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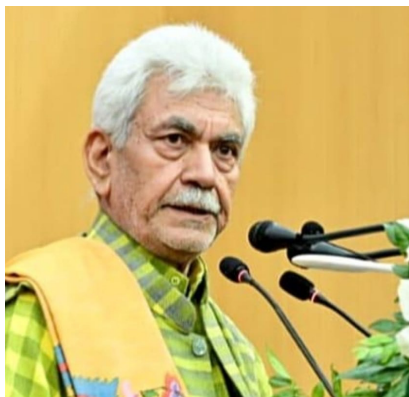
Defend Post-2019 Security Gains, Neutralise Every Terrorist & Enabler : LG Manoj Sinha

Chairs UT-level Security Conference in Jammu; calls for coordinated, AI-driven offensive against terror ecosystem

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 18: Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Shri Manoj Sinha, on Wednesday chaired a UT-level Security Conference in Jammu and issued a strong call to defend the security gains achieved since 2019 by decisively neutralising every terrorist, over-ground worker (OGW), supporter and ideologue operating across the Valley, forests, hills and villages.

Addressing senior officers from the J&K Police, Army, Intelligence agencies,



Civil Administration and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), the Lieutenant Governor said the conference, held under the guidance of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Hon'ble Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah, aims to strengthen a "whole-of-government" approach to counter terrorism in all its forms.

Referring to the recent DGPs/IGPs Conference, the Lieutenant Governor noted that extensive deliberations were held on the theme "Viksit Bharat: Security Dimensions," reflecting the Govern-

ment of India's commitment to modernising policing and security institutions to meet emerging challenges.

Emphasising coordinated action, the Lieutenant Governor said dismantling the entire terror ecosystem—including enablers and ideological networks—is essential to eliminate safe havens.

"The real security gains since 2019 must be defended. Every single terrorist and its supporter, whether operating in the Valley, forests, hills or villages, must be neutralised," he asserted.

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'Operation Sindoor' Lessons Key for Future Wars: Rajnath Urges IAF to Stay Combat-Ready

■ HT NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI, DEC 18: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday called upon Indian Air Force commanders to draw critical lessons from Operation Sindoor and remain fully prepared to meet future security challenges, saying the operation showcased India's ability to deliver swift, high-impact strikes with precision.

Addressing the Indian Air Force Commanders' Conclave here, Singh said the action against terrorist camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir underlined the Armed Forces' capacity for short-duration, decisive operations carried out with speed and seamless coordination.

Highlighting the IAF's central role in safeguarding national interests amid a rapidly evolving global security

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Delhi Red Fort Blast: NIA Arrests Ninth Accused, Uncovers 'Self-Sacrificial' Plot

■ HT NEWS DESK / KNO

NEW DELHI, DEC 18: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested a ninth accused in connection with the deadly blast near Delhi's Red Fort last month, further tightening the noose around the terror module behind the attack that claimed 11 lives and left several others injured.

Officials identified the newly arrested accused as Yasir Ahmad Dar of Shopian, who was

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Night chill tightens grip across Kashmir as 'Chillai Kalan' nears

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 17: Several parts of Kashmir recorded sub-zero minimum temperatures on Tuesday, while the Jammu region witnessed relatively milder night temperatures as 'Chillai Kalan', the Valley's harshest winter period, is set to begin on December 21.

In the Kashmir region, Srinagar recorded a low of 0.2 degrees Celsius, while the temperature at

Srinagar Airport settled at 0.0 degrees Celsius.

Qazigund recorded 0.8 degrees Celsius, Pahalgam 0.4 degrees Celsius and Kupwara minus 1.0 degrees Celsius.

Pampore and Baramulla recorded lows of minus 1.8 degrees Celsius each, while Awantipora registered the lowest temperature in the Valley at minus 3.8 degrees Celsius.

Pulwama recorded minus 3.2



degrees Celsius, Shopian minus 1.5 degrees Celsius and Budgam minus 0.8 degrees Celsius.

Anantnag recorded a minimum of minus 0.3 degrees Celsius, Bandipora minus 0.8 degrees Celsius and Ganderbal minus 0.1 degrees Celsius. Kokernag recorded 1.8 degrees Celsius, Kulgam 2.0 degrees Celsius and Sonamarg 2.1 degrees Celsius.

Tourist resort Gulmarg

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No Dilution of Safety as Nuclear Sector Opens to Private Players: Jitendra Singh

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, DEC 18: The government will not compromise on safety and safeguard mechanisms while opening the civil nuclear sector to private participation,

Union Minister of State for the Department of Atomic Energy Jitendra Singh assured the Rajya Sabha on Thursday during a discussion on the nuclear energy bill.

Moving the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of

Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Bill, Singh said the proposed legislation aims to scale up nuclear power generation while keeping strict surveillance and regulatory checks firmly in place. The Bill, which seeks to open

the tightly regulated nuclear sector to private players, was passed by the Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

Highlighting the importance of nuclear energy, the minister said it provides a reliable 24x7

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Centre Steps Up Tourism Drive in J&K with Big Push to Infrastructure and Promotion

■ HT NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI, DEC 18: The Centre is intensifying efforts to boost tourism in Jammu and Kashmir through multiple schemes focused on destination development, infrastructure creation and aggressive promotion, Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat told the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

Responding to a parliamentary question, Shekhawat said the Ministry of Tourism is promoting tourism destinations and experiences across the country, including Jammu and Kashmir, under its Domestic Promotion and Publicity, including Hospitality (DPPH), and Overseas Promotion and Publicity (OPP) schemes. These initiatives, he said, are

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Shopian Court Hands One-Year Jail Term in ₹5 Lakh Cheque Bounce Case

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN, DEC 18: In a significant ruling on cheque dishonour offences, a local court in Shopian has convicted a man for issuing a bounced cheque worth ₹5 lakh, sentencing him to one

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J&K charts major expansion plan of health services with NITI Aayog

Aayog assures full support for its time bound implementation

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 18: In a major push towards strengthening and expanding healthcare delivery across Jammu and Kashmir, a comprehensive roadmap for health sector reforms was today discussed by the Health & Medical Education Department with Dr.

V.K. Paul, Member, NITI Aayog, in the presence of Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo.

The high-level interaction focused on strategic interventions, technological integration, academic collaboration, and capacity augmentation aimed at ensuring equitable, accessible, and quality healthcare services across

all districts of the UT.

The meeting was attended by the Secretary, Health & Medical Education Department; Managing Director, National Health Mission; Director, SKIMS; Principals of Government Medical Colleges; Executive Director, SMVDIME; Director Health Services, Jammu/Kashmir; CEO, State Health Agen-

cy, besides other senior officers.

Addressing the meeting, Dr. V.K. Paul assured the UT of NITI Aayog's full support in strengthening institutional capacities and developing human resources. He advised the Department to implement the healthcare expansion plan through a clearly

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Defend Post-2019.....

Highlighting achievements over the past six years, Shri Sinha said the strengthened security grid and close coordination among the J&K Police, Army, Intelligence agencies and CAPFs have resulted in a significant decline in terrorist violence, the number of active terrorists and recruitment.

He further stressed that armed terrorists, their supporters, OGWs and elements intimidating common citizens must be dealt with equally.

“They must be made to pay a very heavy price for their actions,” the Lieutenant Governor warned.

Addressing evolving security challenges, Shri Sinha said the threat landscape has undergone profound changes, necessitating a shift from reactive to proactive strategies. He called for the adoption of advanced technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, to counter terrorism, terror financing, radicalisation and narco-terrorism.

The day-long UT-level Security Conference focused on strengthening intelligence capabilities, enhancing inter-agency coordination and building a next-generation security grid to tackle new-age threats effectively.

‘Operation Sindoor’.....

environment, the Defence Minister said public confidence in India's defence preparedness was clearly visible during attempts to target Indian installations, as citizens remained calm and reassured of the country's air defence capabilities.

Singh stressed the importance of continuously assessing an adversary's offensive and defensive strengths to maintain a decisive operational edge, urging commanders to stay vigilant against emerging and unconventional threats.

Referring to recent global and regional conflicts—including the Russia-Ukraine war, the Israel-Hamas conflict, the Balakot air strikes and Operation Sindoor—he said air power has become a defining element of modern warfare. Air power, he noted, now serves not only tactical objectives but also strategic messaging through speed, reach and precision.

The Defence Minister observed that 21st-century warfare is increasingly driven by technology and adaptability, with cyber operations, artificial intelligence, unmanned platforms, satellite-based surveillance and space capabilities playing an expanding role. Precision-guided weapons, real-time intelligence and data-centric decision-making, he added, are now integral to military planning.

Reiterating the government's commitment to strengthening national security, Singh said the proposed Sudarshan Chakra air defence initiative, announced earlier by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, would significantly enhance protection of critical national assets. He also described the development of indigenous jet engines as a national mission.

Singh said the government is actively partnering with private industry, start-ups and MSMEs to modernise the Armed Forces through initiatives such as iDEX and ADITI. As of November 2025, he noted, 672 winners had emerged from 565 challenges under iDEX, including 96 aligned with Indian Air Force requirements.

Describing Operation Sindoor as a model of tri-services coordination, the Defence Minister emphasised the need for greater jointness to enhance operational effectiveness. He also lauded the IAF's contributions to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions, both within the country and overseas.

The conclave was attended by Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan and senior IAF commanders. Air Chief Marshal A P Singh briefed the Defence Minister on the force's current operational preparedness.

Delhi Red Fort.....

taken into custody from New Delhi under relevant provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 in case RC-21/2025/NIA/DLI, sources told Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

According to the NIA, investigations have revealed Yasir's active involvement in the conspiracy that led to the high-intensity explosion on November 10. The agency said he had sworn allegiance and taken an oath to carry out “self-sacrificial” operations, indicating deep ideological and operational commitment to the plot.

Probe findings further suggest that Yasir was in constant contact with other accused, including Mufti Irfan and Dr Umar Un Nabi, the suicide bomber who detonated the explosives while driving the vehicle near the historic Red Fort area.

The anti-terror agency said it is working in close coordination with central and state agencies to unravel the entire terror network, its logistics, and support systems. As part of the ongoing investigation, the NIA recently carried out extensive searches across Jammu and Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh, seizing digital devices and other incriminating materials.

Earlier, similar searches were conducted at the premises of the prime accused, Dr Muzammil Shakeel Ganie and Dr Shaheen Saeed, at the Al Falah University complex and other locations in Faridabad, Haryana.

So far, nine accused have been arrested, including several medical professionals, pointing to what investigators have described as a “white-collar terror module.” Following the

arrest of co-conspirators Dr Adeel and Dr Muzammil, Jammu and Kashmir Police recovered over 2,900 kilograms of explosives from Faridabad, marking a major breakthrough in the case.

The blast investigation was transferred to the NIA by the Ministry of Home Affairs soon after the attack. The agency said it is tracing every link, associate, and angle connected to the incident to expose the full scope of the conspiracy behind one of the deadliest attacks in the national capital in recent times.

Night chill.....

recorded a low of 1.6 degrees Celsius, while Zojila Pass recorded the coldest temperature in the region at minus 17 degrees Celsius.

In the Jammu region, Jammu city recorded a minimum temperature of 11.0 degrees Celsius, while Jammu Airport recorded 11.5 degrees Celsius. Katra recorded 12.1 degrees Celsius, Banihal 5.7 degrees Celsius and Bhaderwah 5.0 degrees Celsius.

Batote recorded 9.5 degrees Celsius, Udhampur 6.1 degrees Celsius, Ramban 8.3 degrees Celsius, Samba 7.1 degrees Celsius and Rajouri 3.0 degrees Celsius. Kathua and Doda recorded 8.8 degrees Celsius each, while Kishtwar recorded 8.6 degrees Celsius and Reasi 9.7 degrees Celsius.

In Ladakh, Leh recorded a minimum temperature of minus 3.4 degrees Celsius.(KNS).

No Dilution....

power supply, unlike several other renewable sources that are intermittent in nature. He noted that India is increasingly positioning itself as a global leader rather than a follower in areas such as clean energy, climate action and energy security.

“In the last 10–11 years, India has assumed a global role for itself. We are no longer following others; we are offering cues for others to follow,” Singh told the House.

He said that since 2014, the government has prioritised global concerns including clean and sustainable energy, with a clear push towards reducing dependence on fossil fuels and petroleum resources. Nuclear energy, he added, is a critical component of this transition.

Singh informed the House that significant steps have been taken to strengthen the nuclear sector. The budget of the Department of Atomic Energy has increased from ₹13,879 crore before 2014 to ₹37,483 crore in the current financial year. He also recalled that in 2015, the government allowed joint ventures in the nuclear sector, though initially limited to public sector undertakings.

Further expansion followed in 2017 with Cabinet approval for setting up 10 nuclear reactors. In September 2025, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone for four nuclear reactors, he added.

The minister said India's nuclear power capacity has nearly doubled from 4.7 GW in 2014 to 8.9 GW at present. However, nuclear energy currently accounts for only about 3 per cent of the country's total power generation. To raise this share to at least 10 per cent by 2047, the government has launched a dedicated nuclear energy mission in the current budget.

A key element of the mission, Singh said, is the entry of private players into the nuclear sector, supported by robust safeguards and monitoring systems. The Bill also provides statutory status to the nuclear regulatory board to strengthen oversight.

“Let me assure the House that no compromise will be made on the safeguard mechanism,” the minister said, reiterating the government's commitment to safety and regulation as India expands its nuclear energy footprint.

Centre Steps.....

aimed at attracting both domestic and international tourists and increasing overall footfall.

The minister said the Union government is also extending financial and technical support for strengthening tourism infrastructure in the Union Territory through central sector schemes such as Swadesh Darshan, the Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD), and Assistance to Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development (ACATID).

Under the Swadesh Darshan scheme, several projects were sanctioned in Jammu and Kashmir under the Himalayan Circuit during 2016–17. These include development of the Jammu–Srinagar–Pahalgam–Bhagwati Nagar–Anantnag–Salamabad Uri–Kargil–Leh circuit at a sanctioned cost of ₹77.33 crore, with ₹67.37 crore released, and development of tourist facilities along the Jammu–Rajouri–Shopian–Pulwama circuit for ₹81.60 crore, of which ₹67.35 crore has been released.

Shekhawat said other projects under the scheme include reconstruction of tourism assets damaged in the 2014 floods under the Prime Minister's Development Package, sanctioned at ₹90.43 crore with ₹74.70 crore released, and development works at Mantalai and Sudhmahadev at a cost of ₹91.99 crore, nearly fully released.

Tourism infrastructure has also been developed along the Anantnag–Pulwama–Kishtwar–Pahalgam–Zanskar–Padum–Daksum–Ranjit Sagar Dam circuit at a cost of ₹86.39 crore, with ₹69.95 crore released, and the Gulmarg–Baramulla–Kupwara–Kargil–Leh circuit at a cost of ₹91.84 crore, with ₹85.80 crore released, the minister said.

Under the PRASHAD scheme, ₹40.46 crore

was sanctioned for development works at the Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar, against which ₹34.30 crore has been released. In addition, a sound-and-light show at Nigeen Lake was approved under ACATID at a cost of ₹5 crore, with ₹3.08 crore released, he added.

Shopian Court.....

year of simple imprisonment and ordering substantial monetary compensation to the complainant.

The judgment was pronounced on December 17 by the Court of the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Shopian, in the case Shahnawaz Ahmed Bhat vs Bashir Ahmed Bhat. The court found the accused, Bashir Ahmed Bhat of Bongam, Shopian, guilty under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act.

According to the court record, the complainant Shahnawaz Ahmed Bhat stated that the accused had issued a cheque of ₹5 lakh in September 2018 towards a financial liability arising from joint work undertaken by both parties. When the cheque was presented at the J&K Bank, HR Shopian branch, it was returned unpaid with the endorsement “Exceeds Arrangement.”

The complainant subsequently issued a statutory demand notice, which the court held was duly served on the accused. During the trial, multiple witnesses were examined, and the court observed that the accused failed to rebut the mandatory legal presumption of liability. The defence plea that the cheque had been lost or misused was also rejected.

Holding that the cheque was issued in discharge of a legally enforceable debt, the court sentenced the accused to one year of simple imprisonment and imposed a fine of ₹10,000. In addition, the court directed him to pay the cheque amount of ₹5 lakh along with six per cent interest from the date of issuance, besides ₹50,000 as compensation to the complainant.

The court also cancelled the bail bonds of the convicted person and ordered his immediate custody, directing that he be lodged in District Jail, Pulwama.

J&K charts.....

defined hub-and-spoke model, with institutions frozen for specific roles and responsibilities. Emphasizing structured execution, he called for clearly detailing institutional activities to ensure time-bound progress toward predefined goals.

