural influence and personal aspiration. They allow humans to anticipate events, prepare responses and plan their lives.

Yet, when expectations become rigid or inflated, they create an expectation-reality mismatch—a psychological gap between what we desire and what actually occurs. This mismatch is a primary source of emotional stress and disappointment. In life's long and unpredictable journey, such expectations become unnecessary mental baggage.

WHY EXPECTATIONS SHOULD BE LIGHT

1. The Psychological Weight
High expectations require constant monitoring, evaluation and self-assessment. This drains cognitive energy that could otherwise support patience, creativity or emotional regulation.

2. The Neurobiological Weight
Neuroscience shows that expectations activate the brain's dopamine system.

When reality meets expectations dopamine rises satisfaction.
When it doesn't dopamine drops



disappointment and stress. Repeated cycles of unmet expectations elevate cortisol levels, triggering fatigue, headaches, irritability and sleep disturbances—creating a literal sense of heaviness.

3. Philosophical and Behavioral Lightness

Ancient wisdom and modern behavioral science converge on one point:

Flexible expectations lead to adaptability and resilience.

People who hold lighter expectations cope better with uncertainty and maintain healthier relationships.

HOW EXPECTATIONS CREATE 'HEAVINESS OF THE HEAD'

The phrase reflects real physiological and neurological symptoms such as tension headaches, mental fatigue and persistent rumination.

Chronic Stress Response
High expectations trigger long-term activation of the stress system, leading to:

Tightened scalp and neck muscles
Vasoconstriction in cranial blood vessels

Reduced serotonin levels
Together, these create a tangible heaviness in the head.

Overthinking and Rumination
High expectations overload the prefrontal cortex and activate the default mode network (DMN), which fuels self-criticism and intrusive thoughts.

Emotional Burden
Fear of failure, perfectionism and societal pressure amplify internal tension, deepening the sense of psychological heaviness.

CAN EXPECTATIONS LEAD TO DEPRESSION?

The Psychological Cycle
Unrealistic expectations typically follow this pattern:

Idealized expectations are formed
Reality falls short
Self-blame and hopelessness arise
Self-worth declines
Over time, this reinforces the cognitive triad of depression:

Negative view of self
Negative view of world
Negative view of future
Neurochemical Consequences
Repeated disappointment depresses dopamine and serotonin activity—two neurotransmitters directly linked to mood regulation.

Social Factors
Family pressure, workplace demands and societal comparison deepen feelings of inadequacy, making excessive expectations a major predictor of depressive tendencies.

WHY EXPECTATIONS SHOULD REMAIN LIGHT

Mental Flexibility
Light expectations make it easier to adapt and bounce back from setbacks.

Emotional Well-Being
Flexible expectations reduce chronic disappointment and enhance acceptance.

Physical Health
Lower stress means balanced cortisol, better sleep and fewer headaches.

Better Performance
Reduced pressure improves focus and intrinsic motivation.

Healthier Relationships
Lower interpersonal expectations

reduce conflicts and foster empathy.

HOW TO MAINTAIN LIGHT EXPECTATIONS: EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES

Cognitive Reframing
CBT techniques help replace rigid expectations with realistic, adaptable ones.

Mindfulness and Meditation
Meditation reduces brain overactivity, quiets rumination and enhances emotional stability.

Self-Compassion
Treating oneself with kindness reduces perfectionism and prevents overburdening expectations.

Incremental Goals
Breaking big expectations into small milestones reduces mental load and amplifies motivation.

Detach from Outcomes
Focus on effort and actions within one's control; let go of rigid expectations about results.

CONCLUSION

Expectations shape the emotional architecture of human life. When held lightly, they guide, inspire and support growth. When overloaded, they become mental and physiological burdens—fueling stress, disappointment and even depression. The science is clear: the key is not lowering dreams, but reducing unnecessary mental weight.

In life's long journey, traveling light is not merely a philosophical ideal—it is a scientific and psychological necessity for well-being.

The author is a Faculty, Science Department Sri Amritsar Sahib, Punjab

5 morning habits that reduce cancer risk and promote long-term health

■ HEALTHLINE

LONDON: The way we begin our morning determines far more than how the rest of the day feels. Those first few hours influence our cells, metabolism, immune strength and long-term disease resistance. When practiced consistently, simple daily actions can reduce inflammation, improve repair mechanisms and support the body's defence systems. Cancer risk builds gradually over the years, which means prevention depends on repeated choices rather than extreme changes. Morning habits that improve physical health are among the most effective because they align with natural body rhythms and support processes that protect cellular stability. A thoughtful morning routine can therefore contribute to reduced cancer risk and a stronger foundation for lifelong wellness and vitality.

A peer-reviewed research review published in CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians reported that regular physical activity is strongly linked with reduced risk and improved survival outcomes for several major cancers, including breast and colon cancer. The review concluded that even moderate activity, such as brisk walking, contributes meaningful protective benefits when compared with sedentary lifestyles. The findings emphasize that incorporating consistent physical activity into daily routines should be considered a key strategy in cancer prevention and long-term health management.

Beginning the day with physical movement activates metabolism and improves circulation, sending oxygen and nutrients to cells that need repair. Even 20 to 30 minutes of walking, stretching or yoga reduces inflammation and supports the immune system's ability to remove damaged or abnormal cells. Morning exercise also stabilises hormones and supports a healthy weight, which is important because excess body fat increases the risk of several types of cancer. The goal is consistency rather than intensity. When movement becomes a daily ritual, the body stays stronger, more resilient and better able to protect itself.

A nutritious breakfast gives the body antioxidants, fibre and vitamins that protect cells from damage. Whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, oats and whole grains help reduce chronic inflammation and support digestive health. A breakfast rich in fibre supports a healthy gut microbiome, which plays an essential role in immunity and cancer prevention. Choosing plant-based and minimally processed foods also reduces exposure to additives and compounds found in highly processed meals. A bowl of oats with berries or wholegrain toast with peanut butter can lay the foundation for balanced energy and long-term wellness.