Dr. Paul also stressed the need for a flexible and collaborative framework, enabling institutions to seek support from one another and adopt best practices nationally. He urged the Department to go beyond the Terms of Reference of the high-level committee constituted by the UT and explore the establishment of advanced facilities such as Eye Banks, strengthening Forensic Medicine, and upgrading Emergency and Trauma Care services across healthcare institutions.

Calling for a pragmatic yet ambitious approach, Dr. Paul assured that NITI Aayog would facilitate linkages with premier national institutions and provide expert guidance to help J&K achieve its healthcare objectives.

On the occasion, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo sought NITI Aayog's guidance on strategies to retain senior faculty in medical colleges, attract talent from outside the UT, and extend specialized healthcare services to far-flung, mountainous, and border areas.

He also acknowledged NITI Aayog's crucial role in guiding the UT's health sector reforms, particularly over the past few months, which resulted in the addition of dozens of post-graduate seats and hundreds of MBBS seats across medical colleges in J&K.

The Secretary, Health & Medical Education Department, Dr Syed Abid Rashid Shah presented a comprehensive overview of the initiatives undertaken following sustained consultations with Dr. Paul over the past several months.

He outlined progress in expanding tertiary healthcare services to district hospitals, augmentation of UG, PG, and DNB seats, and development of a robust governance framework. He also detailed the proposed roles, responsibilities, accountability mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation systems, and implementation timelines.

The Executive Director, SMVDIME, Dr. Yashpal Sharma, made a detailed presentation on the proposed healthcare interventions envisaged with active support from NITI Aayog.

Key interventions deliberated during the meeting included the strengthening of critical care services through Tele-ICU rollout in government hospitals under a hub-and-spoke model. It was revealed during this meeting that the Tele-ICU tender, vetted by Team NITI Aayog, has already been floated. To address diagnostic gaps, particularly in peripheral and underserved areas, the UT also plans to implement Tele-Radiology services, for which the tender is in the final stages.

The Health Department is also exploring the establishment of a Dentistry Department, while the creation of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery and Pedodontics departments in newly established GMCs is under active consideration, the meeting was informed.

Dr. Paul was further apprised about the constitution of a high-level committee tasked with devising collaborative models among AIIMS Jammu, SKIMS Soura, GMC Jammu, GMC Srinagar, and the newly established GMCs. The committee was tasked to focus on cardiology, cancer care, mental health, telemedicine, tele-

radiology, and academic integration, including enhancement of UG, PG, and DNB training capacities.

The Department also sought NITI Aayog's assistance in taking up the matter with the National Medical Commission (NMC) for designating District Hospitals as Associated Hospitals of Government Medical Colleges, a move aimed at improving clinical exposure and decentralizing healthcare delivery.

Detailed deliberations were also held on strengthening Drug De-addiction, Mental Health, and Social Health priorities, with a draft action plan titled “Circle of Care”, prepared by Dr. Arshad Hussain, Professor of Psychiatry, GMC Srinagar, submitted to NITI Aayog for its consideration.

In another major development, facili-

tated by NITI Aayog, it was learnt that the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) has agreed to provide training to transplant teams along with continued technical support and mentoring. In this regard, a formal request has been submitted by the Health & Medical Education Department seeking support for establishing Liver Transplant facilities in the UT.

The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation of NITI Aayog's continued guidance and support in transforming Jammu & Kashmir's healthcare landscape through technology-driven solutions, academic collaboration, and systemic capacity building, ensuring accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare for its citizens across the length and breadth of the UT.

DIC Kulgam conducts awareness cum orientation programme on Marketing & Entrepreneurship under PM Vishwakarma



■ FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, DEC 18: District Industries Centre (DIC) Kulgam in collaboration with Ministry of MSME, Srinagar today conducted an awareness cum orientation programme on Marketing and Entrepreneurship under PM Vishwakarma.

Additional District Development Commissioner Kulgam, Mohd Altaf Khan presided as chief guest of programme.

General Manager, District Industries Centre, Kulgam, Dr Bashir Ahmad Lone; Assistant Director MSME, Saheel Alaqband, Principal Polytechnic,

Principal ITI, Faculty Members of IUST, District CSC Head, Representatives from MSME Srinagar, Industrial Promotion Officer and other officials of DIC Kulgam were present in the programme.

General Manager, District Industries Centre, Kulgam gave awareness on the PM Vishwakarma scheme disseminating information among traditional artisans and craftsmen about the various benefits available under the scheme and encouraged them to avail the benefits.

Assistant Director, MSME, in his inaugural

address, sensitized participants about importance of marketing and branding of the products made by the traditional skilled artisans cum craftsmen.

The technical session, led by the faculty of IUST, emphasized on Strategies for Effective Product Promotion, Branding, Packaging, Showcasing, Social Media Marketing and Community Based Events and Effective Costing, Budgeting and Inventory Management for Small Businesses to upgrade the skills of PM Vishwakarmas.

The PM Vishwakarma artisans were also felicitated at the end of the programme.

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Satish Sharma reviews functioning of key departments in Kupwara

HT NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA, DEC 18: In continuation with the government's public outreach programme, Minister for FCS&CA, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, IT, Science and Technology, Satish Sharma, along with Advisor to the Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani today reviewed the progress and performance of several departments during a meeting held at Kupwara.

The meeting was attended by MLA Kupwara Mir Mohammad Fayaz, MLA Karnah Javid Ahmad Mirchal, MLA Langate Khurshid Ahmad Sheikh, Deputy Commissioner Kupwara Shrikant Suse, ADC Handwara, RTO Kashmir, Joint Director FCS&CA and Joint Director Youth Services & Sports, Chief Planning Officer and other concerned district officers.

While reviewing the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department, the Minister

was informed that a total of 6,67,755 beneficiaries have been registered under NFSA and non-NFSA categories in the district. It was further informed that 267.81 metric tonnes of rice have currently been stocked at the main FCS&CA depot at Bumhama. Adequate stock of rice, atta and sugar have already been pre-positioned in border and snow-bound areas, including Karnah, Machil, Keran, Budnamal, Jungund and Kumkadi, which are being serviced through 170 centres.

The Minister emphasized the need to ensure an uninterrupted supply of essential commodities, particularly in snow-bound and hard-to-reach areas, so that the residents do not face any inconvenience during harsh weather conditions.

Reviewing the Transport Department, the ARTO Kupwara apprised the Minister of the number of passenger buses, trucks and cabs operating in the district. It was informed that ₹15.91 crore have been realized



during the ongoing financial year 2025-26 through fees, taxes, fitness and passenger tax. Additionally, ₹5 lakh have been disbursed under the Road Accident Victim Fund during the current year.

Responding to demand of public representatives, the Minister

announced the issuance of government buses to all Assembly Constituencies of the district to facilitate daily commuting for the public.

Regarding solarization of government buildings, it was informed that 398 buildings have been solarized so far, and

smart meters have been installed in 17 buildings. Additionally, 2,798 solar street lights have been installed during the financial year 2024-25 while 344 more have been proposed for installation in the current financial year. It was also informed that 13 solar agricul-

ture pumps have been allotted in the district, of which, 10 have already been installed. He also directed the concerned officers to ensure installation of solar lights in all shrines and stadiums of the district. Meanwhile, various solar lights were issued on the spot to all 6 constituencies of the district.

Regarding Hydro Power Plants, the Minister stressed upon the concerned agencies to speed up the execution of work on these projects, which shall augment the power scenario in the district.

Regarding formulation of plans, the Minister enjoined upon all the officers to ensure utmost coordination with the concerned MLAs while making plans for different works.

The Minister also reviewed the activities of the Youth Services & Sports Department in the district.

The Advisor to Chief Minister, while speaking on the occasion, asked the officers to work in close synergy with the elect-

ed representatives while formulating and executing the government schemes and initiatives.

Earlier, the Chief Planning Officer Kupwara presented a detailed district profile of Kupwara.

Afterwards, the Minister, along with the Advisor to Chief, distributed solar lights among all the constituencies of the district.

Later, the Minister, along with Advisor to Chief Minister, had a field visit during which he inspected Playground of HSS Kupwara and Sports Stadium Galizoo.

MLA Kupwara was also present on the occasion.

The Minister directed the officers to prepare a comprehensive DPR for construction of State of Art Sports facilities at these two grounds.

The Minister met several deputations and directed the officers to ensure time-bound redressal of all their genuine grievances at the earliest.

Allegations of Illegal Soil Extraction from Saffron Land Rock Konibal Pampore; DC Assures Action

MUSHTAQ UL ISLAM

PAMPORE, DEC 18: Serious allegations of large-scale illegal extraction of soil from saffron-bearing land at Konibal, Pampore, have triggered concern among locals and agricultural stakeholders, as the activity is believed to pose a serious threat to the region's centuries-old saffron cultivation.

According to residents of the area, heavy quantities of soil are being unlawfully excavated from saffron fields and smuggled towards Ramban and Jammu, where it is allegedly sold at a rate of nearly ₹20,000 per dumper. Locals claim that the illegal activity has been going on for some time and is being carried out brazenly during night hours. Three individuals, whose identities have been withheld, are alleged to be directly involved in the operation. Residents allege that these persons frequently spend several nights every week at Konibal and carry out the extraction of soil from saffron land without any fear of action.

The alleged extraction is a clear violation of the standing orders issued by the Hon'ble Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, who has categorically prohibited the removal of soil from saffron land in Pampore in order to safeguard the fragile ecosystem and protect the unique crop for



which the area is internationally renowned.

Taking cognizance of the complaint, the Deputy Commissioner Pulwama has assured that the matter will be looked into. Responding to the allegations, the DC stated, "Yes, I will look into it and review the Action Taken Report (ATR)." In official administrative terminology, an Action Taken Report (ATR) refers to a formal account of the steps initiated by the concerned authorities after verification of the complaint.

The assurance from the district administration has brought some relief to the locals. However, residents have stressed that mere assurances are not enough and have urged the authorities to take swift and stringent action against those involved. They warned that continued illegal extraction could cause irreversible damage to Pampore's saffron fields, threatening both livelihoods and the cultural heritage associated with the prized crop.

Locals have appealed to the administration to conduct ground verification, deploy enforcement teams, and ensure strict implementation of existing orders to preserve the iconic saffron landscape of Pampore.

Research Scholar Dr.Sajjad-ul-Akbar Wani Bags Prestigious Farmer of the Year Award 2025

DR. AB QAYOOM

KUPWARA, DEC 18: Dr. Sajjad-ul-Akbar Wani, a renowned progressive farmer and agricultural innovator from Village Chandhara in Pampore tehsil of Pulwama district, has brought laurels to Jammu and Kashmir by being selected for the prestigious Farmer of the Year (FOTY) Award 2025 by Krishi Jagran, one of India's leading agricultural media platforms.

A distinguished Ph.D. research scholar, gold medalist, and UNO award winner, Dr. Wani is widely recognised for his outstanding contributions to sustainable agriculture, environmental conservation, and agri-innovation in Kashmir. An alumnus of the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), he is presently associated with the KVK/ETCPulwama, where he has emerged as a role model for the farming community.

Dr. Wani attributes his success to the guidance and motivation of eminent academicians and mentors, including Vice Chancellor SKUAST-K Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, his spiritual mentor

Habibullah Beigh (Habba Sob), former Director Education Prof. Shaeel Ahmad Wani, Prof. Imtiyaz Murtaza from the Basic Sciences faculty, and the present Director Extension Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, whose continued support has played a vital role in shaping his journey.

Professionally an agricultural scientist, environmental researcher, and agripreneur, Dr. Wani has been associated with several reputed institutions such as Bundelkhand University, Jhansi; Vikram University; Vinayaka Mission University, Salem; Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU), Hyderabad; and SKUAST-K. His specialised research includes establishing breeding records of migratory species in Kashmir wetlands, and he has represented India at international forums, including the CMS COP-13, focusing on the conservation of migratory species. Driven by his inspiring slogan, "Don't Panic... Go Organic," Dr. Wani has been at the forefront of promoting organic and natural farming practices. He consistently advocates reducing the use of chemical pesticides and fungicides,



encouraging farmers particularly the youth to adopt eco-friendly and traditional practices such as vermicomposting and cow dung-based organic inputs. His efforts have significantly contributed to improved soil health, water conservation, enhanced crop productivity, and

long-term environmental sustainability. While announcing the award, Krishi Jagran lauded Dr. Wani's unwavering dedication to responsible farming, conservation of natural resources, and community welfare. The Farmer of the Year Awards honour individuals who not only

nurture the land but also inspire future generations through innovation and sustainable agricultural practices.

Dr. Wani will be felicitated with the District Honour during the Farmer of the Year Awards 2025, scheduled from December 7 to 9, 2025, at ICAR-IARI, Pusa Grounds, New Delhi, with the main felicitation ceremony to be held on December 8. He has also been invited to participate in national-level seminars, panel discussions, networking sessions, and exhibitions during the three-day event.

Reflecting on his journey, Dr. Wani expressed gratitude to his wife and in-laws for their unwavering support, particularly when he chose agripreneurship over a conventional career path. He also credits spiritual guidance and teachings that regard agriculture as a noble source of sustenance and livelihood. The achievement has been widely appreciated by farmers, academicians, and agricultural experts, who see Dr. Sajjad-ul-Akbar Wani's journey as a beacon of hope and inspiration for the farming community and youth across Jammu and Kashmir.

KU's IMFA concludes maiden annual art camp 2025

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR DEC 18: The Shri Pran Krishan Koul Institute of Music & Fine Arts (IMFA), University of Kashmir (KU), concluded its maiden 'Art Fiesta' Annual Art Camp 2025, organised from December 12 to 18 at the Main Campus under the theme "Viksit Bharat 2047: Bold Vision, Brighter Future."

The camp aimed to provide a collaborative platform for young artists to explore contemporary themes through visual and performing arts while encouraging dialogue between tradition and modern expression.

The valedictory function, held today, featured an exhibition showcasing artworks created by participants during the week-long camp, along with cultural and musical performances by IMFA students.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Chancellor, KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, appreciated the initiative and said, "Art plays a vital role in shaping reflective and socially conscious minds. Platforms like this camp nurture creativity while encouraging students to engage with national visions through artistic expression."

Registrar, KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, while going through artworks, said



that such academic-cultural initiatives strengthen the university's creative ecosystem and provide students with meaningful opportunities to develop discipline, confidence, and artistic skills beyond the classroom.

Dean, School of Arts, Languages and Literature KU, Prof. Aejaz Mohammad Sheikh, said that the Art Camp highlights the value of interdisciplinary artistic practice, while Dean Students Welfare, KU, Prof. Pervez Ahmed, said that such initiatives encourage students' creative expression and holistic development.

Earlier, in his welcome address,

Principal, IMFA KU, Dr. Habibullah Shah, said that the Art Fiesta was envisioned as a space where students could experiment freely, learn collaboratively, and respond creatively to ideas shaping nation's future. He expressed satisfaction over the enthusiastic participation and the quality of work produced during the camp.

The valedictory event was attended by deans, heads, faculty members, students, and art enthusiasts from across the campus. The formal vote of thanks was presented by Mr. Naushad Hussain, senior instructor IMFA KU and event coordinator.

Awareness programme on Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace held at Kulgam

FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, DEC 18: In compliance with the directions of the J&K LSA, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Kulgam, under the Chairmanship of Aijaz Ahmad Khan, Chairman District Legal Services Authority (Pr. District & Sessions Judge) Kulgam,



organized an awareness programme on Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2013, at South Kash Coaching Centre Kulgam, today.

During the event, Deputy LADC and Asst. LADCs delivered lectures on the significance of Prevention of Women from Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act and also provided detailed information on the various schemes introduced by NALSA. The programme was attended by the DLSA staff, LADCs, PLVs, students, and teachers of the institution.



Javid Ahmad Dar calls for vigorous awareness campaign on Agriculture, allied schemes

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 18: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today addressed the Multi-Stakeholder Platform Meet-2 under the Jammu & Kashmir Comprehensive Agricultural Development Programme (JKCIP/HADP) at Kisan Kendra, Talab Tillo, Jammu.

The Minister highlighted the importance of such platforms in bringing together the farmers, FPOs, government departments, agri-entrepreneurs, financial institutions, researchers and civil society to collectively work for growth of agriculture and allied sectors. He reiterated that agriculture remains the backbone of Jammu & Kashmir's economy and stressed the need to



empower the farmers for sustainable regional development.

He emphasized the launching of a vigorous awareness campaign on agriculture and allied sector schemes to ensure maximum outreach and benefits to the farming community. He underlined the need

to promote market-driven production, strengthen market linkages, reduce dependency on middlemen, encourage public-private partnerships and foster inclusive decision-making involving small and marginal farmers, women and youth.

The Minister also called for replication of successful innovations and technologies in agriculture and horticulture, stating that the goal is to transform the traditional farming into a modern, income-oriented and market-driven system.

Later, the Minister visited the Rural Development Department Jammu, interacted with the officials and reviewed the progress of ongoing developmental works in Jammu division.

The event was attended by the Mission Director JKCIP/HADP, Directors of Agriculture,

Horticulture and Animal Husbandry, MD JK AGRO, experts from SKUAST-J and Universities, representatives of financial institutions including J&K Bank and PNB, members of the Kissan Advisory Board, farmers, FPOs and budding entrepreneurs.

DC Doda reviews implementation of power sector schemes

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

DODA, DECEMBER 18: Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh today chaired a meeting to assess the progress of the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) and other power sector initiatives being implemented in the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner undertook a comprehensive appraisal of both the physical and financial progress of RDSS works. The review covered key components including feeder bifurcation, loss-reduction measures, strengthening of distribution infrastructure and installation of smart meters.

Emphasis was laid on maintaining quality standards and adhering strictly to prescribed timelines to achieve the scheme's objective of improving the efficiency and reliability of power supply.

A power point presentation was delivered highlighting the major works executed under RDSS so far. The presentation included updates on the replacement of wooden poles, feeder-wise completion status, current power supply status, DTR augmentation and replacement and the status of execution of MCM (Million Circuit Meter) quantities across the district.

The review also covered the status of STD station reviews, tower installation works and progress on other critical power infrastructure projects.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned agencies to accord top priority to completion of solarization projects on priority. He further stressed that cabling works and installation of smart meters should be implemented simultaneously to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure



efficient execution.

Directing the executing agencies to expedite ongoing works, particularly in remote and winter-prone areas, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need for timely resolution of bottlenecks through effective inter-departmental coordination.

Officers were instructed to carry out regular monitoring, ensure proper field-level supervision and submit periodic progress reports to avoid delays.

The meeting was attended by the CPO, SE PDD, GMDIC, Executive Engineers (XENS) PDD, SDM Thathri and SDM Gandoh, AEEs, AEs, JE of PDD and other concerned officers and officials.

DC Samba reviews preparations for Ratkhada Mela at Ghagwal Temple

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SAMBA, DECEMBER 18: Deputy Commissioner Samba, Ayushi Sudan today convened a comprehensive review meeting at the DC Office to evaluate and finalize preparations for the forthcoming Ratkhada Mela, scheduled to commence from December 27 at the revered Shree Narsingh Dev Ji Temple, Ghagwal.

Recognizing the cultural and devotional importance of the Ratkhada Mela, the Deputy Commissioner issued detailed directives to all concerned departments, emphasizing the critical need for meticulous planning, robust inter-departmental coordination and timely execution of arrangements to facilitate the seamless conduct of this major religious event.

During the extensive deliberations, the DC conducted a thorough assessment of multifaceted preparatory measures spanning security protocols, sanitation infrastructure, traffic management systems and the provision of essential public amenities.

Special emphasis was placed on maintaining stringent law and order, ensuring exemplary cleanliness standards and orchestrating smooth vehicular movement in anticipation of the substantial influx of pilgrims during the religious festivities.

The Deputy Commissioner meticulously reviewed arrangements pertaining to uninterrupted drinking water supply, adequate deployment of mobile toilet facilities, comprehensive medical and emergency response systems, fire safety mechanisms and other critical services essential for public welfare.

Strategic directions were issued to designate appropriate spaces for amusement rides and temporary markets while ensuring these do not impede vehicular flow or compromise public convenience, reflecting a balanced approach between tradition and public safety.

The Deputy Commissioner unequivocally stressed that seamless inter-departmental synergy remains paramount to orchestrating a safe, orderly and memorable Ratkhada Mela that honors the religious sentiments of devotees while upholding the highest standards of administrative excellence.

The meeting was attended by ADC Samba, Jagdish Singh, ACR Samba, Ajay Bharti, SDM Ghagwal, K.J.S Bali, Executive Engineers from various departments and heads of Health, Fire & Emergency Services, Public Health Engineering, Food Safety and Tourism departments and members of the Shree Narsingh Dev Ji Temple Committee, Ghagwal.

District Administration Samba organises Volleyball, Kabaddi matches under NMBA

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SAMBA, DECEMBER 18: To promote a drug-free society, the District Administration Samba in collaboration with the Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS), today organized Volleyball and Kabaddi matches under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan.

The sports events were held at Rajpura Zone, Ghagwal and Government Higher Secondary School Gho Brahmana, Zone Ramgarh.

The initiative witnessed enthusiastic participation from local youth and students, highlighting the positive role of sports in channelizing energy towards healthy and constructive activities.

JKEDI trains 258 entrepreneurs under RAMP, concludes MDPs in 13 districts

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU/SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 18: The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) on Thursday successfully concluded the fourth batch of Management Development Programmes (MDPs) across 13 districts of the Union Territory under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme. The scheme is funded by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, and implemented by the Industries and Commerce Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

The six-day intensive MDPs, conducted from December 12, 2025, were held simultaneously in Anantnag, Bandipora, Baramulla, Budgam, Ganderbal, Kulgam, Pulwama, Shopian, Srinagar, Jammu, Kathua, Reasi and Udhampur. A total of 258 aspiring and existing entrepreneurs successfully completed the 30-hour structured training programme, which comprised expert interactions and field exposure visits. Notably, 243 women entrepreneurs participated in the batch, marking a significant stride towards gender inclusivity in the region's entrepreneurial

ecosystem. The programmes were conducted by the respective District Centres of JKEDI under the overall supervision of the Director, JKEDI.

The MDPs were designed to enhance managerial, financial and strategic competencies of participants, enabling them to scale up their enterprises, improve competitiveness and develop sustainable business models. The initiative aligns with the broader objectives of the RAMP programme, which seeks to strengthen and modernise the MSME ecosystem across the country.

The carefully curated curriculum, developed by subject

matter experts, covered key areas including business planning, marketing strategies, use of digital tools, financial literacy, statutory compliance, innovation and leadership development. The training also featured mentorship sessions, case studies, interactive discussions and hands-on workshops to provide participants with practical, real-world business insights. Sector-specific sessions formed an important component of the MDPs, with experts from the District Industries Centres (DICs) and the Labour and Employment Department interacting with participants to

share domain-specific guidance. In addition, field visits to successful enterprises were organised to provide firsthand exposure to operational best practices.

The programmes were regularly monitored by designated Range and Reviewing Officers, who interacted with participants to assess training quality and gather feedback, ensuring effective implementation and impact. The successful conclusion of the MDPs in 13 districts reflects JKEDI's continued commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and building local capacity to drive economic growth in Jammu and Kashmir.

District Panel approves 4 CLU cases in Doda

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

DODA, DECEMBER 18: Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh today chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee on Change of Land Use (CLU) to review and decide upon the applications received from different parts of the district.

During the meeting, five CLU cases were taken up for discussion of which four were approved after detailed scrutiny. Each case was examined thoroughly to verify compliance with the provisions applicable under rules and regulations.

The Deputy Commissioner



emphasized that all CLU applications must be processed in a transparent, objective and time-bound manner to promote planned development and curb unauthorized land conversion.

The Deputy Commissioner also directed the concerned departments to expedite verification processes, maintain accurate and complete documentation, and strengthen inter-departmental coordination to ensure prompt and error-free disposal of cases.

He further stressed the need to strike a balance between developmental requirements, environmental sustainability and the protection of agricultural land.

The meeting was attended by the ADC, DFO, CEO Bhaderwah Development Authority, CPO, concerned Tehsildars, Executive Engineers (XENS) and other revenue and departmental officials.

2-day District-Level Philately Exhibition commences at Udhampur

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

UDHAMPUR, DECEMBER 18: A two-day District-Level Philately Exhibition Udhampex-2025, organized by the Department of Posts, commenced today at Riwayat Hall, showcasing India's rich culture and civilization through postage stamps.

Deputy Commissioner, Saloni Rai graced the occasion as the chief guest and formally inaugurated



the exhibition in the presence of Assistant Director Philately, J&K Circle, G M Shah, Superintendent of Post Offices Udhampur Postal Division, Rajeev Sharma and other officers of the Postal Department.

The exhibition featured an impressive display of over 2,000 postal stamps from different periods, highlighting diverse themes and historical milestones.

In her inaugural address, the Deputy Commissioner stated that the main objective of the exhibition is to generate awareness among the general public about the importance of the Post Office and the educational value of postage stamps. She informed that the exhibition was open to all and highlighted that postage stamps, covering various themes, represent a wealth of knowledge. During the two days exhibition, the Postal Department is going to organise varied activities for children, including letter-writing competitions, stamp design contests, quiz competitions and a philately workshop to encourage young minds to develop an interest in philately.

Handicrafts Dept to Celebrate Jashn-e-Chillai Kalan with Iconic Pheran on Dec 20-21 at Kashmir Haat

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 18: As the Valley prepares to welcome Chilla-i-Kalan—the 40-day harshest winter period beginning December 21—the Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, is set to organize 'Jashn-e-Chilla-i-Kalan', a vibrant cultural and craft celebration coinciding with Pheran Day on December 21.

Sharing details, a spokesman of the department said that the two-day event, scheduled for December 20 and 21 at Kashmir Haat (Numaish Gah), Srinagar, will showcase the rich legacy of Kashmiri handicrafts through dedicated stalls highlighting traditional Zari (Tilla) and Aari (hook) embroidery, which are hallmark embellishments of the iconic Pheran.

He said that renowned craftsmen and artisans from different districts of the Valley have been invited to participate



in the event. The festival will feature live craft demonstrations, exhibition-cum-sale of hand-embroidered Pherans, Pashmina shawls, woollen wear, and other winter apparel, allowing visitors

to witness the intricate craftsmanship firsthand and interact directly with master artisans.

The spokesman added that the initiative aims to revive interest

in traditional winter attire, promote local artisans and weavers, and provide them a platform to showcase their skills while generating livelihood opportunities during the winter season.

Highlighting the cultural essence of the festival, he said that the event underscores the resilience and creativity of Kashmiri traditions during the harsh Chilla-i-Kalan period, with the Pheran symbolizing warmth, comfort, and identity of Kashmir's winter lifestyle.

"The event will celebrate the cultural significance of Chilla-i-Kalan and Pheran Day, bringing together locals, tourists, students, and craft lovers to experience the Valley's rich handloom and embroidery heritage. Visitors can look forward to a festive ambience with vibrant displays of intricate zari and aari work, reflecting Kashmir's enduring artistic legacy," he said.

The department has urged the general public, tourists, and stakeholders to visit the event in large numbers and extend support to local artisans, thereby contributing to the preservation and promotion of Kashmir's timeless handicraft traditions.



Div Com reviews progress of National Highway Projects in Jammu Division

Directs for completing Bhagawati Nagar flyover; opening both tubes of Gandharwan tunnel on Jammu Poonch highway

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 18: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar today reviewed progress of different National Highway Projects and major road projects being implemented across Jammu Division by National Highway Authority of India, NHIDCL and Border Roads Organisation.

The Divisional Commissioner was apprised of the progress of package wise stretches of Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway, Jammu-Poonch National Highway, Buddal-Mahore-Gul road and highways being developed by NHIDCL in Chenab Valley region.

Regarding Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway, the Divisional Commissioner directed for speedy completion of 3 KM over bridge



at Vijaypur.

The Chief Engineer BRO was directed to open both tubes of the

Tunnel at Gandharwan on Jammu-Poonch National Highway at the earliest for smooth movement of

traffic.

Reviewing the progress of Bhagwati Nagar flyover, the

Divisional Commissioner directed NHIDCL to complete the project at the earliest. Discussion was held on several other issues pertaining to land acquisition and the Forest clearances for the smooth execution of the National Highway Projects.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the concerned officials and District Administrations to resolve all the pending issues for expediting the completion of the remaining part of the National Highway Projects at the earliest.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioners, Director Geology & Mining Jammu, Chief Engineer Project Beacon/Sampark, Regional Officer NHAI, GMNHIDCL and Project Directors Jammu and Udhampur.

DC Reasi inaugurates capacity building workshop on packaging & branding for artisans, weavers

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

REASI, DECEMBER 18: In a significant initiative aimed at strengthening market integration and enhancing the economic prospects of traditional artisans, the Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom Jammu, in collaboration with the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) Srinagar and the District Administration Reasi, organised a one-day capacity building workshop on Packaging and Branding for Handicraft Artisans and Handloom Weavers at the Conference Hall, DC Office Complex, Reasi.

Deputy Commissioner, Nidhi Malik, graced the occasion as Chief Guest and formally inaugurated the workshop.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the pivotal role of effective packaging and branding in enhancing the value, visibility and marketability of handicraft and handloom products. She emphasized that in today's competitive marketplace, quality craftsmanship must be complemented by professional presentation and strong brand identity to ensure better price realization and access to national and international markets.

The Deputy Commissioner encouraged artisans and weavers to actively participate in such training programmes, adopt contemporary practices and leverage government schemes and institutional platforms to expand their market reach.

She assured continued support from the District Administration in promoting the handicraft and handloom sector as a key driver of inclusive economic growth in the district.

Resource persons from NIFT Srinagar conducted comprehensive technical sessions on contemporary packaging and branding practices, focusing on design aesthetics, consumer preferences, cost-effective packaging solutions and brand positioning.

Participants were also briefed on the role of NIFT and the various professional courses, short-term trainings and skill development programmes offered by the institute for artisans and craft-based entrepreneurs.

Expert-led sessions were followed by interactive discussions and hands-on activities, enabling participants to engage directly with the resource persons, seek clarifications and deliberate on practical challenges related to product presentation, branding strategies, pricing mechanisms and access to wider markets.

The programme concluded with a collective resolve to strengthen collaboration between artisans, institutions and government agencies to promote sustainable growth of the handicraft and handloom sector in Reasi.

DSWO, Sachin Sharma, A.D Handicraft, Ujwal Singh, officials from Handicraft and Handloom department, departmental field functionaries and a huge number of artisans and weavers were present during the event.

273 cases approved under Mission YUVA in Jammu district

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 18: In a significant step towards strengthening youth entrepreneurship and livelihood generation, the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) Jammu today approved 273 new cases under Mission YUVA.

The approvals were granted at a combined meeting of the DLIC and members of the SBDU convened to scrutinise and approve cases received under the flagship initiative.

The meeting was chaired by Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Dr. Rakesh Minhas, who reiterated the district administration's commitment to empowering youth through sustainable entrepreneurial opportunities and skill-based livelihoods.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Sher Singh, Deputy Director DE&CC Jammu, Mukhina Saini, Assistant Director DE&CC Jammu, Sukhi Ali and other members of the SBDU and DLIC.

During the meeting, a detailed review was undertaken on multiple key agenda items including SBDU verification and preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), bank sanctions and disbursement status, progress on onboarding of external trainers, onboarding of enterprises for enterprise mentorship, approval of completion requests by the DLIC and onboarding of motivators under Mission YUVA.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasised timely coordination among departments, banks and implementing agencies to ensure swift sanctions, disbursement and handholding support to beneficiaries. He underlined the importance of quality mentorship, capacity building and continuous monitoring for the long-term success of youth-led enterprises.

With the approval of these new cases, Mission YUVA continues to gain momentum in Jammu district, reinforcing the administration's vision of nurturing a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for the youth.

JKEDI Pulwama Concludes Fourth Batch of MDP under RAMP at Pampore Campus

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

PULWAMA, DECEMBER 18: Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) Pulwama today successfully concluded the fourth batch of the Management Development Programme (MDP) under the RAMP initiative at its main campus Pampore.

A total of 21 women participants completed the one-week training programme, aimed at strengthening managerial skills and nurturing entrepreneurial capabilities among aspiring women entrepreneurs.

The valedictory ceremony was attended by Nafia Nazir, Range Officer



South Kashmir (JKEDI); Raiyees Manzoor, District Nodal Officer JKEDI Pulwama, and Iqra Yousuf, Block Programme Manager (NRLM) Pampore, who interacted with the trainees and

encouraged them to pursue sustainable and innovative business ventures.

As part of the concluding activities, the trainees also participated in a special masterclass titled "From Vision to Valuation, a Masterclass on Smarter Capital and Sustainable Growth", delivered by Khalid Wani, Founder One Capital, which provided valuable insights into strategic growth, funding, and long-term business sustainability.

The programme concluded on a positive note, with participants expressing appreciation for the practical exposure and guidance received during the training.

DC Budgam Chairs Review Meeting on Revision of Stamp Rates for 2026 Comprehensive Assessment Ordered to Ensure Rational Stamp Duty Implementation from January 1, 2026

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, DECEMBER 18: A review meeting regarding the revision of stamp rates for the year 2026 was chaired by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, at the District Headquarters.