Stepping outside for a few minutes soon after waking resets the circadian rhythm and helps regulate hormones, particularly cortisol and melatonin. Strong circadian rhythm supports DNA repair and immune surveillance, which are critical protective mechanisms against abnormal cell growth. Consistent sleep and wake timing paired with morning light exposure improves recovery and reduces chronic inflammation. Better sleep quality strengthens defence systems while maintaining mental clarity and emotional balance. A stable internal rhythm is one of the simplest yet most effective wellbeing tools.



Two-Day Pahari Literary and Cultural Programme Begins in Uri, MLA Uri Inaugurates Event

■ FAROOQ RATHER

URI, DEC 04: A two-day Pahari Literary and Cultural Programme, organised by the Pahari section of the J&K Cultural Academy, commenced today at Town Hall Lagama, Uri. A large number of Pahari writers, poets, scholars and intellectuals participated in the event. MLA Uri, Dr. Sajjad Shafi, inaugurated the programme and attended as the chief guest. Head of the Pahari Section, Mohd Ayub Nayeem, formally welcomed the chief guest and other dignitaries.

In his address, MLA Uri highlighted the efforts and contributions of the government toward the promotion of Pahari language, literature and cultural identity. He urged the J&K Cultural Academy to conduct more such programmes across the Sub Division Uri.

DDC Boniyar, Mohd Ismail Khan, also spoke on the occasion and appealed to the present govern-



ment to fill all vacant posts in the J&K Cultural Academy to strengthen its functioning.

Prominent attendees included

DDC Boniyar Mohammad Ismail Khan, SHO Uri Mohd Madisar, Syed Nisaar Hussain Shah, Ab Aziz Dachnavi, Atta Ullah Mumtaz,

Mohd Saleem, Ab Qayoom Chalko, Syed Ishtiaq Shah, Mohammad Iqbal Sihardi, Asgar Ali Khan, Farooq Beigh, Balbir Kumar, Mohammad Saleem Beigh, Raja Ilyas Khan, Mohammed Syed Khan (Ex-ZEO), Ab Ahad Mangrial, Khurshid Bandy, Mahtab Ahmed Sheikh, Ch Nazir Bakerwal, Taj Din Taj, and several other noted Pahari dignitaries.

The programme, themed around the preservation and promotion of Pahari literature and heritage, witnessed enthusiastic participation from writers, scholars, students and cultural enthusiasts.

The first day of the event concluded successfully at Town Hall Lagama, Uri. The second day of the programme will be held tomorrow at Noorkhah Boniyar.

Academy officials extended heartfelt thanks to all participants and guests for their presence and support.

Congress Holds Sanghathan Srijan Abhiyan Meeting in Kund Kulgam

■ FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, DEC 03: The Congress Party held an important meeting under the Sanghathan Srijan Abhiyan at Waltangoo Kund Kulgam. The meeting was attended by AICC Observer Jayendra Ramola, J&K Observer Abid Kashmiri, Mohd Iqbal Mir, JKPC Member Amanullah Mantoo, District President Congress Abdul Rashid Lone, along with several other senior leaders. The discussion focused on the Sanghathan Srijan Abhiyan a major nationwide organizational rebuilding and strengthening initiative of the Congress Party. The campaign aims to restructure, energize and empower the party from

the booth level to the district level, promoting stronger grassroots involvement, dynamic leadership development, and a more efficient and responsive organizational framework.

Leaders speaking at the event said that the Sanghathan Srijan Abhiyan will enhance public engagement, improve coordination, and strengthen organizational capacity in district Kulgam. They emphasized that the initiative will boost the morale of party workers at all levels and improve outreach ahead of upcoming political challenges.

The Congress Party extended its gratitude to all media representatives for their presence and continued support.

Public Notice

This is an information for general public , that I have lost all documents of my vehicle bearing Registration No JK01AC 4788, While traveling around Shalteng. Now I want to apply for it's duplicate and also want to submit missing report in police station, in this regard if any person has any objections he/she may file the objections in office of the ARTO Srinagar Kashmir within a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice after that no objection shall be accepted.

WASEEM AHMAD GANAI
S/O: Habib Ullah Ganai
R/O: SHALTENG PARIMPORA
District: Srinagar Jammu and Kashmir 190017

Devyani Rana Launches Youth Camp for Hotel Careers in Nagrota

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

GHAROTA, DEC 03: MLA Nagrota Devyani Rana today inaugurated an Orientation and Training Camp aimed at empowering local youth and preparing them for employment opportunities in the hotel and hospitality industry across Jammu & Kashmir and other parts of the country. The programme has been organised in collaboration with ARC Hospitality, Jammu, as part of its ongoing efforts to enhance skill development and open corporate avenues for the younger generation.

Over 200 enthusiastic youth, aged 18 to 27, participated in the inaugural session. The selected candidates will undergo an intensive 45-day free training programme, covering essential hospitality skills, professional grooming, communication, and workplace readiness. After completion, eligible trainees will be facilitated for placement in reputed hotels within and outside the Union Territory.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Devyani Rana emphasized the need for youth to take proactive steps in upgrading their skills in line with the evolving demands of the global job market. She highlighted that the hospitality sector offers immense opportunities for growth, stability, and exposure.

"Today's world belongs to those who are willing to learn, adapt, and excel," Ms. Rana said. "Our youth must come forward, enhance their skill sets, and confidently join the corporate world. With the right training and attitude, they can build rewarding careers not just in the UT but anywhere in the country. My vision is to see the youth of Nagrota and Jammu & Kashmir emerge as leaders, innovators, and professionals who contribute meaningfully to society."