The meeting was attended by the ADC Budgam Mehraj-ud-din Shah, General Manager, District Industries Centre Budgam Zahid Ahmad; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Budgam; Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Budgam; Divisional Forest Officer, PP Forest Division Budgam; Sub Registrar, Budgam;

Town Planner, Housing and Urban Development Department, Budgam; Sub-Divisional Magistrate Beerwah/Chadoora/Khansahib; and Executive Officers of Municipal Councils/Committees of Budgam, Beerwah, Chadoora, Charar-i-Sharif, Khansahib and Magam.

During the meeting, a detailed review of the existing stamp rates was undertaken in light of the proposed revisions for 2026.

The DC emphasized that the revision process must be carried out in a scientific, data-driven and objective manner, taking into account prevailing market trends, recent developmental activities,



and variations in land use patterns across urban, semi-urban and rural areas of the district.

He directed that a comparative analysis of current stamp rates and proposed revised rates be conducted with due consideration

to infrastructure growth, commercial viability, residential expansion and overall economic activity in different localities. The DC highlighted about importance of ensuring uniformity, transparency and rationality in the revised rates so as to prevent both undervaluation and undue financial burden on the public.

The DC further stressed the need for close inter-departmental coordination, directing all concerned departments to furnish relevant inputs and factual data within the prescribed timeframe.

He underlined that the revised stamp duties must be well-

documented, properly justified and aligned with existing legal provisions and government policies.

The DC also emphasised timely finalization of the exercise so that the revised stamp duties are notified and implemented uniformly with effect from 1st January, 2026, ensuring smooth administration and enhanced revenue realization for the district.

He directed all concerned officers to submit their detailed reports and recommendations promptly for further examination and necessary action at the District Level.

JKEDI hosts Smarter Capital Mentorship Program at Pampore

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 18: Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) on Wednesday hosted a Smarter Capital Mentorship Programme at its main campus, Sempora, Pampore, aimed at enabling startups to transform innovative ideas into scalable and investment-ready ventures.

The day-long programme brought together startups, entrepreneurs and ideators for focused knowledge-sharing, strategic discussions and one-on-one mentorship sessions designed to strengthen entrepreneurial decision-making and growth planning.

The mentorship was led by Director, One Capital Ltd, Khalid Wani, who shared valuable insights on investment strategies, global market trends and building high-growth businesses.

Addressing the participants, he underlined the fundamentals of startup success, stating that converting an idea into a scalable enterprise requires clarity of vision, disciplined execution



and strategic access to capital. He emphasized that mentorship plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between entrepreneurial potential and performance, adding that initiatives like Smarter Capital are aimed at equipping startups in Jammu & Kashmir with the tools to compete at a global level. He further highlighted vision, resilience and adaptability as key attributes for entrepreneurial success.

The programme featured interactive sessions focused on refining business models, addressing operational challenges and aligning ventures with investor expectations.

More than 80 startups, aspiring

entrepreneurs and ideators actively participated in discussions, strategy workshops and personalized mentoring interactions.

Participants appreciated the practical orientation of the programme that helped them sharpen their business models and think strategically about investor readiness and global scalability.

Organised under the Jammu & Kashmir Startup Policy 2024-27, the initiative is part of JKEDI's broader efforts to nurture a new generation of entrepreneurs capable of building sustainable, technology-driven enterprises that contribute to the economic growth of the Union Territory.

District Admin Bandipora Initiates District-Wide Social Audit of Anganwadi Centres

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, DECEMBER 18: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib has ordered a district-wide social audit of Anganwadi Centres across the district.

The initiative aims to review the implementation of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme through a participatory and transparent process involving both officials and community stakeholders.

Prior to the commencement of the social audit, capacity-building and orientation of officers deployed for the audit was conducted through the Social Audit Unit.

As per the directions issued by the District Development Commissioner, Bandipora, training of trainers for the Social Audit was conducted by the Director, Social Audit Unit, to ensure effective and standardized conduct of the audit process.

As part of the exercise, beneficiaries, including pregnant and lactating mothers, community members, former Panchayat representatives and



volunteers are participating in the audit proceedings at Anganwadi Centres across various blocks of the district. The initiative is intended to enhance awareness about ICDS services and to assess the delivery of nutrition, early childhood education and allied components under the scheme, including the Poshan Bhi Parhadi Bhi initiative.

The social audit is being conducted as a fact-finding and review exercise, focusing on verification of records, availability and quality of supplementary nutrition, maintenance of kitchen utensils, beneficiary attendance and service delivery outcomes. Audit findings are being shared in public meetings and documented in resolution registers and structured questionnaires to ensure transparency and accountability.

The exercise has also provided a platform for women beneficiaries and community members to share feedback and suggest improvements in service delivery. Inputs from school teachers regarding children's attendance and learning outcomes are also being documented as part of the audit process.

The district administration has emphasized that the social audit is aimed at strengthening service delivery mechanisms and promoting accountability through community participation, with the objective of improving the overall effectiveness of ICDS interventions in the district.

HT EDITORIAL

Air Quality in Focus: J&K's Window of Opportunity Amid a National Challenge

As air quality makes headlines across India, with the National Capital continuing to report the highest pollution levels today, the broader national picture presents a mix of concern and cautious optimism. In several regions, a marginal easing of Air Quality Index (AQI) levels has been observed, largely due to changing weather conditions and ongoing mitigation efforts. For Jammu & Kashmir—particularly the Kashmir Valley and its summer capital Srinagar this moment offers an important opportunity to consolidate relative gains and plan wisely for the future.

Although J&K Better Than Many, But Not Immune Compared to the severely polluted urban centres of the northern plains, air quality across Jammu & Kashmir has generally remained in the moderate category in recent days. Srinagar's AQI, while fluctuating, has not approached the alarming levels seen in Delhi and parts of the NCR. This relative advantage stems from a combination of factors: lower industrial density, greater forest cover, and periodic ventilation from western disturbances.

However, geography is a double-edged sword. The Valley's bowl-like topography, coupled with winter temperature inversions, can trap pollutants close to the ground. Localised sources—such as domestic heating with firewood and coal, open waste burning, brick kilns, and vehicular emissions—become more prominent during colder months. As winter deepens, even moderate pollution can have pronounced health impacts, particularly on children, the elderly, and those with respiratory ailments.

We need to Learn from the National Experience. Delhi's continued position as the most polluted city today serves less as a point of comparison and more as a cautionary tale. It demonstrates how quickly air quality can deteriorate when emissions meet unfavourable weather conditions. For J&K, this underscores the value of early, preventive action rather than reactive crisis management.

Authorities in the Union Territory have already taken steps to strengthen monitoring and regulate major pollution sources. These efforts deserve recognition, especially in a region with unique climatic and logistical challenges. Continued focus on cleaner household heating options, phased reduction of high-emission fuels, and strict checks on construction dust and waste burning can help prevent sharp winter spikes.

A Balanced, Forward-Looking Approach is the need of the hour. Improving air quality is not about assigning blame; it is about shared responsibility and steady progress. In J&K, the emphasis should be on preserving existing environmental advantages while addressing emerging risks.

Cleaner heating solutions for urban and semi-urban households to reduce winter smoke.

Enhanced public awareness so citizens understand how everyday practices affect local air.

Urban planning and green cover protection, especially in Srinagar, to maintain natural sinks for pollutants.

Reliable, transparent AQI reporting, enabling schools, hospitals, and workplaces to take timely precautions.

Weather may offer temporary relief, but durable improvement comes from consistent policy, community cooperation, and long-term planning. Jammu & Kashmir still has the chance to chart a different path from the heavily polluted metros—one that balances development with environmental stewardship.

As the country watches AQI trends closely, J&K's relative stability should not breed complacency. Instead, it should encourage timely action so that clean mountain air remains a defining feature of the region, not a seasonal memory.

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Technology Plays a Pivotal Role in Uplifting the Nation



■ SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

Today's era demands extraordinary talent to lead the nation forward in technology. Technology plays an immense role in uplifting the country and generating employment.

Every country throughout the world is emphasizing the strengthening of the education sector. Where there is a well-developed education sector, the remaining fields develop automatically. Sensible people always give their 100 percent effort to any task assigned to them by their seniors. Achieving success in a very short span of time is never possible unless we have educated and well-trained staff.

Today, we are witnessing a bizarre world that feels as if it is completely run by machines. Machines are made of materials like iron, plastic, etc. All types of machines are created by well-educated youth, and machines are controlled by humans.

There are a number of tasks we perform on a daily basis, such as using photocopiers, smartphones, vehicles, etc., all of which are human inventions. The Almighty has blessed us with a powerful brain. The human brain has potential beyond our imagination. Only a few people use their brains to certain limits and bring revolutions to the world by inventing things beyond our thinking. According to studies, even scientists utilize only about 30 percent of their brain and still make great inventions. Therefore, we can say that a normal individual may use only 8 to 10 percent of his or her brain throughout life. The rest remains unused.

Some people aim to become good teachers. We should always support the interests of learners and never push them against their interests. Every individual among us has immense potential in different ways. Some are interested in the medical field, so they should never be forced against their will. Today, the government has initiated various schemes so that anyone can achieve their dreams. Some are interested in the engineering field.



Support their interests, and they will become great engineers, develop their nation, and contribute to the economy.

The world is full of opportunities. If you believe in yourself, your talent will never go in vain. You can change the world and become an influencer. Every individual has different skills, abilities, and talents, and every talent has great scope throughout the world.

Today, we are connected to each other through social media. Never remain idle, as idleness rusts your abilities. Always try to engage yourself and understand your own strengths. The day you recognize your talent is the day you achieve real success in life.

Today, we have great opportunities to become what we want, but we need patience, perseverance, consistency, and hard work. In the past, we had very limited sources of learning. Today, everything is in our hands. We have unlimited resources through which we can learn, keep ourselves updated, and

acquire knowledge in many fields.

In this article, I am going to explore how we can get good marks in exams.

Handwriting

Handwriting plays an important role. Always keep your handwriting neat and legible, and avoid cutting and overwriting. First, solve the questions and problems you are confident about. Prepare yourself from the first day when you start learning in a new class. "Do not put it off until tomorrow." Procrastination makes things difficult and creates problems.

Always write to the point and never include unnecessary or irrelevant details in your answers. Use a ruler and leave proper space between separate questions to avoid making your answer sheet messy. Write your roll number and other particulars carefully before submitting the answer sheet.

sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com

Connecting youth to the Quran



■ MASROOF MANZOOR

As parents, educators and guardians, we are in a never-ending state of worry about our youth, persistently contemplating: Are we guiding them enough? Are we present enough? How do we bring their hearts closer to Allah before the world takes them far away?

The period of youth is the most precious chapter of a human life. Yet, in this vibrant period, majority of our Muslim young hearts specifically the adolescents are unintentionally seen losing themselves in distractions like music, dance, aimless outings, parties and countless activities that steal their time without giving lasting benefit. In chasing temporary pleasures, they forget the deeper truth: we were created with a purpose and true success lies in living a life aligned with Allah's guidance.

It is not any facile task to guide them, protect their innocence and keep their hearts connected to their Lord, while battling the many challenges of life—especially in this technology-dominated world, where screens replace conversations, gaming consumes hours and social media quietly shapes minds, often pulling them away through endless distractions and unseen negative influences. Muslims are collectively responsible for guiding one another. Every generation bears the responsibility of guiding the generation that follows especially those officially recognized as leaders of society upon whom this responsibility rests even more heavily.

So if we truly want to secure the future of our youth, we must gift them what never fades: that is correct knowledge, deep understanding and disciplined training



that anchors their lives to Allah through His Words. The Quran is the greatest and most complete source of guidance for the whole of mankind. It educates the mind, strengthens the soul and inspires the heart. It is not merely a book to be read but a lifelong companion and mentor, guiding humanity through every stage of life. It is a fountain of divine wisdom and a vast treasure-house of knowledge from which all true understanding flows.

In a world filled with confusion, distractions and competing influences, the Quran provides clarity, purpose, and direction. Understanding its message and striving to live by its teachings is not optional, it is an essential responsibility. Therefore, making the Quran central to our homes through learning, reflection and practice must be a top priority for every family so that future generations grow up connected to Allah and guided by His words. "This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah." (Al-Baqarah, 2:2). The following points highlight practical approaches to help our youth develop a deeper connection with this noble Divine Guidance.

1. The Quran should not be confined

to being recited or heard only in mosques or on special occasions. It is meant to guide every aspect of our daily lives. When the Quran becomes a regular part of the home, recited, understood and reflected upon, it creates an atmosphere of faith and consciousness of Allah. In such an environment, the youth naturally develop a deep and meaningful connection with the Quran.

2. Many of our youth have grown up without a close relationship with the Quran. As a result, they struggle with reading or reciting it correctly which in turn leads to feelings of embarrassment or inadequacy. Instead of correction that discourages, what they need is compassion that reassures. One needs to provide a supportive and non-judgmental space for youth to learn the Quran so that they can love the Quran.

3. We are living in an age dominated by technology and it is the youth who stand at its forefront. Since digital tools shape so much of their daily lives, introducing Quranic apps can serve as a powerful bridge making the Quran easily accessible to them.

4. We all would love to see our youth become enthusiastic about Quranic recitations, memorizations

and learning but are we truly giving them the environment that is conducive to this learning and encouraging for them?

So whenever together with the youth make it a habit to play the Quran on mobile, in car. Because the soothing sound of Quranic recitation can help reduce stress, anxiety and depression. When we connect with the words of Allah, we feel comforted and relaxed. This is also a way through this we can bring them closer to the Quran.

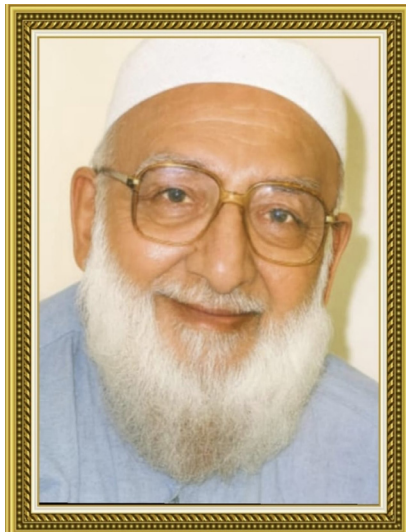
5. Organizing quizzes & recitation tests in schools, at other educational institutions, Quranic centres that impart knowledge definitely has the potential to foster a deep and meaningful connection with the spiritual teachings of the Quran. It serves as a bridge guiding youth towards a path of understanding, reflection and a more profound connection with the Quran.

To conclude, the youth should realize the purpose of their lives & should read the Quran & understand its teachings so that they can live a successful life in this world & the life hereafter.

The author is a Teacher by profession Masters in Economics

HT - OBITUARY

Molvi Syed Abdul Majeed Andrabi (1931–1999): A Life of Faith, Truth and Enduring Legacy



خران عقیدت مع تارک وفات
حسرتا تاریک خُدا اس بے پنا روئے زمین
رحلت سید مجید اندرابی بن شمس الدین
صورت و سیرت میں تھے ممتاز و روشن ضمیر
عالم و فاضل و دانا وقت تھے بے مثال
ساہبا در مسجد جامع غلقاؤ مُراد
یوہ امام و خطیب صاحب شیریں مقال
عارضہٴ قلب نے مجبور و معذور کردیا
اور دلی اسپتال میں آڑ ہوا ان کا وصال
گیارہ رمضان چودھویں جنوری (۲۰۲۰ھ - ۱۹۰۹ھ) اور اتوار
۱۲ دسمبر ۱۹۹۹ء (19/12/1999) عیدویں کا تھا



■ S G M ANDRABI

Molvi Syed Abdul Majeed Andrabi, a revered religious scholar known for his unwavering faith, moral courage and deep empathy for people, passed away in 1999, leaving behind a legacy that continues to inspire even after more than two and a half decades.

Born in 1931, Molvi Andrabi lived a life firmly rooted in truth, humility and straightforwardness. He was widely respected for his fearless commitment to principles and his absolute trust in Allah in every aspect of life. Those who knew him recall his clarity of thought, gentle guidance and the strength of conviction that defined both his words and actions.

Twenty-six years have passed since his demise, yet his presence remains deeply felt among his family and admirers. His last words, remembered with emotion and reverence,

continue to echo in the hearts of his loved ones, serving as a source of guidance and comfort. His teachings and personal example remain a moral compass for those who had the privilege of knowing him, as well as for those who learned about him through his life and values.

In the years following his passing, the family has endured further losses. On October 2, his sister joined him in the eternal abode, fifteen years after the passing of their mother. While these departures have left a profound void, the family draws strength from the belief that their departed loved ones remain united in the spiritual realm, praying for those they have left behind.

Molvi Syed Abdul Majeed Andrabi is remembered not only as a devoted father and family man, but as a guiding light whose legacy of faith, compassion and righteousness transcends time. His life stands as a reminder that true influence is measured not by years lived, but by the values imparted and the lives touched.

The family prays for his continued elevation in Jannatul-Firdous and seeks Allah's mercy and blessings for him. Aameen.

Purpose Fuels the Journey, Passion Lights the Way



■ BY M S NAZKI

At its core, the idea of purpose is the idea that what we do matters to people other than ourselves.Chief of the Army Staff ! Purpose is the reason you journey. Passion is the fire that lights the way....

Passion begins with intrinsically enjoying what you do.The cadets in the Indian Military Academy!

Our potential is one thing. What we do with it is quite another...

The Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, resonated with pride, tradition and military splendour as the 157th Passing Out Parade was held at the historic Drill Square today. The momentous occasion marked the commissioning of Officer Cadets into the Indian Army, reflecting the Academy's enduring motto, "Valour and Wisdom", and standing as a testament to the rigorous training, discipline and indomitable spirit of its cadets.

Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), General Upendra Dwivedi, reviewed the parade and congratulated the newly commissioned officers on successfully completing their training. Addressing the Officer Cadets on the occasion, the COAS underscored that the profession of arms is far more than an occupation - it is a sacred calling that demands unflinching dedication, selfless service and when required, the ultimate sacrifice in the service of the nation. He lauded the Indian Military Academy's illustrious legacy of producing visionary leaders and intrepid officers who have time and again upheld the highest traditions of courage and honour.

The ceremony was witnessed by proud parents, family members, senior Army officers and distinguished guests. The parade culminated with the traditional 'Antim Pag' (final step), as the young officers marched forward, ready to uphold the sovereignty, honour and ideals of the nation.

"Children as flag bearers of the future Indian Army" is a theme often explored through stories of young cadets, army kids growing up in cantonments, or historical accounts of youth inspired by military ideals, highlighting themes of patriotism, discipline, and sacrifice, often seen in narratives about the NCC, 'Fauji' children's unique experiences, or even actual young recruits learning bravery, embodying the nation's future defenders with pride and spirit

This short story will say everything what we want to say:

The Young Recruit: A story about a small village boy, perhaps named Arjun, who dreams of the Army after seeing soldiers protect his home, eventually joining the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and learning discipline, culminating in him becoming a young officer, carrying the Tricolor forward.

"Fauji" Kids' Life: A narrative focusing on the unique childhood of children living in cantonments, experiencing the bugle, military trucks as school buses, and learning patriotism from their soldier parents, showing how their home

is the Army.

The Legacy of Bravery: A tale centered on a young girl whose father is a soldier; she faces fear in Kashmir but learns courage and duty, ultimately deciding to serve, inspired by the valor she witnessed.

Future Soldiers: A story highlighting an interaction between the Army and school children, where soldiers share stories of sacrifice, inspiring the kids to develop respect, courage, and national pride, seeing themselves as future guardians.

Inspiration: Children are inspired by the Army's bravery and discipline.

Mentorship: Soldiers act as mentors, teaching values like "Service Before Self" (Seva Parmo Dharma).

National Spirit: The Army nurtures patriotism and the idea of being a citizen-soldier.

From Innocence to Duty: Stories often show the transition from childhood wonder to committed service.

These narratives often appear in social media posts by the Indian Army, blogs about military life, or in essays for school, all emphasizing that today's children carry the torch for tomorrow's defense.

As much as talent counts, effort counts twice!

We are sure that General UP's Diwedi (COAS) must have sensed the odor of the past as he reviewed the POP (passing out parade of the 157th parade at the Drill square, Indian Military Academy!)

We have another short story for our readers:

The story of a child wanting to join the Indian Army is often one of unwavering grit, discipline, and sacrifice, exemplified by real figures like Lieutenant Varaprasad (from a daily wage background) or Major Prajakta Desai, who dreamt of it from age 8, showing how passion fuels extraordinary effort, from early fitness training (Raghav) to late-night runs (Pradeep Mehra), culminating in fulfilling the dream to serve, often overcoming huge odds for a nation that becomes their true home.

Inspiration: Many stories begin with watching war films or seeing soldiers, sparking a desire to serve.

Early Signs: Children display discipline like polishing shoes, maintaining neat cupboards, and excelling in sports or academics, preparing for the rigorous life.

Financial Hardship: Youngsters like Varaprasad, from humble backgrounds, work hard to clear tough exams like the CDS, supported by dedicated parents.

Physical & Mental Grit: Pradeep Mehra, working at McDonald's, ran 10 km daily to build stamina for the Army, while others like Raghav took up karate and abacus for holistic development.

Persistence: Even failing an attempt (like Jintu) doesn't stop them; they try harder and break through, as seen with Jintu joining the NCC and later the 17 Garhwal Rifles.

Shravan Singh: A young boy who, during Operation Sindoor, brought water and lassi to jawans, embodying service even before officially joining, earning the Army's respect.

Jintu: A young man whose mother recounts his deep love for India, sacrificing his personal life to serve, eventually joining the Army for the Kargil war, demonstrating ultimate dedication.

Major Prajakta Desai: A first woman UAV Observer, who decided at age 8 and achieved her dream, proving girls can also reach the highest ranks.

For many, the Army isn't just a job; it's a lifestyle where cantonments become homes, bugle calls mark mornings, and fellow soldiers become family, fostering a profound sense of belonging and pride in serving India.

The Honour of the Tricolour

The monsoon rain had softened the earth around the flagpole, but it did little to dampen the spirits of the small band of soldiers. It was a time of immense turmoil; the air crackled with the fervent energy of a nation demanding its independence.

Among them was Corporal Ayyappan, a man whose quiet resolve belied his youth. A few years prior, he had left college to join the Quit India Movement, driven by Mahatma Gandhi's call for autonomy. Now, serving in the Royal Indian Navy, he and his comrades faced a direct confrontation with their British officers. Tensions had escalated when they decided to raise the flag of Indian independence, a powerful symbol of their demand for freedom.

The British response was swift and violent. In the ensuing clash, shots rang out, and several Indian soldiers fell. The air was thick with the sorrow of loss, yet the determination in Ayyappan's eyes hardened. The flag, a simple tricolour with a spinning wheel at its heart, represented the hopes and aspirations of over a billion people, a symbol of pride, resilience, and unity.

As a symbol of the emergent free India, the flag became more than just cloth and dye; people were willing to give their lives for the right to hoist it. Ayyappan, with trembling hands and a resolute heart, took the flag from a fallen comrade. He pushed through the chaos, ignoring the pain and the loss, focusing solely on the task at hand.

With immense pride, he hoisted the tricolour high above the camp. It fluttered in the damp breeze, a beacon of defiance and hope. In that moment, Ayyappan understood the true meaning of being a flag-bearer. It wasn't just about holding a pole; it was about embodying the sacrifice, truth, and courage that the flag represented. It was about carrying the collective dreams of a nation striving for its destiny.

Years later, the flag was formally adopted as the national flag of independent India, with the Ashoka Chakra replacing the spinning wheel. The colour took on a universal meaning: saffron for courage, white for peace and truth, and green for growth and the law of dharma.

Ayyappan's act, like those of countless others during the freedom struggle, became a testament to the fact that the true flag-bearers were the everyday citizens who carried the spirit of the nation in their hearts and in their actions.

Here is another one:

In the shadow of the Black Cliff lived a boy named Kael, whose quiet life shifted when a shadow fell over his village: a wolf pack, desperate and starving, began snatching livestock, then threatened the children themselves, its leader a massive, scarred brute. While others hid, Kael, remembering his hunter father's words, faced the beasts with a simple hunting horn, not a weapon, and played a tune—not of war, but of longing, a mournful sound that mirrored their hunger, an act of empathy rather than aggression. The alpha paused, confused, then slowly led his pack away, not defeated, but understood, teaching the village that courage wasn't just fighting, but finding a path through fear, even for a wolf.

Maulana Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA): A Legacy of Faith, Leadership and Public Service



■ SYED SAHRAAN HUSSAIN AL-BUKHARI AL-NAQVI

Maulana Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA) occupies a distinguished place in the religious and public life of Jammu and Kashmir. Revered as a scholar, community leader and principled public figure, his life reflected a rare synthesis of spiritual depth and social responsibility. Belonging to the eminent Ansari family of Srinagar, he inherited a tradition rooted in knowledge, piety and service—values that continued to define his journey throughout his life.

From an early age, Maulana Ansari (RA) displayed a deep inclination towards Islamic scholarship. He pursued rigorous studies in the Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh and the teachings of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), emerging as



a scholar whose learning was matched by clarity of thought and moral conviction.

His majalis and religious discourses, marked by intellectual depth and emo-

tional resonance, earned him respect across Kashmir and beyond. He possessed a rare ability to communicate complex religious ideas in a manner that inspired reflection, reform and action.

As the head of the All Jammu and Kashmir Shia Association, Maulana Iftikhar Hussain Ansari (RA) played a pivotal role in addressing the social and religious concerns of the community. His leadership focused on strengthening faith, empowering youth, supporting the underprivileged and preserving the enduring message of Karbala. Equally important was his emphasis on unity and harmony among Muslims in the region. His approach to leadership was defined not by authority or distance, but by accessibility, compassion and sincerity.

In public life and politics, Maulana Ansari (RA) was widely regarded as a voice of integrity. He carried his spiritual values into governance, advocating for justice, development and fair representation, particularly for marginalized sections of society. Despite occupying influential positions, he remained humble and grounded, earning trust across social and political divides.

Central to Maulana Ansari's life was his unwavering devotion to Imam Hussain

(a.s.) and the philosophy of Karbala. Through his majalis and religious guidance, he revitalized the spirit of Azadari in Kashmir and inspired generations of zakireen and religious workers. His contribution strengthened both the intellectual and spiritual foundations of religious discourse in the region.

Maulana Iftikhar Hussain Ansari's legacy continues through the countless individuals he mentored, the institutions he strengthened and the values he upheld. He was not merely a scholar or a political figure; he was a moral compass for his community and a source of enduring inspiration.

In remembering Maulana Ansari (RA), one recalls a life lived in service of truth, justice and devotion to Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). His influence remains alive in the collective memory of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, and in the principles he championed throughout his life. May Allah (SWT) elevate his rank and grant that his legacy continues to guide future generations.

Author is a, Student Researcher and Student of Islamic History and writes frequently for daily Headlines Today

High Protein Diet For Weight Loss: Avoid These Common Mistakes For Effective Results

One of the most popular macronutrients that you are suggested to when trying to lose weight is protein. This is not surprising given that they are the building blocks of tissue. Protein also plays an important role in building your muscles and keeps you full for longer. With all these benefits, it is quite possible to get

carried away and follow a diet that has a little too much protein. Overconsumption of protein can impact your health and lead to some side effects. Too much protein intake can lead to calories accumulation, and jeopardise your weight loss plans. To prevent this, here are some common mistakes that you should avoid when on a high protein diet.

Weight loss: Avoid these mistakes when on a weight loss diet

1. Type of protein
Make sure you consume proteins from lean sources. This includes protein such as fish, chicken and white-meat poultry. On the other hand, lamb, bacon and pork should be avoided so that you don't go

overboard with your intake.

2. Include carbohydrates
Just because you are on a protein diet, does not mean you should completely avoid eating carbohydrates. Carbohydrates, in a limited quantity, is necessary for overall good health and energy.

3. Protein in all meals
It is important to include protein-rich food in all your meals so that you divide the consumption into smaller quantities through the course of the day. Consuming protein at regular intervals instead of eating it in bulk will do you good. For snacks or smaller meals, nuts, eggs or protein-rich milkshakes are good

options to start with.

4. Check water intake
When on a high-protein diet, one has to stay amply hydrated. Proper water consumption also helps deal with constipation issues, which may occur while following this type of diet. Besides, water is filling and automatically helps you eat less.

Courtesy Healthline

A FATTY LIVER CAN BE DANGEROUS TO YOUR HEART

'Fatty Liver' commonly finds mention in an ultrasound examination report and is often passed off as an incidental finding, it may not be innocuous after all, suggest recent studies in reputed medical journals.

Japanese and European scientists were the first to report a strange four-fold increase in heart disease in these patients compared to those of the same age and sex who had normal livers. And their observations are proving true across the world.

Using sophisticated techniques, doctors have found the wall of arteries to be thicker and the lumen narrower, causing reduced flow of blood to their heart muscles and brains, in these patients. Their findings support the clinical observation that those with excess fat in their livers are more vulnerable and die earlier from heart problems.

The appearance of a 'bright' and swollen liver suggesting excess fat deposition is a common finding on ultrasound examination. While it is commonly seen in drinkers, it is often seen in tee-totallers too, and is referred to as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease or NAFLD in them. Although the risk of liver damage due to this fat is modest and occurs in only 20 per cent when present for over 20 years, proneness to heart attacks grossly increases.

If a fatty liver is detected or suspected, a reliable simple way to find out "how much fat" and "how bad the liver's condition is" can be answered by a test called Liver Fibroscan (with CAP), a simple, painless, non-invasive test that takes only 10 minutes and gives you the important answer.

NAFLD is usually associated with obesity, diabetes, hypertension or high amounts of circulating fats in the blood, and is often called a "Lifestyle Disorder". Lack of adequate exercise and consumption of excess calories have been shown to lead to obesity and excess fat deposits in the liver. The mechanism underlying this disorder called Insulin Resistance, is like that which occurs in diabetics of the Type 2 variety or the common adult type, in which patients have high circulating levels of Insulin that prove ineffective in driving sugar into cells. Insulin Resistance also causes excess accumulation of fat in liver cells, as well as thickening of arteries that cause heart or brain disease.

Regular exercise and reduction of weight form the fulcrum of treatment for this disorder. Apart from helping reduce weight, aerobic exercise up-regulates a protein (glut-4) that restores the sensitivity of cells to circulating insulin. Hence insulin and sugar levels both come down, fat gets mobilised from the liver, buttocks and abdomen, and the increased risk of heart disease is restored to normal levels.

India is in the eye of an emerging global epidemic of diabetes and heart disease. While our genes may be partly accountable for our misfortune, the greater share of blame lies in our reluctance to exercise regularly. While vagaries of weather and unsafe roads may come as handy excuses, we Indians, more than any other race, need to shake off our laziness and indulge ourselves in far more and regular exercise than what we are doing at present. And we need to start quite urgently if we need to live longer and healthier lives.

Effective medications are now available to help you shed fat from your liver. But much depends on your motivation and will power to adhere to a "diet-and-fitness" regime to get your liver and heart into good shape.

Courtesy Healthline

Heart Health: 5 Tips You Should Follow To Boost Cardiovascular Health

Taking care of the heart is important as it is one of the most vital organs in the body. It is the heart that keeps one alive by pumping blood to all the other organs. The incidence of heart diseases has majorly risen over the years due to factors such as diabetes, hypertension, unhealthy diet and obesity, sedentary lifestyle, and consumption of alcohol and tobacco. It is vital to take immediate action and bring about modifications in your lifestyles to reduce the burden of heart diseases. One must lead a heart-healthy lifestyle, as the benefits of a healthy heart can also have a positive impact on overall well-being. Having a strong heart can protect against complications linked with several chronic conditions. While age has been a primary risk factor for heart diseases, over the years, more and more youth are getting detected with heart ailments due to the evolution of lifestyles. Therefore, it is important to start taking care of the heart from early on in life to prevent fatalities at a later stage.

Steps to have a healthy heart:
1. Making healthy food choices -

- **Whole Grains -** It is recommended to include at least one type of whole grain



in daily meals such as cereals and millets

- **Omega 3-rich foods -** Seeds like flaxseed and chia seeds are best sources for omega-3
- **Green leafy vegetables -** Include more greens in daily diet as they are excellent sources of vitamins and minerals, especially, heart-friendly vitamin K
- **Herbs -** Avoid table salt and add herbs to add flavour to the food
- **Olive and mustard oil -** Use olive and mustard oil to cook as they contain healthy fats, which are good for the heart

- **Nuts and seeds -** A handful of almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, walnuts etc. every day must be consumed

2. Hydrate yourself -
Besides drinking water throughout the day, keep yourself hydrated with other healthy drinks like coconut water, lemon, smoothies and homemade drinks with low sugar and salt content.

3. Exercising regularly -
Exercise can lower the risk of developing plaque in the arteries which reduce blood flow. The

key is to get up and move, go for a walk, or do some push-ups or sit-ups. As per WHO, it is recommended to do at least 150-300 minutes of physical activity/ workout every week.

4. Managing stress and mental well-being -
Managing stress can help reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke. Stress is often associated with high blood pressure and exposes the body to elevated levels of stress hormones. There are breathing exercises and meditation which can help manage stress.