She reiterated her commitment to supporting initiatives that bridge the gap between education and employability, ensuring that young people have access to training programmes that align with industry requirements. Ms. Rana praised ARC Hospitality for creating a training and placement platform that nurtures talent and expands employment opportunities for local youth.

Also speaking on the occasion, Ms. Chitwan Khorana, CEO, ARC Hospitality, expressed confidence in the potential of the participants and outlined the organisation's mission.

Ms. Khorana said, "The hospitality sector is growing rapidly, and with structured training, we can help young individuals secure stable and prestigious careers. We are proud to partner with community leaders like Ms. Devyani Rana who share our vision for youth empowerment."

The event concluded with an interactive session where experts briefed the participants about career paths, industry expectations, and the importance of professional discipline.

Scores Join PDP Ranks in Bhadarwah



■ AMIR IQBAL KHAN

BHADARWAH, DEC 3:

In a major show of support, hundreds of residents mostly from the tribal dominated Bihani Sharekhi area of Bhadarwah have come on board the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) citing its sustained grassroots engagement and timely assistance during the recent flash floods that ravaged parts of the Additional District Bhadarwah.

The joining function organised by the local unit of the party Thursday witnessed the presence of senior PDP leaders including District Publicity Secretary (Doda) Zaffar Hussain Wani, District Advisor Nazir Ahmed Shah, Block President (Bhadarwah) Mohammad Salim Butt and workers Ashiq Hussain Butt and Abdul Hafiz Dar.

Those who switched to the PDP fold included John Mohammad, Bashir Ahmed, Shamma Choudhary, Mohammad Shafi, Siddique Choudhary, Irfan, Yassir Ahmed, Altaf, Ashfaq Hussain, Akhtar Hussain, Saddam Hussain, Gul Mohammad and several others. They hailed the PDP's outreach in extending relief, conducting rescue operations and restoring damaged links in the aftermath of heavy rains and floods.

Party functionaries said the PDP's Bhadarwah unit has been working round the clock to reach out to flood-hit families, coordinate rehabilitation efforts and put local connectivity back on track in collaboration with government and non-government agencies.

Zaffar Hussain Wani while welcoming the new entrants said the overwhelming response from the public reflected people's faith in the PDP's sincerity. "Our workers stood shoulder to shoulder with the affected families when disaster struck. The trust shown by the people today vindicates our commitment to serve beyond political considerations," Wani remarked.

Mohammad Salim Butt, the Block President said the inclusion of new members would give a fresh impetus to the party's grassroots network. "We have consistently been on the ground providing relief, ensuring rehabilitation and engaging with every community. The party stands for collective development rooted in compassion and accountability," he said. District Advisor Nazir Ahmed Shah said the mass joining was an indicator of the changing public mood in rural and tribal belts.

Meanwhile, during an ongoing public outreach programme held in the presence of District Publicity Secretary Doda, Zaffar Hussain Wani along with party leaders Nazir Ahmed Shah and Abdul Hafiz Dar, several people from diverse backgrounds today joined the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) at Puneja in Additional District Bhadarwah. The initiative focused on reaching people at the grassroots level seeks to understand local issues and strengthen the party's connect with the public. Prominent among those who embraced the party fold were Abdul Hafiz, Sakeena Begum, Farooq

Najar, Yasir Najar, Touheed and Azeem reflecting growing support for PDP's activities in the area. The event concluded with party workers

resolving to intensify village-level contact programmes and carry forward relief and development initiatives across Bhadarwah and adjoining areas.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) MECHANICAL DIVISION CENTRAL KASHMIR (NOTICE INVITING TENDERS)

GIST
e-NIT No:- R&B/MDCK/NIT/21 of 2025-26
Dated: 02-12-2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited in two-cover system (Technical and Financial) on percentage basis from OEM/experienced firms/ authorized dealers of OEM with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the below mentioned work: -

S. No	Name of work	Cost of Tender Documents (in Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (in Rs)	Advertised cost (Rs.)	Time Completion (month)	Tender Opening Authority	Position of Funds
1	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 01 No., G+2, 06 Passenger MRL Lift with CMC of 02 years post 01 year DLP along with allied works Multipurpose sports building.	800	38,816	19,40,800	02 months	Executive Engineer, R&B Mechanical Division Central Kashmir	Available with intending department

S.No	Particulars	Dated
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	02-12-2025
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 02-12-2025 (15:00 hrs) To 17-12-2025 (16:00 hrs)
3	Bid Submission Start Date	From 02-12-2025 (15:00 hrs)
4	Bid Submission End Date	To 17-12-2025 (16:00 hrs)
5	Date and time of opening of Technical bid (online)	18-12-2025 at/after 12:00 hrs in the office of Executive Engineer, R&B Mechanical Division Central Kashmir
6.	Date and time of opening of Financial bid (online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
R&B Mechanical Division Central Kashmir

DIPK: 8670/25 | Dated: 03-12-2025

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER Machinery Division Kashmir Mechanical & Hospital Engineering Department, Kashmir GIST of e-Tender

e-NIT No:	MDSK/TS /2025-26/70
Date	02 .12 .2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union territory of J&K, e-tenders are invited on item rate basis from eligible contractors/registered firms for the below mentioned works

Name of the Work	Cost of Tender Doc. (In rupees)	Estimated Cost (In Rs)	Bid security (EMD) in Rs	Position of AA	Position of TS
Supply, Installation, testing and Commissioning of Hot & Cold Ac of capacity 1.5 Ton for Snow clearance Control room Budgam of Machinery Division Kashmir.	200.00	2,55,000.00	5100.00	Works programme approved by CE vide order No. M&HED/K/Acct u/107 of 2025-26 Dt.30.08.2025 .	Sanctioned vide No.39 of 2025-26 Dt. 02 -12 -2025.

The bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below: -

01	Publish date	03-12-2025(18:00hrs)
02	Period of downloading of bidding document	03 -12-2025(18:30 hrs)
03	Bid submission start date	03-12-2025 (18:55hrs)
04	Bid submission end date	10 - 12-2025(18:55 hrs)
05	Date and time of opening of bids (online)	11 - 12-2025(14:00 hrs)

No: MDSK/ TS/4276-79 | Date: 02 .12.2025

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Machinery Division, Srinagar

DIPK: 8683/25 | Dated: 03-12-2025

Laptop Care House

Wholesale Dealer Of New And Pre Used Laptops

DEALS IN ALL KINDS OF LAPTOPS AND ACCESSORIES

REPAIRING OF: ALL TYPES OF LAPTOPS & DESKTOPS



DC Srinagar, SMC Commissioner review winter preparedness in district

Emphasis laid on robust mechanism to ensure swift snow clearance, supply of essential services

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 03: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo and Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation, Faz Lul Haseeb Wednesday chaired a joint meeting of District/Sectoral Officers of all line Departments at Meeting Hall of the DC Office to review the overall winter preparedness measures in Srinagar District.

The meeting focused on ensuring that all line departments have comprehensive and coordinated plans in place to deal with snowfall, frost, waterlogging and unhindered supplies and essentials across Srinagar District.

The DC and Commissioner stressed the need for a robust mechanism to ensure swift snow clearance, particularly along major roads, inner lanes and critical service points including roads leading to hospitals, emergency service stations and vital installations.

The Officers were directed to plan proactively and develop a coordinated and strategic approach for snow clearance in both urban and rural roads. Emphasis was laid on the deployment of essential machinery and fully utilization of resources to ensure prompt road clearance and restoration of connectivity.



The DC also instructed Officers SMC and PMGSY ensure all from Departments of MED, R&B, necessary machinery and

manpower is kept in ready state to clear snow from all main roads, especially for emergency services viz hospitals, vital installations, besides inner lanes and bylanes across the district.

Instructions were also given to maintain power, water, and essential supplies and to ensure that adequate stocks of essential commodities are available.

Furthermore, the DC and SMC Commissioner directed for establishing a special district level Control Room for coordination among departments and redressal of public grievances.

Both officers directed close inter-departmental coordination, round-the-clock control room functioning, and prompt response systems to address public grievances during winter emergencies. They emphasized proactive planning, timely deployment of men and machinery, and effective communication to ensure the smooth functioning of essential services. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed; Joint Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Khurshid; SP Headquarter, Umar Shah; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; SDM East, SDM West, Superintending Engineers, ASP Traffic Police, Director IMD Srinagar, Executive Engineers and District/Sectoral Officers of various Departments.

College of Nursing, GMC Srinagar Observes World AIDS Day

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 03: The College of Nursing, Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, in collaboration with the Family Planning Association of India (FPAI), organised an impactful programme to commemorate World AIDS Day, aimed at enhancing awareness, promoting preventive strategies, and reinforcing the collective responsibility to eliminate stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS.

The observance was attended by Principal/Dean, GMC Srinagar, Prof. (Dr.) Iffat Hassan Shah, who attended the event as the Chief Guest. In her address, she underscored the significance of early diagnosis, education-driven prevention, and community engagement in the fight against HIV/AIDS. She urged nursing students to become strong advocates for public health and to play a proactive role in spreading accurate information at grassroots levels. She highlighted the importance of counselling services, treatment adherence, and social support systems as essential pillars in controlling the disease.

The programme was also attended by Administrator, GMC Srinagar, Mohammad Ashraf Hakak, as the Guest of Honour. He appreciated the initiative and emphasised the need for interdisciplinary collaboration and youth involvement in public health outreach. Encouraging students, he reiterated that meaningful participation in such awareness programmes builds competent and socially responsible healthcare professionals.

Chairperson, FPAI, Dr. Shahroz, delivered a key message on the importance of strengthening sexual and reproductive health services, improving accessibility to information, and extending support to vulnerable communities. He praised



the College of Nursing for taking lead in promoting impactful educational activities.

As part of the commemoration, an engaging Quiz Competition on HIV/AIDS was organised to enhance students knowledge and clinical understanding. Nursing students participated with great enthusiasm, demonstrating commendable awareness, teamwork, and competitive spirit.

The World AIDS Day observance concluded with a pledge to continue spreading awareness, supporting affected individuals, and contributing to global efforts toward achieving an AIDS-free society.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities observed at Town Hall Kupwara

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KUPWARA, DECEMBER 03: District Administration Kupwara in collaboration with Save Youth Save Future Foundation (SYSFF) today organized a programme titled "NOOR-E-WUJOOD" at Town Hall Kupwara to observe the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.



The event was presided over by ADC Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmed Khan and was aimed at interaction with terror-affected persons who are specially abled.

ADC Kupwara emphasised on sustained institutional and community support and efforts from district administration for rehabilitation, providing healthcare services and livelihood opportunities.

Special medical camp was also organised by health department in coordination with social welfare department.

Chairman SYSFF, Wajahat Farooq Bhat also spoke on the occasion highlighting ongoing outreach campaign.

Participants expressed gratitude to the Administration for their support to various initiatives undertaken for terror affected families.

DC Bandipora reviews Stray Dog Management; Stresses Strict Compliance, Coordinated Action

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, DEC 03: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today chaired a meeting to review district-level measures for managing the stray dog menace, emphasising strict compliance with the directions issued by the General Administration Department (GAD).

She stressed that all facilities established for this purpose must remain fully functional with adequate staff so that citizens do not face any inconvenience.

During the meeting,

departments apprised the Chair of actions taken.