5. Controlling blood pressure -
High blood pressure is a common ailment and one of the leading causes for heart diseases such as heart attacks, failure, and others. One must keep a regular check on the blood pressure and consume a diet that helps reduce hypertension.

Importance of monitoring the heart:

While the above precautionary measures can help keep heart health within check, it is important, especially for heart patients to monitor their heart regularly. The advent of medical technologies like remote monitoring has now made it possible for patients to monitor their heart within the comfort of their home and transmit information about the same to their doctor remotely. Early reaction also helps improve patient outcomes.

When to consult a doctor?
Most people might avoid consulting a doctor due to the commonality of the symptoms experienced in heart diseases, however, it is important to seek medical help if experiencing symptoms like shortness of breath, palpitations, dizziness, chest pain, shortness of breath, pain in the neck, jaw, throat, rapid or irregular heartbeat. **Courtesy Healthline**

Natural Vs Refined Sugar: Nutritionist Decodes The Difference

Simply put, sugar is a form of simple carbohydrate that the body converts into glucose and uses for energy. But the effect on the body and overall health depends on the type of sugar one is eating, either natural or refined. Natural sugars are found in fruit as fructose and as lactose in dairy products, such as milk and cheese. They contain essential nutrients that keep the body healthy and help prevent disease. The natural sources of sugar are digested slower and help you feel full for longer. It also helps keep your metabolism stable.

Natural vs refined sugar

Refined sugar such as: white sugar, brown sugar, cane sugar, coconut sugar, palm sugar, high-fructose corn syrup, etc. All these sugars mainly come from plants but have been processed in some way to a simple, sweet form, thus they are processed or refined. Due to which an increase in the consumption of refined sugar has led to the rise in obesity rates, which is associated with higher risks of cancer.

Fibre is a huge key. When sugar from fruit is taken



up, the fiber that comes with it slows down the absorption rate of sugar. This is so, because natural sugars found in whole foods don't increase blood sugar levels as fast as refined sugar. Adding up, to help slow down the absorption of the fruit even more is to pair your fruit with a meal, including a protein. Berries such as strawberries, raspberries and blackberries are lowest in natural sugar, while the highest are dried fruits, bananas, and mangoes. Fruit juices are also high in sugar, so opt for whole fruit instead. Even though if one consumes the same number of calories from whole fruit and juice, the metabolic effects are very different. Thus, metabolically speaking, juice is more or less similar to soda than it is to whole fruit.

Metabolism Matters

The way body metabolizes the sugar in fruit and milk differs from how it metabolizes the refined sugar added to processed foods. The body breaks down refined sugar rapidly, causing insulin and blood sugar levels to skyrocket. Because refined sugar is digested quickly, one doesn't feel full after you're done eating, no matter how many calories you consumed. Hence, the fiber present in fruit brings down metabolism, as fruit in the digestive tract expands to make you feel full.

To understand better about added and natural sugar, the best piece of advice we have now is to simply eat less sugar, with the whole fruit as a notable exception to this rule. Ideally, our diets should be low in sugar and high in fibre, consisting primarily of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

Thus, there is not much difference between sugar that is present in food naturally and the one that is added. Yet, how it's presented to the body, what comes with it, and the quantity is masks much, much difference.

This human molecule is helping Covid virus escape antibodies

A natural molecule called biliverdin present in human body is helping SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19, escape antibodies - a discovery that can help explain why some Covid patients become severely ill despite having high levels of antibodies against the virus, report researchers.

When SARS-CoV-2 infects a patient's lungs, it damages blood vessels and causes a rise in the number of immune cells.

"Both of these effects may contribute to increasing the levels of biliverdin and bilirubin in the surrounding tissues. And with more of these molecules available, the virus has more opportunity to hide from certain antibodies," said Annachiara Rosa, first study author at the Francis Crick Institute in the UK.

"This is a really striking process, as the virus may be benefiting from a side-effect of the damage it has already caused," Rosa said in the paper published in the journal Science Advances.

In their research, teams from the Francis Crick Institute, in collaboration with researchers at Imperial College London, Kings College London and UCL (University College London), found that biliverdin and bilirubin, natural molecules present in the body, can suppress the binding of antibodies to the coronavirus spike. As vaccines are rolled out globally, understanding immunity to SARS-CoV-2 and also how the virus evades antibodies is critically important.

The ability of the immune system to control the infection and the quality of the antibody response are highly variable, and not well correlated, between individuals. The scientists discovered that the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein strongly binds to biliverdin, a molecule which was giving these proteins an unusual green colouration. **Courtesy Healthline**



J&K to crack down on bird hazards near airports

2 committees formed to curb bird-attracting activities near aerodromes

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 18: In a move to safeguard air travel, the Jammu & Kashmir government has constituted two committees to monitor and regulate activities prohibited under Rule 91 of the Indian Aircraft Rules, 1937.

The government has constituted two committees, one each for Kashmir and Jammu, for strict implementation of the Rule 91, which prohibits activities near airports which attract birds, as these can cause dangerous bird strikes to aircraft.

According to an order issued by General Administration Department, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the committee for Jammu is headed by the Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, and comprises Administrative Secretary, Civil Aviation Department; Deputy Commissioner, Jammu; Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation; Senior Superintendent of Police, Jammu; Director, Urban Local Bodies, Jammu (Member); Member Secretary, J&K Pollution Control Board (Member); and Director, Airport Jammu

The committee for Kashmir is headed by Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir and comprises Administrative Secretary, Civil Aviation Department; Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar; Deputy Commissioner, Budgam; Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama; Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation; Senior Superintendents of Police, Srinagar/Budgam/Pulwama; Director, Urban Local Bodies, Srinagar; Member Secretary, J&K Pollution Control Board and Director, Airport Srinagar (Secretary)

As per its term of references, the committee would immediately identify and map all unauthorized slaughterhouses, meat shops, dairies, piggeries, garbage dumps and other prohibited facilities within 10 km range of International Airport, Srinagar.

The committees have also been mandated to ensure strict enforcement measures including closure or relocation of non-compliant units, in coordination with Urban Local Bodies, Municipal Corporations, Pollution Control Board and law enforcement authorities. The committees would institutionalise the compliance monitoring mechanism with quarterly reports to be submitted to the Director General of Civil Aviation, Government of India—(KNO)

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Naib Tehsildar, Achabal, Achabal

PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject: Application of Noorina Yousuf and Muntaza Yousuf, D/o Mohammad Yousuf Hajam, R/o Kawari Gam, Tehsil Achabal, District Anantnag for issuance of RBA / OBC Certificate.

Whereas the above named applicants have applied in this office for issuance of RBA / OBC Certificate in their favour. In this connection, a report from the Patwari Halqa concerned has been sought, which reveals that the applicants are residents of village Kawari Gam, Tehsil Achabal, District Anantnag and belong to Hajam community.

The annual income of the family as per records is within the prescribed limits and the family details stand verified.

Now, therefore, any person having any objection with regard to the issuance of the said certificate in favour of the applicants may present his/her objection along with documentary proof in this office within 07 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the stipulated period, no objection shall be entertained.

Issued under my hand and seal of this office.

Naib Tehsildar Achabal

Public Notice

I want to correct my minor son's adhaar card name under Aadhar card no. 7670 2713 1867 from Wasi Arshid to Waris Arshid. Now I am applying for its correction, if anybody have any objection in this regard he/she may contact the same at General Manager, Ranbir Govt press jammu with in 7 days from the publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

**Asma Hassan
Mother of Waris arshid
R/o Midoora Pulwama.**

Public Notice

I WAHEED MAQBOOL DAR S/O MOHAMMAD MAQBOOL DAR R/O ALLAHPORA WAGOORA hereby inform the general public that I am applying for pesticides and fertilizers Licence .If anyone has any objection regarding the same he/she may contact the Head Office HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT LAL MANDI SRINAGAR within stipulates time after that no objection shall be entertained.

Public Notice

I, Rehman Sheikh, S/o Lass Sheikh, resident of Pahalgam, hereby declare that my Date of Birth has been incorrectly mentioned in my Aadhaar Card.

My correct Date of Birth is:
12-03-1959

Henceforth, the above-mentioned Date of Birth (12 March 1959) shall be treated as correct for all official and non-official records.

If anyone has any objection regarding this correction, the same may be conveyed within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Name: Rehman Sheikh

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of RUTBA HAMID D/O ABDUL HAMID DEADAR R/O BANDIBALA Tehsil KTEERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 31/03/2015 and event has been shown to be occurred at home for issuance of delay order .In this connection .

If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject: Application MUSLIM SHAFI WAR S/O MOHAMMAD SHAFI WAR R/O SHEIKHPORA for issuance of RBA certificate in favour of self Tehsil KREERI for the issuance of RBA in his /her / their favor

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of RBA in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in the village of SHEIKHPORA of Tehsil KREERI and belongs to the WAR community having annual income 500000// the details of family of the applicant are as follows

- 1..MOHAMMAD SHAFI Father 51 years farmer
- 2.FAREEDA BAGUM Mother 45 years H/W
- 3... TABASUM SHAFI sister 22 years student student
- 4..MASRAT SHAFI sister 20 years student
- 5....MUSLIM SHAFI self 18 years student

If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

Public Notice

I am applying for fresh Pesticide and Fertilizer License under the name SOFI AGRO CHEMICALS situated at sheikpora KREERI BARAMULLA In this regard if anybody is having any objection may file the same to Chief Agriculture Officer Baramulla and PPO Lal Mandi Srinagar within the time period of 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

**Jamsheedah Bano
D/o.Ghulam Mohammad Sofi
Address.SHEIKH PORA KREERI
CELL.NO-8493812176**

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KALANTRA / KREERI

Subject: Application of SAJAD HUSSAIN BOKRA for the issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar and Bakerwal)in favour of MUZAFFAR AHMAD BOKRA ,TABASUM SAJAD

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of ST . in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village BANDI BALLA and belongs to the ST caste and BOKRA community, having annual income is 350000 the details of the family of the applicant are as follows

- 1....MUZAFFAR AHMAD BOKRA son 26 years student
- 2.... TABASUM SAJAD daughter 12 years student//

The applicant has applied for Issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar & Bakerwal) certificate in favour of Self.

If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

Public Notice

My name has been wrongly written as SHUGUFTA BEGUM W/O AIJAZ AHMAD KHAN in my Aadhar card bearing Aadhar No....20514697 5267 while my correct name is SHAGOOFA SHABAN D/O MOHD SHABAN BHAT as per my school record which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he /she may file his /her objection in office of concerned adhar authorities with in seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

**Name..SHAGOOFA SHABAN
S/OMOHD SHABAN BHAT
Mathers name.....FARZANI**

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KALANTRA / KREERI

Subject: Application of FAROOQ AHMAD BOKRA for the issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar and Bakerwal)in favour of FAROOQ AHMAD BOKRA (self ,) MUDDASIR FAROOQ ,FARHAT FAROOQ & SAHIL FAROOQ

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of ST . in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village BANDI BALLA and belongs to the ST caste and BOKRA community, having annual income is 868584 the details of the family of the applicant are as follows

- 1...FAROOQ AHMAD BOKRA SELF 53 years GOVT EMPLOYEE
- 2.... MUDDASIR FAROOQ Son 25 years student
- 3....FARHAT FAROOQ daughter 24 years Student
- 4....SAHIL FAROOQ daughter ,16 years //

The applicant has applied for Issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar & Bakerwal) certificate in favour of Self

If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

Public Notice

I WAHEED MAQBOOL DAR S/O MOHAMMAD MAQBOOL DAR R/O ALLAHPORA WAGOORA hereby inform the general public that I am applying for pesticides and fertilizers Licence .If anyone has any objection regarding the same he/she may contact the Head Office HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT LAL MANDI SRINAGAR within stipulates time after that no objection shall be entertained.

**WAHEED MAQBOOL DAR S/O MOHAMMAD
MAQBOOL DAR R/O ALLAHPORA WAGOORA**

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KALANTRA / KREERI

Subject: Application of AB HAMID DEADER S/O GHULAM UD DIN for the issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar and Bakerwal)in favour of self , RABIYA HAMID ,RUTBA HAMID & AYMAN HAMID

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of ST . in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village BANDI BALLA and belongs to the ST caste and Guggar community, having annual income is 195960 the details of the family of the applicant are as follows

- 1...AB HAMID SELF 32 years Labour
- 2.... KOUSAR BEGUM wife 35 years house wife
- 3....RABIYA HAMID daughter 10 years Student
- 4....AYMAN HAMID daughter ,06 years //
- 5....RUTBA HAMID daughter 09 years //

The applicant has applied for Issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujar & Bakerwal) certificate in favour of Self

If anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

Public Notice

My name wrongly mentioned in my 8Th Class School certificate as Nissar Ahmad Parray instead of Naseer Ahmad Parray.Now i am applying for its duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact Govt Middle School Hail Jageer within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

**NASEER AHMAD PARRAY S/O TARIQ AHMAD
PARRAY R/O HAIL JAGEER KREERI BARAMULLA**

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Directorate of Employment, J&K

NOTIFICATION

In partial modification of this office Notification No. DIEMP/Estt/D11/2000/11/3962-63 dated 15.12.2025, it is hereby notified for the information of all concerned that the document verification of Kashmir-based candidates, who have applied for key contractual positions under the Business Helpline component of MISSION YUVA, in pursuance of Advertisement Notification No. 01 of 2025 dated 25.10.2025, shall now be conducted at the Srinagar Office of the Directorate, located near JVC, Bemina, Srinagar. The document verification shall be carried out as per the schedule given below. Kashmir based Candidates may opt to attend either the Srinagar Office or the Jammu Office of the Directorate for document verification, as per their convenience.

S.No	Applicant No (of Annexure A)	Time & Date
1	S.No 1 to 50	19th Dec 2025, 10 am to 1 pm
2	S.No 51 to 125	19th Dec 2025 2 pm to 5 pm
3	S.No 126 to 200	20th Dec 2025 10 am to 1 pm
4	S.No 201 to 240	20th Dec 2025 2 pm to 5 pm

The applicants are advised to bring all original documents along with mandatory experience certificate supported by pay slips/ bank statement. The list of candidates who have submitted the applications is annexed as Annexure A.

**No: Diremp/Estt/D-11/2000/II/ 3975-76
Dated: 17-12-2025**

DIPK: 9113/25 | Dated: 18-12-2025

Sd/- Director Employment, J&K

Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION SOPORE

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

NIT No: 144 of RnB-Sopore of 2025-2026 e-tendering | DATED: 17.12.2025.

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K, e-tenders (in Single Cover System) are invited on Percentage rate basis from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:

S.N o.	Name of Work	Adv. Cost	T.D Cost	E/M	Time	Time & Date of Openingof Bid	Class	MHA	Position of TS
1	Construction of Computer room at Higher Secondary School Rampora	17.877	600/-	35760	90 days	06.01. 2026	BEE/ CEE	314-Chirag of 2025	112/TS of 2025-26 dated:16.12.2025 Rs. 17.877 lacs
2	Construction of ACR at Primary School Raj Mohalla Warapora	20.84	600/-	41600/-	90 days	06.01.2026	BEE/ CEE	314-Chirag of 2025	113/TS of 2025-26 dated:16.12.2025 Rs. 20.84 lacs
3	Construction of Boundary Wall at Middle School Hamid Baba Sahib Rampora	7.59	300/-	15180/-	30 days	06.01.2026	DEE/ CEE	314-Chirag of 2025	114/TS of 2025-26 dated:16.12.2025 Rs. 7.60 lacs
4	Major Repairs at Middle School Zandipora.	3.47	200/-	6940/-	30 days	06.01. 2026	DEE	314-Chirag of 2025	115/TS of 2025-26 dated:16.12.2025 Rs. 3.47 lacs

Project Authority: Project Director Samagra Shiksha J&K

Position of funds: Available

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

1	Date of issue of tender Notice	17.12.2025	
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	17.12.2025	05.01.2026(upto 4.PM)
3	Bid Submission start date	17.12.2025	
4	Bid submission End date	5.01.2026 (4.00 PM)	
5	Date and time of opening of bides (online)	06.01.2026(12 PM)	in the office of Ex. Engineer R&B Division, Sopore

- Bids must be accompanied by a Treasury Challan (dated between the bid start date and the Bid Submission End date) with NIT No. Name of work: and S.No. deposited in M.H. 0059 in the name of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore (tender inviting authority) as the cost of the tender document. At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore . Besides that, the successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 5% at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released after submission of a performance security of 5% of the quoted cost which will be released after completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.
3(b). Geotag Photographs Minimum 03 sets (01 set Comprising of Photograph before, during and after execution of work) of size 26 cm x21 cm to be provided.