The Deputy Commissioner noted the measures implemented by the Municipal Council, Education Department, Health Department, Rural Development, Animal Husbandry, DYSSO, Police and R&B, ranging from boundary walls in schools, waste management in kindergarten institutions, deployment of volunteers during sports events, awareness in panchayats, barricading at sensitive points, and ongoing sterilisation and geo-tagging work.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all departments to



strengthen Animal Birth Control operations, regulate feeding strictly at designated points, and ensure seamless coordination for public safety and timely implementation of Government directions.

Among others, the meeting was attended Superintending Engineer, Public Works (R&B) Bandipora, Chief Medical Officer, Bandipora, DySP DAR; District Youth Services and Sports Officer, Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Council Bandipora, Executive Officer, Municipal Committees Hajin/Sumbal and other concerned line departments.

DLSA Samba organises awareness event

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SAMBA, DECEMBER 03: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Samba commemorated the International Day of persons with Disabilities at the Home for Children with Disabilities Vijaypur. The event was held under the patronage of the Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority and Chairman, DLSA Samba.

The Secretary DLSA Assma Choudhary, Deputy LADC Balbir Singh, Assistant LADCs, Versha Anthal and Nishu Lalotra, caretakers and children residing at the institution attended the programme.

The programme aimed to create a warm, inclusive and encouraging environment for the specially-abled children and promote awareness about



the rights, legal protections, and welfare measures available to the persons with disabilities under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

The programme also sought to highlight the commitment of the Legal services institutions towards promoting inclusion, accessibility and dignity for individuals with disabilities.

The event featured an interaction with the children, encouraging them and appreciating their strengths and talents.

Motivational conversations and interactive sessions were organized

to make the event engaging and meaningful for the children.

The importance of equal opportunities, empathy and social responsibility towards persons with disabilities was emphasized throughout the programme.

The programme concluded on a positive and compassionate note, reaffirming the resolve of the District Legal Services Authority Samba to continue its efforts towards building an inclusive society where persons with disabilities can live with dignity and avail equal opportunities.

The DLSA expressed gratitude to all stakeholders and highlighted the commitment of Legal Services Institutions to inclusivity and equal access to justice. As a gesture of care and support refreshments and stationery items were distributed among all the children.

DLSA Jammu hosts awareness programme on Int'l Day of Persons with Disabilities 2025

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 03: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Jammu, under the guidance of the Chairman, R. N. Watal, (Pr. Distt. & Sessions Judge) and the overall supervision of Secretary Maleeka Sharma, organized an awareness programme on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities here at Muskan Home for Mentally Challenged Children Channi Rama. The programme aimed to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities across political, social, economic and cultural spheres and to sensitize participants about prevention, early identification, intervention, rehabilitation and mainstreaming of persons with disabilities.



Ld. Secretary District Legal Services Authority Maleeka Sharma contributed notably by distributing drawing pads and colors among the children at Muskan Home, adding a personal touch to the programme and encouraging creative engagement among the children.

Panel Lawyer DLSA Advocate Kavita Raina served as the resource person, supported by PLV Sahil Khosla who helped in ensuring smooth conduct of the programme.

Awareness was also raised about enhancing skills in communication, personal care and health management to foster inclusion. The theme for the year 2025 "Fostering Disability- Inclusive Societies for Advancing Social Progress" was highlighted.

Foundation day of Assam and Nagaland celebrated in Jammu Kashmir Lok Bhavan

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 03: The Foundation Day of Assam and Nagaland was celebrated in Jammu Kashmir Lok Bhavan in presence of Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha. Statehood was officially conferred to Nagaland on 1 December 1963 while Assam celebrates its Foundation Day on 2nd December. The Foundation Day programme was organised as part of the 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' initiative of Government of India.

Addressing the gathering, Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha said celebration of the foundation days of other states and Union Territories in the Lok Bhavans across the country has strengthened the cultural bonds and inspired citizens to learn about other state's unique traditions, language while building a deep bond of brotherhood.

The Lieutenant Governor also paid tribute to Swargadeo Sukapha, founder of the Ahom kingdom, Lachit Borphukan, the renowned General of Ahom Army and Rani



Gaidinliu, Naga spiritual and political leader who led a revolt against British rule in India. "They had demonstrated

courage and resilience and their bravery in face of adversity continue to inspire generations. The ideals of these great men and Rani Gaidinliu are empowering others to build a strong and self-reliant India," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted the literary and cultural heritage of Assam and Nagaland. He said the rich traditions are integrated into the larger fabric of Indian society and strengthening the spirit of "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat".

Rupee's Fall From Grace: Hit by trade deficits, tariff wars, & stronger dollar

JAYANTA ROY CHOWDHURY

NEW DELHI, DEC 3 : The Indian rupee's slide to a record low, crossing Rs 90 to the US dollar on Wednesday morning, marks one of the sharpest currency pressures India has experienced in recent years.

The fall has not been sudden; it is the result of a confluence of domestic vulnerabilities and global shifts that have collectively battered sentiment and intensified the demand for dollars.

At the core of the rupee's weakness lies a ballooning trade deficit. India posted a record merchandise trade deficit of USD 196.82 billion during April–October 2025, an increase of more than USD 25 billion compared to the same period last year. The near USD 200 billion deficit starkly illustrates how rapidly imports are outpacing exports. This widening gap has a direct effect: it forces importers to buy more dollars, tightening the supply of the US currency in domestic markets and

pushing the rupee down. India's exports, which were already struggling with sluggish global demand, were dealt a body blow by US President Donald Trump's surprise tariff impositions.

A huge 50 per cent penal tariff was slapped on almost all sectors as "punishment" for India's purchase of Russian crude. India's key export industries—such as textiles, gems and jewellery, pharmaceuticals, and chemicals faced new barriers at a time when they could least afford them. Exports slowed, while certain imports, such as gold, surged, worsening the trade imbalance and intensifying dollar demand. In fact, India's merchandise exports were almost flat, growing by just 0.6 per cent during April–October this year.

The external environment has only amplified these pressures. The US dollar strengthened globally on the back of robust American economic growth and the Federal Reserve's stance of keeping interest rates high for a longer



period, attracting funds to American shores, and begging Asian fund markets in the process. The result is visible in foreign investor behaviour. Foreign portfolio investors withdrew over USD 17 billion from Indian equities so far this year, reflecting both concerns about emerging market risk and uncertainty around the unresolved US–India trade deal. Compounding this was the rush among Indian importers to buy dollars before the greenback became dearer. At the same time, Indian exporters delayed hedging, hoping for better rates later. This operational hedging cycle deepened

the mismatch between dollar demand and supply, resulting in the rupee's value weakening further.

Throughout this period of rupee weakness, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been active in defending the currency by selling dollars aggressively, depleting its forex reserves by over USD 47 billion since October 2024.

However, the wise men running India's central bank, who are meeting this week on a number of issues, know the RBI can't keep selling dollars endlessly.

Persistent dollar sales drain rupee liquidity at a time when the banking system is already tight, limiting how far the central bank can intervene in the foreign exchange market without disrupting domestic credit conditions.

The consequence is that the rupee has effectively been allowed to find a new equilibrium. The currency is now down around 5 per cent this year, making it Asia's worst performer in

2025.

Market forecasts suggest that without significant policy shifts, whether on interest rates, trade negotiations, or capital flow management, the rupee may remain in the 89–91 per dollar range through December.

There is also a more structural element to this weakness. While India's growth remains relatively strong compared to many countries, its import-intensive economy, dependence on foreign capital markets, and exposure to global commodities leave the rupee vulnerable whenever global risk appetite shrinks.

What distinguishes this moment is not the fall itself, India has weathered sharper rupee falls before, but the number of economic and political factors acting at once. A record trade deficit, a global tariff war, portfolio outflows, stronger dollar, and limited ammunition with the RBI for a strong intervention. UNI

Vijay Vasanth seeks urgent debate in Lok Sabha on labour reforms

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 3 : Kanyakumari Lok Sabha MP Vijay Kumar (Vijay Vasanth) on Wednesday moved an adjournment motion in the Lok Sabha meeting seeking an urgent discussion on what he termed the Centre's "failure to bring meaningful labour reforms", saying crores of workers across the country continued to suffer in the absence of basic protections.

In his notice to the Secretary-General of the Lok Sabha, the MP said that although the government claims to have merged 29 labour laws into four Labour Codes, the rules have still not been notified, and there is no sign of implementation. As a result, workers across the country continue to suffer without proper protections.

Vasanth stressed that India's workforce urgently needs a fair national minimum wage, universal health coverage, an urban employment guarantee, comprehensive social security for unorganised workers, and an end to excessive contractualisation, especially in essential government services.

Reiterating the five key demands stated in his adjournment notice, he called for a national minimum wage of Rs 400 per day and a Right to Health law with coverage up to Rs 25 lakh.

The Congress MP said that while the Centre markets reforms only on paper, some states had moved ahead with modern welfare measures. He pointed to Karnataka and Rajasthan, which have enacted gig-worker welfare laws, showcasing genuine models of inclusive labour protection.

Vasanth urged the House to adjourn its scheduled business and take up an immediate discussion to fix accountability and set a clear timeline for genuine labour reforms.

He said it was Parliament's duty to act decisively for crores of workers who "continue to struggle for basic rights". UNI

Congress Leader Manickam Tagore Rebuts Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's Claims on Nehru and Babri Masjid

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 3 : Congress leader Manickam Tagore on Wednesday issued a strong rebuttal to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's recent claims that Jawaharlal Nehru intended to rebuild the Babri Masjid using public funds and that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel opposed it. Tagore described these assertions as "lies" lacking any archival or documentary evidence.

In a pointed statement on his official X handle, Tagore said, "There is zero archival or documentary evidence to support this claim. Nehruji explicitly opposed using government money for religious places—including the reconstruction of temples. He insisted such projects should be funded through public contributions, not the state."

Tagore further emphasized, "If Nehruji refused public funds even for Somnath—a symbol revered by millions—why would he propose spending taxpayer money on Babri?" He dismissed Rajnath Singh's statements as politically motivated attempts to rewrite history for divisive purposes.



"Rajnath ji's statements aren't about history. They're about politics—rewriting the past to divide the present. The BJP's strategy is simple: insult our founders, invent stories, fuel polarization. We will not allow the legacy of Nehru or Patel to be distorted by Godse's followers. Truth matters. History matters. Rajnath ji's lies must be exposed," Tagore asserted.

This rebuttal highlights the continuing political tussle over historical narratives in India, reflecting the deep sensitivities surrounding the country's founding leaders and communal harmony. UNI

From Constitution maker to nation builder: Kharge honors Dr Rajendra Prasad

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 3 : Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday paid tribute to Dr Rajendra Prasad, India's first President, on his birth anniversary, highlighting his remarkable contributions to the country's freedom struggle and the making of its Constitution.

"Humble salutations to Dr Rajendra Prasad Ji, the great freedom fighter, former Congress President, and the first President of the country, who made significant contributions to the making of India's Constitution," Kharge said in a post on his X handle.

Kharge praised Dr Prasad's selfless service and glorious contributions, saying, "From the making of the Constitution to laying the foundation of a strong and progressive India - his selfless service and glorious contributions will always be remembered. His ideals, his simplicity, and his lofty thoughts will forever remain a source of inspiration for all of us."



Rahul, Sonia condemn Modi govt's 'death warrant' to Aravalli Hills, warn of environmental crisis

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 3 : Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday sharply criticized the Modi government's environmental policies, accusing it of encouraging reckless exploitation of natural resources at the expense of future generations.