Unbalanced Bid:- In case bid of the successful bidder is unbalanced, the Successful bidder will have to provide additional performance security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore (tender receiving authority) vide Principal Secretary to Government Finance department's circular issued under endorsement No: DF-Code/ 441/ 2021-02-158 dated" 8.8.20025.

- Where the bid price is below 10% but not below 20% of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee/security percentage shall be Incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of bid price below 10% of the project cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional bid performance guarantee being 0.1% and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.
- Where the bid price is 20% or more below of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee percentage shall be Incremented by 0.2% for every percentage of bid price below 20% of the project cost put to bid in addition to 1% of the bid price and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.
- The additional performance guarantee percentage shall be rounded off to the next lower percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price is below 0.5% or next higher percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price is 0.5% or more.
- The additional performance security shall be treated as part of the performance security . Additional performance security shall be taken only after approval of next higher authority.

The additional performance security shall be released only after successful completion of work.

- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on web Site www.jketenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same web site in the office of the Tender receiving authority).

- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of technical Bids.
- Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
- Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in acquaint bid submission process.
- To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendor.
- The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No Financial bid will be accepted in physical form..
- Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-I
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with bid.Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

No: 9216-25 | Dated: 17-12-2025

DIPK: 9097/25 | Dated: 18-12-2025

Sd/- Executive Engineer, R&B Division Sopore

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



7006083461

Director Agriculture reviews departmental activities in Kishtwar District

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KISHTWAR, DECEMBER 18: Director Agriculture Jammu, Anil Gupta today undertook an extensive tour of District Kishtwar to review the ongoing activities and progress of the departmental schemes being implemented in the district.

At the CAO Office, the Director chaired a detailed review meeting to assess the physical and financial progress of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), CAPEX, Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), NABARD and JKICP.

The Chief Agriculture Officer, Kaushal Chandel briefed the Director about the ongoing development works and achievements under different programmes.

The Director Agriculture issued clear instructions to ensure timely implementation, optimum utilisation of funds, quality execution of works and enhanced field-level monitoring, while stressing convergence with allied departments for achieving better results on ground.

Later, the Director Agriculture inspected Hi-Tech Polyhouse



established by beneficiary Ashok Kumar residence of village Jailna, where he interacted with the beneficiary and appreciated the adoption of protected cultivation for enhancing productivity and farmers' income.

He also visited the Kisan Khidmat Ghar (KKG) at village

Pochhal and interacted with Krishi Udhaymis.

Director, Anil Gupta further inspected low-cost polyhouses and vermicompost units established under HADP and emphasised their role in promoting sustainable, low-input agriculture while improving soil health and farm

profitability. He encouraged farmers to adopt such cost-effective technologies on a larger scale.

During the tour, the Director Agriculture also visited the saffron-growing fields in the Pochhal area and Saffron Development Farm at Berwar, where he interacted with saffron growers and field

functionaries to assess the on-ground progress of saffron cultivation.

The Director also inspected the ongoing works of the Controlled Condition Cropping Unit at the Saffron Farm. He took stock of the ongoing interventions under the programme and addressed the challenges being faced by the farmers.

He issued specific directions to the Saffron Development Officer to strengthen extension services, ensure proper upkeep of infrastructure and provide timely technical guidance to saffron growers.

Emphasising the need for area expansion under saffron cultivation in Kishtwar, the Director stated that the district possesses favourable agro-climatic conditions for saffron.

He stressed that identification of new potential areas, availability of quality planting material and focused interventions would help in expanding acreage, enhancing production and creating new livelihood opportunities for farmers, while positioning Kishtwar as an emerging saffron-growing district.

District AYUSH organises one day training programme for MPWs in Ramban

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

RAMBAN, DECEMBER 18: A one-day training programme for Multipurpose Workers (MPWs) was organized today by the District AYUSH Ramban, with the objective of strengthening grassroots-level delivery of its services and promoting preventive healthcare practices.

The training was conducted by senior Medical Officer AYUSH and District Yoga Coordinator Dr. Masood Iqbal, who delivered detailed and interactive sessions focusing on effective field-level implementation of AYUSH interventions.



The sessions covered key aspects including proper AYUSH service delivery at the community level, accurate maintenance of OPD records and registers at Ayush Health and Wellness Centres (AHWCs) and strategies for enhancing community health awareness. Emphasis was laid on the role of AYUSH in preventive and promotional healthcare, highlighting its significance in addressing lifestyle related ailments and improving overall well-being.

Dr. Iqbal also conducted practical demonstrations of various Yoga asanas such as Tadasana, Vrikshasana, Bhujangasana, Vajrasana and Shashankasana, enabling participants to gain hands-on understanding for effective dissemination in their respective field areas.

To assess the learning outcomes and gather constructive feedback, an aptitude test of objective type was conducted at the end of the programme which aimed to evaluate participants' understanding of the topics discussed and to collect suggestions for further strengthening AYUSH public health initiatives.

Rajouri admin plans to host 43 public service & grievances redressal camps: DC

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

RAJOURI, DECEMBER 18: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma today held a press conference to brief media persons about the one-week 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore' campaign being organised under Good Governance Week which is scheduled to commence on December 19 and continue till December 25 across the district.

The Deputy Commissioner informed that 43 public service and grievances redressal camps would be organised in different blocks and tehsils of the district during the campaign period. The initiative aims to redress pending grievances, strengthen last-mile governance and bring about tangible improvements in service delivery.



The DC said that a wide range of services will be made available at these camps, including facilities from banks, Common Service Centres (CSCs), Aadhaar centres, along with awareness generation and on-the-spot implementation of various government schemes.

He added that a detailed calendar of camps has been issued well in advance to ensure maximum participation of the general public. Officers from concerned departments will be deputed at block and panchayat levels to ensure prompt redressal of public grievances at the grassroots, he said.

The Deputy Commissioner further informed that the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) will monitor the campaign. Citizens who are unable to attend the camps can also register their grievances on the JK Samadhan portal.

DC Rajouri urged the general public to actively participate in the campaign and avail the services being provided at their doorsteps.

DLSA Chairman visits District Jail Udhampur; inspects facilities for inmates

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

UDHAMPUR, DECEMBER 18: Principal District & Sessions Judge/Chairman DLSA Udhampur, Virinder Singh Bhou today visited District Jail Udhampur with a team of civil and judicial officers to take stock of civic amenities and other facilities available for the inmates.

The team consisted of Deputy

Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai, Secretary DLSA Udhampur, Sumati Sharma, Chief LADC Udhampur, Pawan Gupta and LLB Intern, Diya Kesar where as Superintendent District Jail, Mohammad Irfan Khan facilitated the visit.

The team inspected facilities like barracks, washrooms, medical rooms and the kitchen to check the hygiene

and food quality.

Interacting with inmates, they addressed concerns and ensured their well-being. Inmates presented a spirited cultural program featuring songs and dances.

The visit aimed to assess jail conditions, identify improvements and protect inmates' rights, reviewing SOP adherence and discussing rehabilitation measures.

DC Reasi reviews progress of development works, government schemes in various sectors

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

REASI, DECEMBER 18: Deputy Commissioner Reasi, Nidhi Malik today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the overall progress of ongoing developmental works and implementation of flagship government schemes across various sectors in the district.

At the outset, officials delivered a detailed sector-wise presentation highlighting the status of major projects and schemes being executed by different departments.

Deputy Commissioner directed the district officers to expedite achievement of targets under the flagship schemes of the Central and UT Governments.

While reviewing the road connectivity status, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need to prioritize upgradation of roads to enhance accessibility and strengthen connectivity infrastructure across the district. Reviewing projects of the Public Works Department (PWD) and PMGSY, she instructed the concerned officers to mobilize men and machinery, accelerate execution and ensure completion of works within stipulated timelines.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the importance of covering all eligible beneficiaries under Government welfare schemes. She called for strong inter-departmental coordination, transparency and commitment in the implementation.

Assessing the education sector performance, the Deputy Commissioner directed the CEO to ensure delivery of quality

education in all government schools, with regular monitoring of academic and infrastructural standards.

She further instructed all officers to conduct regular field visits and effectively utilize the 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore' action plan from December 19 to 25 to intensify grievances redressal and doorstep service delivery in their respective jurisdictions.

Emphasizing livelihood generation, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted capitalization of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), youth engagement through Mission YUVA and effective implementation of self-employment schemes.

During the review of the health sector, she directed the concerned authorities to ensure adequate availability of doctors and medical staff so that patients receive timely, quality healthcare services. The Social Welfare Department was instructed to maximize coverage of eligible beneficiaries under various welfare schemes.

Financial inclusion emerged as a key focus area, with the Deputy Commissioner directing banks and line departments to ensure maximum enrollment under schemes such as PM Shram Yogi Maandhan, PMJJBY and PMSBY. The Deputy Commissioner reviewed each sector in detail and instructed executing agencies to prepare clear action plans and work schedules to ensure timely completion of all projects.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Reasi, Sukhdev Singh, CPO, Narinder Kumar, DSEO, CAO, CAHO, DSHO and other senior district officers.

DC Kishtwar chairs DRSC, RTA meeting; reviews road safety measures

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KISHTWAR, DECEMBER 18: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma, who is also the Chairman of the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC), Regional Transport Authority (RTA) and Road Accident Victims Fund, today chaired a comprehensive meeting of the District Road Safety Committee and Regional Transport Authority to review and strengthen road safety initiatives across the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the status of key road safety interventions, including the implementation of the Road Safety Act, identification and rectification of accident-prone black spots, erection of crash barriers, installation of road signage, expediting insurance claim processes and promotion of speed-limit awareness through road safety clubs in schools and colleges.

The DC instructed the ARTO Kishtwar, Police and Traffic Police to intensify enforcement and launch a massive crackdown against traffic violators, especially targeting overloading, over-speeding, rash driving and other unsafe practices to minimize road accidents.

He asked the ARTO Kishtwar to submit a detailed list of e-rickshaws operating in the district along with their respective regulatory authorities.

He also instructed the issuance

of a circular on proper zone distribution of e-rickshaws to ease traffic congestion.

To enhance public awareness, the Deputy Commissioner directed the District Traffic Inspector (DTI), Traffic Police and ARTO Kishtwar to launch general awareness campaigns on road safety and welfare schemes.

He further instructed the ARTO to issue advisories and take appropriate action in cases involving parents of teenage traffic violators.

Additionally, the DC emphasized regular inspections of driving schools to ensure compliance with prescribed norms.

He also directed concerned departments to conduct joint drives to assess and remove encroachments on roadside pedestrian pathways, ensuring safer movement for pedestrians.

In the RTA meeting, the permits received by ARTO Kishtwar were submitted to the DC Kishtwar (Chairman, RTA) and discussed during the meeting which shall be finalized in the next meeting of the RTA.

The meeting was attended by ASP Kishtwar, Pardeep Singh, ACR Kishtwar, Idrees Lone, DSWO Kishtwar, Tariq Parveaz Qazi, CEO Municipal Council Kishtwar, Mirza Mumtaz Iqbal, ARTO Kishtwar, Tasleem Wani, Ex-Ens, AO DC Office Kishtwar, besides other officers and concerned staff.

Jammu to host International Dangal, "Rustam-e-Jammu & Kashmir" championship

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 18: The J&K Sports Council in collaboration with the J&K Indian Style Wrestling Association, is set to organise the International Dangal and "Rustam-e-Jammu & Kashmir" Title Championship, a first-of-its-kind event in the region aimed at promoting youth engagement, health and fitness while preserving the rich heritage of indigenous sports.

The championship will be held on 20th December 2025 here at M.A. Stadium and is expected to draw large public

participation and widespread media attention. Wrestling, popularly known as Dangal, Kushti or Pahalwani, is an integral part of the cultural legacy of Jammu, especially in rural and border belts where it has been nurtured for generations. Preserving and promoting such traditional sports is essential not only to safeguard cultural identity but also to pass on values of discipline, strength, resilience and community bonding to the younger generation. Through this championship, the stakeholders aim to revive this age-old sport by providing a modern,



professional platform while retaining its traditional essence.

More than 50 national and international wrestlers are expected to participate in the

grand event, including renowned athletes from countries such as Russia and Iran and other Asian countries along with top wrestlers from across India.

The championship, being organised with technical support from the Indian Style Wrestling Federation of India, is poised to showcase high-quality competition and elevate the standard of indigenous wrestling in the region.

The event will also serve as an effective platform to propagate key government social initiatives, particularly the "Nasha Mukh Abhiyan" and the ongoing war against drugs. By actively engaging youth in sports and physical fitness, the championship seeks to promote a healthy, disciplined and drug-free lifestyle,

underlining the role of sports as a powerful tool for positive social change. The Government of Jammu & Kashmir, through the Department of Youth Services and Sports alongside J&K Sports Council, continues to play a proactive role in strengthening sports infrastructure, encouraging traditional and modern sports alike, and creating opportunities for athletes at all levels. Such initiatives reflect the government's broader vision of making Jammu & Kashmir a vibrant hub of national and international sports activities, while also boosting sports

tourism and providing exposure to local talent. In addition to open category bouts, the championship would introduce the prestigious "Rustam-e-Jammu & Kashmir" Title, to be contested exclusively by wrestlers above 85 kg.

The title winner will be awarded a cash prize of 50,000 along with traditional honours of Gurj (Gadda) and Patta, while the runner-up and other position holders will receive appropriate cash prizes. Around 50 wrestlers, supported by 15-20 officials, are expected to take part, with an anticipated audience of 10,000-15,000 spectators.

KVB–G RAM G Bill, 2025 passed amid strong Opposition protests in Lok Sabha

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 18 : The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill, 2025, abbreviated as VB–G RAM G, despite strong and vociferous protests from opposition parties.

The bill aims to overhaul India's rural employment framework by providing a statutory guarantee of 125 days of wage employment to rural households, aligning with the national vision of Viksit Bharat at 2047.

Under MGNREGA, the central government provides the entire cost of wages for unskilled manual work, up to three-fourths of the material cost, and a share of administrative costs.

State governments provide one-fourth of the material cost, administrative costs, unemployment allowance, and compensation in case of delay in wage payments.

The Bill amends this to provide that the scheme will be implemented as a centrally sponsored scheme. State governments will notify a scheme consistent with the Bill, within six months from its commencement. The fund-sharing pattern between the

central government and state governments will be 60:40 for all states other than the North-eastern and the Himalayan states (90:10). A state and the central government will share the cost of wages, material costs, and administrative costs in the above ratios. The state government will continue to pay unemployment allowance and compensation.

Under the new laws, State governments to bear expenditure in excess of normative allocation: The Bill provides that the central government will determine state-wise normative allocation for each financial year. The parameters for these allocations will be prescribed by the central government under Rules. The state government will bear any expenditure incurred in excess of this allocation.

Union Minister of Rural Development Shivraj Singh Chauhan moved the bill for passage, describing it as a transformative step to strengthen and expand the existing Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). "The main aim of the Bill is to align the rural development framework with the national vision of Viksit Bharat at 2047 by providing a strengthened statutory wage-employment guarantee of 125



days per financial year to rural households whose adult members volunteer for unskilled manual work, thus enabling their greater participation in the expanded livelihood security system," he said.

The legislation focuses on empowerment, growth, convergence, and saturation of multiple government schemes through initiatives such as the 'Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans' coordinated via the PM Gati Shakti programme. It also envisions an

integrated 'Viksit Bharat National Rural Infrastructure Stack' to manage rural public works effectively, emphasizing water security, core rural infrastructure, livelihood generation, and climate resilience. Addressing concerns about agricultural labor availability, Minister Chauhan noted, "Given the enhanced wage-employment guarantee for the rural workforce, ensuring the availability of farm labor during peak agricultural seasons is essential. Accordingly, the Bill

empowers States to notify in advance specific periods covering peak sowing and harvesting seasons during which work under this Bill will not be carried out."

He further explained the funding structure: "Each State Government must prepare a scheme to implement the guarantee under this Bill within six months of the Act's commencement; this will be executed as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The Central Government will allocate normative funding

to each State based on objective criteria set out in the rules. Any expenditure beyond the approved allocation will be the responsibility of the State Governments."

On wage provisions, the Minister assured, "The Central Government will notify wage rates for unskilled manual labor under this legislation. Until new rates are set, those under the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA will apply." He added, "If an eligible applicant is not provided work within the prescribed timeframe as per this Bill, the State Government must pay unemployment allowance at the prescribed rate."

For oversight, Chauhan announced the formation of Central and State Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Councils to monitor implementation and advise on key matters. "Transparency and accountability will be ensured through biometric authentication, spatial technology-based planning, mobile and dashboard monitoring, and weekly public disclosures. The social audit mechanism will be strengthened," he said.

However, the bill met with intense opposition criticism. Congress leaders demanded referral of the bill to a Parliamentary Standing

Committee for detailed scrutiny. Senior Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi condemned the bill, stating, "No law should be passed based on someone's whim, ambition and prejudice." Congress members protested in the Parliament premises, holding photographs of Mahatma Gandhi, in whose name the existing MGNREGA was established.

Congress President and Leader of the Opposition in Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, called the renaming of MGNREGA to VB–G RAM G "not just a name change but a planned assassination of the world's largest employment scheme." He accused the government of insulting Mahatma Gandhi and undermining the Right to Work that has transformed rural India. "Against the oppression of this authoritarian ruling government, we will fight from Parliament to the streets," Kharge declared amid protests.

The Bill's passage marks a significant moment in India's rural development policy, reflecting evolving aspirations and a push for integrated, technology-driven governance. Yet, its future implementation faces scrutiny and debate given its profound impact on millions of rural livelihoods. UNI

Delhi govt to install water sprinklers on all flyovers to tackle pollution

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC. 18 : Amid mounting concerns over air pollution in the national capital, Public Works Department Minister Parvesh Verma on Wednesday announced a series of infrastructure and enforcement measures aimed at controlling dust and particulate pollution across Delhi.

Under the plan, water sprinklers will be installed on top of all flyovers in the city, supported by dedicated RO plants beneath each flyover.

Sprinklers will be installed on both sides of the flyovers to help suppress dust and reduce pollution levels, the minister said.

Verma said that around 200 anti-smog guns are currently operational across Delhi and are being monitored through GPS. In addition, 270 PWD maintenance vans have been deployed on roads, while 250 mist poles have been installed at key locations. He said the number of mist poles would be increased further, especially at identified pollution hotspots on PWD roads, to strengthen pollution control efforts.

Acknowledging the scale of the challenge, the minister said Delhi's pollution problem could not be resolved in four or six months and would require sustained efforts over several years.

"Pollution will be reduced gradually, year after year. No harsh rules will be imposed on the public," he said, adding that citizens should follow government advisories and adopt lane discipline to ease traffic congestion.

He said the Delhi government is planning for the next 40 to 50 years and urged people to have patience. "You have given us a five-year mandate, not a one-year mandate. Problems cannot be solved overnight, but they will be addressed step by step," Verma said.

The minister also spoke in support of the "One Nation, One Election" concept, saying frequent elections disrupt governance. Citing recent municipal by-elections, he said that ministers, legislators and chief ministers often remain occupied with polls.

"If elections are held once every five years, governments will get adequate time to work effectively," he said.

Launching a sharp attack on the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Verma alleged that key works required to tackle pollution such as removal of garbage mountains, footpath repairs, e-waste management, Yamuna cleaning, repair of roads and parks, water treatment plants, drain construction and cleaning, plastic waste management and electric vehicle policy implementation should have been completed during AAP's 11-year rule. "None of these were done. Today, we have to do all this work," he claimed.

He said pollution in Delhi was not a one year old problem but had worsened over many years due to inaction. "Had Arvind Kejriwal done even a little work, we would only have had to complete the remaining tasks. Instead, the problems have piled up," Verma said.

Referring to protests by AAP leaders, Verma alleged that no green waste plant was set up under the previous government, while the present government had initiated work on six green waste plants soon after assuming office.

Describing pollution as a serious issue, Verma said the current leadership was committed to addressing it on the ground. "Unlike the previous government, we are not running away from responsibility. The Chief Minister, ministers and officials are on the streets, working in mission mode to resolve every problem," he said. UNI

Implementation alone will decide success of labour codes: Justice Manmohan

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 18: The success of India's landmark labour reforms will ultimately depend on how effectively the four labour codes are implemented on the ground rather than on legislative intent alone, Justice Manmohan of Supreme Court said on Thursday. Justice Manmohan was delivering the keynote address at 'Decoding the Codes – Conference on Four Labour Codes', a one-day national conference jointly organised by the Society of Indian Law Firms (SILF) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) here.

The conference brought together members of the judiciary, senior government officials, legal experts and industry leaders to deliberate on the transition to India's new labour law regime. Stressing the importance of clarity, consistency and institutional preparedness across States, Justice Manmohan said many of India's labour statutes, including laws dating back to 1926 and 1936, had become outdated

and disconnected from modern employment realities.

"Several of India's labour statutes had become outdated and were no longer aligned with contemporary realities such as digital platforms, gig work and new forms of employment," he said.

With India's workforce estimated at nearly 50 crore people, and close to 90 per cent engaged in the unorganised sector, he said modernising the labour law framework was unavoidable.

"It was imperative to modernise and rationalise the labour law framework to address long-standing gaps in coverage and protection," Justice Manmohan added.

He explained that the consolidation of nearly 29 to 30 central labour enactments into four Labour Codes was intended to strike a balance between operational flexibility for employers and expanded protections for workers.

"The consolidation seeks to strike a balance between ease of doing business and worker welfare," he said, pointing out that

while the Codes simplify compliance and raise thresholds for prior government approval in cases of layoffs and retrenchment, they also expand minimum wage and social security coverage to unorganised, gig, platform and fixed-term workers.

However, Justice Manmohan cautioned that the real test lies ahead. "The true test of these reforms will lie in effective and coordinated implementation by State Governments," he said.

Addressing the gathering as Guest of Honour, Dr Manoj Kumar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice, described the four Labour Codes as one of the most significant restructurings of India's labour law framework since Independence.

"The four Labour Codes represent one of the most significant restructurings of India's labour law framework since Independence, addressing decades of fragmentation caused by multiple laws enacted under different economic assumptions," he said.

Dr Kumar emphasised that the shift from multiplicity to harmonisation was aimed at ensuring that economic growth and worker protection are not seen as competing goals.

"By moving from multiplicity to harmonisation, the Codes seek to ensure that economic flexibility and worker protection are complementary objectives," he said.

Noting that labour is a concurrent subject, he added that the success of the reforms would depend heavily on cooperation between the Centre and States.

"Their success will depend on harmonised rule-making by States, capacity-building across stakeholders, and the use of technology to enable transparent, inclusive and simplified compliance," Dr Kumar said, adding that if implemented with care and consensus, the Codes could support India's journey towards Viksit Bharat 2047.

Offering a contrasting view, Senior Advocate Colin Gonsalves raised concerns over the impact of the reforms on workers' rights.

"At a time when India's GDP is growing at nearly 7 per cent, this growth is being built on an army of insecure workers," he said, warning that the increasing reliance on arbitration, mediation and conciliation could weaken independent judicial protection for labour.

In his inaugural address, Dr Lalit Bhasin, President of SILF and Chairman of the CII National Committee on Legal Services, said the conference was aimed at unpacking the practical implications of the new framework.

"The Codes represent new wines in old bottles," he said, explaining that while they retain the essential ingredients of earlier laws, they introduce new features in line with contemporary industrial relations. "There may be issues in implementing these laws but these would be ironed out in due course," he added.

The conference featured detailed panel discussions on all four Labour Codes — the Code on Wages, Industrial Relations Code, Code on Social Security. UNI

Vajpayee stood for 'politics of conviction, not convenience': Nitin Gadkari

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 18 : Releasing a political memoir on former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Delhi on Wednesday, Minister Nitin Gadkari recalled Vajpayee as a strong practitioner of "politics of conviction over politics of convenience". The memoir 'Atal Sansmaran' is penned by Ashok Tandon, who served as media relations in charge in the PMO under Vajpayee.

The release of the book coincides with the 100th birth anniversary month of former prime minister.

Gadkari underlined the relevance of the book in today's political scenario and recalled his personal interactions with the former Prime Minister. He said that a very few leaders matched Vajpayee's intellectual depth or his engagement with literature, art, and culture in the political history of independent India.

Gadkari noted that Vajpayee viewed development as more than physical infrastructure, insisting that it must also encompass human development, patience, and social sensitivity.

Recounting his years of working with Vajpayee, he said the former Prime Minister spoke sparingly but acted decisively. "He believed that if someone came to meet you, you must never



refuse them time," Gadkari said, describing this as a life lesson he learnt as a young party worker and continues to follow as a cabinet minister.

The Minister added that Vajpayee rejected power-centric politics, advocating instead a politics rooted in ideology, conviction and social responsibility. While Vajpayee was not scared of disputes, Gadkari said that he believed it should not be at the cost of ideals.

Vajpayee, he said, believed governance was about institutions and ideas rather than individuals. "Who occupies the Prime Minister's chair matters less than the inheritance of ideas," he said, recalling Vajpayee's belief system.

Gadkari also highlighted Vajpayee's ability to disagree without bitterness and his insistence on dignity in public life, even amid sharp political

differences. "He believed protest was important, but discussion was indispensable," he said, adding that differences are natural in a democracy, but hatred, personal animosity, should never exist.

Present at the release, India TV Editor-in-Chief Rajat Sharma said that one of the most enduring qualities of Vajpayee was he knew when to remain silent. Drawing from poetry and personal exchanges, he described Vajpayee as a leader for whom disagreement never translated into bitterness and for whom dialogue always took precedence over confrontation.

Sharma also reflected on Vajpayee's moral authority and the enduring relevance of his politics. Invoking idioms closely associated with Vajpayee, he said the former Prime Minister often questioned whether power made leaders better human beings.

"Atal ji reminded us that politics must refine people, not corrode them," Sharma said, likening power to a 'kajal ki kothari', a place where stains can appear without warning.

Emphasising the importance of preserving political memory, Sharma said such recollections were vital to guide future generations and ensure that history is not forgotten. UNI

Security heightened in Delhi's Tihar jail after gangster Anmol Bishnoi's transfer

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 18: Security has been significantly strengthened at Delhi's Tihar Jail following the arrival of gangster Anmol Bishnoi, who was recently extradited from the United States. Jail authorities are on high alert, monitoring all movements closely. Anmol Bishnoi is the younger brother of incarcerated gangster Lawrence Bishnoi. His presence in Tihar has raised concerns of a potential gang war, as rival gangsters are already housed in the same facility. Key rival gangsters include Rohit Godara, the Goldy Brar gang, and others linked to the Neeraj Bawana, Bambiha, Himanshu Bhau, Kaushal Chaudhary, and Jaggu Bhagwanpuria networks. In a previous court hearing, Anmol Bishnoi had claimed his life was under threat from Pakistan-based gangster Shahzad Bhatti. The threat landscape is complex, involving former allies turned foes. Lawrence Bishnoi and Goldy Brar, once close associates, are now engaged in a feud, with threats regularly exchanged on social media. Lawrence Bishnoi is currently held in Sabarmati Jail. Tihar Jail has a history of gang violence. In 2023, inmates Prince Tewatia and Tillu Tajpuria were killed in separate incidents inside the prison, raising serious questions about security. CCTV footage of Tajpuria's murder had circulated widely. The central question now is whether Anmol Bishnoi's incarceration will lead to renewed gang conflict within the prison walls or if the administration will be able to maintain control. The situation remains under close watch. UNI

Smith Out With Vertigo; Khawaja Recalled

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

OVAL: Steven Smith has been ruled out of the third Ashes Test on the morning of the match in extraordinary circumstances with Usman Khawaja earning a recall just a day after it seemed unlikely that he would play another Test for Australia.

Cricket Australia (CA) confirmed just before the start of play that Smith was suffering vertigo type symptoms, something he has battled with in the past. He left the ground during the warm-up after he had batted in the nets and had a conversation with coach and selector Andrew McDonald.

Smith missed training on Monday due to illness but had trained on Sunday at Adelaide and then played golf with his team-mates at Kooyonga on Sunday afternoon.

He returned to training on Tuesday and was first in the nets. But he did not look in full health during the net session and was also hit in the groin at one point which felled him and caused him to take a lengthy break.

"Over the past few days he has been feeling unwell, with symptoms including nausea and dizziness," a

CA spokesperson said.

"He was assessed and monitored closely and was close to being available to play. However, given the persistence of symptoms, a decision was made not to proceed.

"He is being treated for a potential vestibular issue. This is something Steve has experienced intermittently in the past and is being managed accordingly. He is expected to be available for the Boxing Day test in Melbourne."

Pat Cummins, who returned as captain after Smith had led the first two Tests, confirmed after winning the toss that Khawaja would replace him.

"Steve's been feeling a bit unwell the last couple of days," Cummins said. "He came and gave it a crack this morning but didn't think he was going to get up for this one. So he's headed off home. But pretty lucky we've got someone like Usman who can step right in. Usman will bat No. 4"

Khawaja has been recalled after Australia had elected to leave him out despite returning to full fitness from a back injury, with the success of the Travis Head-Jake Weatherald opening partnership in the first two Tests forcing the selectors' hand. Even

with Khawaja's last-minute return, the selectors have decided to keep Head and Weatherald at the top. Khawaja will slot in at No. 4 with the rest of the order remaining the same.

Khawaja has only twice batted at No. 4 in Test cricket, including in the first innings of the first Test in Perth when he was unable to open due to back spasms. It has been his preferred spot to bat in first-class cricket, averaging 53.15 with 10 centuries. He batted at No. 4 in Sheffield Shield cricket for Queensland for several years while he was Australia's Test opener.

Khawaja will turn 39 on Thursday, and become the first 39-year-old to play for Australia in 40 years.

Smith has missed two of Australia's last six Tests through injury or illness. He missed Australia's first Test of the West Indies tour in June due to a finger injury he suffered in the WTC final. Josh Inglis batted at No. 4 on that occasion.

Prior to that he had not missed a Test since the third Test of the 2019 Ashes series when he was ruled out with concussion. He has suffered several bouts of vertigo in the intervening years but none that have kept him out of a Test match.



J&K Register Commanding 3-0 Win Over Himachal in Santosh Trophy Clash

NEWSPOINT BUREAU

MAHILPUR (PUNJAB): The Jammu and Kashmir football team continued their impressive run in the 79th Santosh Trophy National Football Championship 2025-26, securing a dominant 3-0 victory over Himachal Pradesh in their Group-A encounter at the Principal Harbhajan Sports Stadium, Mahilpur, on Wednesday.

Displaying sharp coordination, disciplined defending, and purposeful attacking play, the J&K side remained in control from the opening whistle and dictated the tempo of the match throughout. The players showcased strong teamwork and tactical awareness, leaving little room for the opposition to mount a comeback.

Jammu and Kashmir opened the scoring in the first half with a well-worked move that reflected their attacking intent. The goal boosted the team's confidence, and they continued to apply pressure on the Himachal Pradesh defence. Their sustained dominance paid off as they added a second goal



before the break, heading into halftime with a comfortable lead.

In the second half, J&K maintained their intensity and composure, effectively neutralising Himachal Pradesh's attempts to regain control. The defence remained compact and organised, while the midfield controlled possession and launched swift counter-attacks. The third goal, scored in the later stages of the match, sealed the outcome and capped off a thoroughly professional performance.

This victory marks Jammu and Kashmir's second consecutive win in the group stage, significantly strengthening their position in Group-A. The result highlights the team's growing confidence, fighting spirit, and collective determination as they progress in the prestigious national championship.

Team officials expressed satisfaction with the performance, noting that the players are responding well to tactical planning and match discipline. Coaches emphasised the importance of maintaining consistency and focus as the tournament advances, stating that tougher challenges lie ahead.

The Santosh Trophy remains one of India's most prestigious domestic football competitions, and Jammu and Kashmir's strong showing so far has generated optimism among supporters. With momentum on their side, the team will look to carry forward this winning form in their upcoming matches and continue their push for a deep run in the tournament.

Sports Association Pattan Felicitates Auqib Nabi on ₹8.4 Crore IPL Auction by Delhi Capitals

LONE MUSAIB

PATTAN: Sports Association Pattan organised a special programme to celebrate the grand auction of promising cricketer Auqib Nabi, who was bought by Delhi Capitals for a whopping ₹8.4 crore in the IPL auction. The occasion marked a proud and historic moment for Baramulla, Pattan and the entire Jammu and Kashmir region.

The programme was attended by President Mr. Nayeem Ahmad Bhat, Vice president Mr. Niyaz Ahmad Sofi, Chairman Mr. Ab Qayoom Khanday, chief Spokesman, Mr. Shafiq Ahmad Sofi, General Secretary, Mr. Dharain Farooq Wani and other members of



association and a large gathering of young cricket enthusiasts. Speakers on the occasion congratulated Auqib Nabi for his outstanding achievement and termed it a result of his dedication, perseverance and consistent performances.

They said Auqib's success has brought national recognition to the region and will serve as a major source of inspiration for budding cricketers. The Sports Association Pattan reaffirmed its resolve to continue supporting and promoting young talent at the grassroots level.

The event concluded with prayers for Auqib Nabi's continued success and a bright future in Indian cricket.

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