His strong condemnation aligns with Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, who warned in a recent article that the government's revised definition of the Aravalli Hills poses a grave threat to the fragile ecosystem. "Since coming to power, the Modi Government has shown a venal



streak of cynicism towards environmental protection, promoting exploitation while disregarding the consequences for our planet and future generations," Rahul Gandhi stated. "Can policymaking be so blatantly up for sale to benefit a few, ignoring the wellbeing of millions?" Sonia Gandhi highlighted the implications of the Centre's redefinition of the Aravalli range, recently upheld by the Supreme Court, which excludes hills under 100 meters from mining restrictions.

She wrote, "The Aravalli range, stretching from Gujarat through Rajasthan to Haryana, has historically been vital to India's geography and heritage. But now, the government has effectively signed a death warrant for these hills, already ravaged by illegal mining." She added that this policy change is "an open invitation for illegal miners and mafias to destroy 90% of the range." The Congress has demanded the rollback of amendments to the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and the Forest Conservation Rules, 2022, warning that the current approach risks environmental degradation and neglects the rights of local communities.

Environmental experts have expressed concern that the new definition could unleash large-scale mining, accelerating desertification and worsening air pollution in the region. The growing critique from Congress leaders reflects rising public anxiety over the government's environmental stewardship, underscoring the urgent need for sustainable policies that protect India's natural heritage while promoting responsible development. UNI

India's Growth Story Must Stand on the Strength of Accessibility

TUHIN A. SINHA & NAGENDER PARASHAR

NEW DELHI, DEC 3 : India's commitment to inclusive development has consistently drawn direction from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a nation where every citizen is empowered to live with dignity. The Prime Minister has repeatedly emphasised that disability does not diminish a person's talent or potential, stating that disability is not an obstacle to success when society ensures equal opportunity.

This clarity of thought is essential as India reflects on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and evaluates whether accessibility has been integrated into the centre of national development. India has a significant population of citizens with disabilities, many of whom are limited not by their impairments but by a physical and social environment that restricts their functional independence. For decades, disability was viewed primarily through a medical framework, but the most persistent barriers have always been structural.

These barriers include public buildings without universal design, transportation systems that do not support mobility, workplaces that lack adaptive technologies and prosthetics that remain out of reach due to high costs or long waiting periods. The United Nations has long underlined that disability becomes disabling only when society fails to create an enabling environment. India has made visible progress through initiatives such as the Accessible India Campaign, the Department of



Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, the Deendayal Divyangjan Rehabilitation Scheme, District Disability Rehabilitation Centres, ADIP, PM DAKSH and SIPDA. These programmes reflect a clear commitment to creating systems that prioritise inclusion.

However, as India advances towards the goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047, it must move from targeted interventions to a comprehensive national model that mainstreams accessibility across governance, urban planning, healthcare, education and industry.

Across various innovation hubs in the country, a new generation of engineers, researchers and medical technologists is developing advanced prosthetics and assistive solutions. These innovations demonstrate that India has the intellectual and manufacturing capability to lead globally in assistive technology. Yet the sector remains underrepresented in national industrial priorities even though its social and economic

impact is far reaching. Assistive devices may not have the same headline value as electric vehicles, AI platforms or drones, but they determine whether a student can continue education, whether a professional can return to work and whether a citizen can participate fully in the national economy.

A nation that aspires to global leadership must recognise that advancing accessibility is not just a social imperative—it is a powerful driver of economic growth and shared progress. Prosthetics and assistive technologies are not optional enhancements. They are essential instruments of mobility, independence and dignity. They transform passive dependence into active contribution and allow millions to study, work, innovate and live with agency.

They are as critical to national development as infrastructure, digital connectivity and healthcare.

As India is serious about achieving the Prime Minister's vision of Viksit Bharat, it

is time to move towards a unified and ambitious approach. India must consider creating a National Mission for Prosthetics and Assistive Technology that consolidates efforts, expands access, lowers costs, strengthens district level infrastructure, builds domestic manufacturing leadership and positions the country as a major player in the global disability economy which is valued at more than thirteen trillion dollars. Such a mission would not merely deliver social benefits but would generate measurable economic outcomes including higher workforce participation, reduced long term dependency and increased national productivity. India already has a strong policy foundation, technological depth and entrepreneurial momentum. What is now required is the recognition that inclusion is a strategic national imperative. When accessibility improves, the labour force expands. When education becomes barrier free, the national talent pool strengthens. When mobility increases, economic participation rises.

Inclusion creates measurable national strength, not symbolic progress. A country that builds world class infrastructure must also ensure world class accessibility. A nation that invests in industry and innovation must also invest in the citizens who power that innovation. India's future will not be shaped by those who advance alone. It will be shaped by a nation that creates conditions for every citizen to move forward confidently and independently. That is the true measure of Viksit Bharat and the standard by which our progress must be judged. UNI

Hardik 77* Leads Baroda; Shaw's 66 Outshines Suryavanshi Ton

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

DUBAI: Returning to competitive cricket for the first time since injuring (left quadricep) himself ahead of the Asia Cup final in September, Hardik Pandya struck an unbeaten 77 off 42 balls to power Baroda home in a tall chase of 223 against Punjab.

Hardik put together a crucial third-wicket partnership of 101 with Shivalik Sharma, who was tactically retired out on 47 off 32. This allowed Jitesh Sharma, Baroda's new recruit, to join Hardik with the side needing 30 off 15 balls. Baroda needed just nine more balls to seal victory.

Hardik's batting performance somewhat made up for his underwhelming returns with the ball. He finished with figures of 4-0-52-1, with much of his early damage caused by Punjab captain Abhishek Sharma who waltzed to an 18-ball 50, before being dismissed off the following delivery.

Punjab's innings went into over-drive courtesy Anmolpreet Singh (69 off 32) and Naman Dhir (39 off 28). Yet, they found the target easily razed down in the end, with Baroda winning by seven wickets.

Both sides have two wins in as

many matches in Group C, which is currently led by Gujarat, who have three wins in four matches.

After scores of 14, 13 and 5 in his first three knocks, Bihar's Vaibhav Suryavanshi, set to be India's opener at next month's Under-19 World Cup, made heads turn with an unbeaten 61-ball 108. In the process, he became the youngest player (14 years) to hit a ton in the tournament.

Suryavanshi hit seven fours and seven sixes in Bihar's 176 for 3. Suryavanshi's three centuries are the joint-most by an Indian in 2025, along with Abhishek Sharma. Ayush Mhatre and Ishan Kishan have two hundreds each.

Suryavanshi's knock, however, wasn't enough in the face of an opening onslaught from Maharashtra captain Prithvi Shaw. Hoping to attract the attention of IPL franchises after going unsold for IPL 2025, Shaw laid the foundation of Maharashtra's chase with a 30-ball 66 at the top of the order. Maharashtra eventually got home by three wickets in hand with one over to spare.

This was Maharashtra's second win in four games, while Bihar continued to remain winless.

Devdutt Padikkal struck his fourth T20 century - an unbeaten 46-ball

102 - as Karnataka bounced back from two back-to-back losses to trounce Tamil Nadu by 145 runs. This is their second win in four matches that keeps their chances of making the Super Fours alive.

Sent in to bat, Karnataka raced to a 69-run opening stand between Mayank Agarwal and BR Sharath (53 off 23), before Padikkal took centre stage. He hit 10 fours and six sixes in his innings. The in-form R Smaran, who has made quite an impression so far this season, made 46 not out. TN captain Varun Chakravarthy conceded 47 off four wicketless overs.

TN's chase never got going; they were eventually bowled out for 100 in 14.2 overs with N Jagadeesan's 21 being the top score. B Sai Sudharsan managed just 8. Karnataka's leg-spinning duo of Shreyas Gopal and Pravin Dubey picked up three wickets apiece.

The result puts TN in the bottom half of Group D, with their domestic season going from bad to worse. After finishing the first half of the Ranji season winless and going through a coaching reshuffle for the white-ball leg, they've now managed just one win in four matches and are in danger of not progressing beyond the group stages.



Rip me up and start again:
cricket's most thrilling art is also
the most self-destructive

GREG CHAPPEL

PERTH: Imagine a javelin thrower sprinting flat-out before planting their front leg and unleashing the spear with every ounce of power. Bio-mechanists describe that sudden stop - all that forward momentum slamming to an abrupt halt - as the equivalent of a low-speed car crash. Now picture doing similar a few hundred times over the course of five days, while trying to hit a spot the size of a saucer 22 yards away. That, in essence, is what a Test-match fast bowler signs up for: a deliberate act of repeated self-destruction, which the human body was never designed for.

A couple of weeks ago, as Australia began the Ashes without Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood - two of the finest fast bowlers of their generation - the old conversation resurfaced: why do fast bowlers break down so often, and what, if anything,



can be done about it? The brutal truth is that bowling seriously fast means living permanently on the edge of what the skeleton, soft tissue, ligaments, tendons and nervous system can endure. Speed comes at a price, and the bill usually arrives in two instalments: once in adolescence, when bones are still growing, and then around 30, when the years of accumulated impact finally catch up.

Cummins knows both chapters intimately. As a prodigiously quick teenager, he suffered lumbar stress fractures - tiny cracks in the lower spine caused by the explosive twist and arch of the delivery stride. He missed almost two full years. Now, at 32, he is in the second danger zone, managing a body that has carried an enormous workload as captain and strike bowler. Hazlewood's troubles have had more to do with soft tissue - side strains, hamstrings, shoulders - the classic toll borne by a tall man repeatedly bracing against huge ground-reaction forces.

History is littered with similar stories. Dennis Lillee was told in 1973 that multiple spinal stress fractures had ended his career. A relentless two-year schedule with no proper off season had broken him. He rebuilt himself through pioneering strength work, remodelled his action and returned stronger, eventually claiming a world-record tally. I know no one with such iron will.

Dale Steyn, among the most electrifying bowlers of the 21st century, alongside Jasprit Bumrah, Mark Wood and Kagiso Rabada, fractured part of his shoulder blade in 2016; the screw inserted to fix it marked the beginning of the end, sadly. Bumrah and Cameron Green have recently undergone surgery involving screws and titanium wire to bind vertebrae together to stabilise stress fractures. Very few men of pace seem to avoid the inevitable.

ESPNCricinfo

Downtown Heroes Football Club Honours Azim Parvez for Historic Achievement with the Indian National Team

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 03: Downtown Heroes FC proudly honoured Azim Parvez, a former academy player of the club, for his remarkable contribution to Indian football as a member of the national team that won the SAFF Cup and secured qualification for the AFC Asian Cup 2026, set to take place in Saudi Arabia.

Azim's achievement marks a monumental milestone not only for Jammu & Kashmir but also for Downtown Heroes FC, as he emerges as one of the region's brightest examples of talent, discipline, and perseverance. Rising from the grassroots through the Downtown Heroes FC Academy, his inspirational journey continues to motivate young footballers across the valley.

Speaking on the occasion, the club leadership expressed immense pride:

"Azim's success is a testament



to the power of opportunity and perseverance. To see a player who trained within our academy structure reach the biggest stages of Asian football is truly a proud moment for the entire Downtown Heroes FC family."

The Chairman of Downtown Heroes FC Irfan Shahmiri added: "This is a major achievement for our club. It reinforces our mission to prepare the youth of Kashmir for a professional future in sports."

Downtown Heroes FC also reaffirmed its commitment to nurturing local talent, strengthening youth development, and creating pathways for aspiring players to excel at national and international levels.

The club extends its heartfelt congratulations to Azim Parvez on this historic accomplishment and wishes him continued success as he represents the nation and inspires the next generation of footballers.

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