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Even A Single Unemployed Graduate is Failure of The System: LG Manoj Sinha Calls for Skill-Driven Education

Urges Universities to Cut Curriculum Burden, Integrate AI, Foster Innovation and Ensure Employability, While Addressing SMVDU's 11th Convocation Ceremony

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

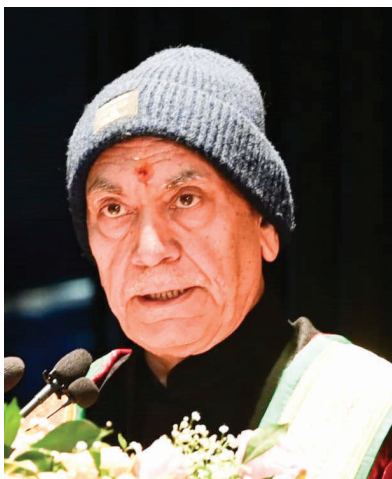
JAMMU, DEC 27: The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha, graced the

11th Convocation Ceremony of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, today.

In his convocation address, the Lieutenant Governor spoke about the imperative of shifting from outdated, rote learning system to more modern and skill-based learning approaches to meet the demands of an evolving world.

"Our endeavour should be reduction in curriculum load and development of adaptable skills for future jobs.

Even if a single student of any higher education institution is unemployed or not setting up his or her enterprise, then it clearly means that the educational institution and its teachers have



not done their work honestly," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the students to create new paths in life, give new direction to life, explore new aspects and suggest new ways for the prosperity of the nation.

"To achieve the goal of a developed India by 2047, every student, every educational institution will have to fulfil its responsibility because the future and its development will be based on the knowledge economy," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor gave five solutions to keep pace with technological change and the demands of

● Turn on Page 2

Homes Are Dreams Rebuilt, Not Just Walls and Roofs : LG Sinha

Lays Foundation Stone For 320 HRDS-funded Smart Houses for flood, Landslide-Affected Families in Reasi

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 27: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha on Saturday laid the foundation stone for the construction of 320 houses for families whose homes were completely destroyed by recent flash floods and landslides in Reasi district, calling the initiative a people-driven revolution in disaster rehabilitation.

The Rs 32-crore housing project will be fully funded by High-range Rural Development Society (HRDS India), ensuring that the affected families receive modern, prefabricated three-bedroom "Smart Houses" without any financial burden on the

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Year-End: Over 1.41 lakh pilgrims visit Mata Kheer Bhawani in 2025

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, DEC 27: A total of 1,41,044 pilgrims paid obeisance at the revered Mata Kheer Bhawani Temple at Tulumulla during January-December 2025, reflecting steady pilgrimage activity throughout the year, official data revealed.

Month-wise figures, as per the data gathered by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), show that 4,447 pilgrims visited in January, 4,722 in February, 16,094 in March, 22,446 in April, 3,609 in May, 20,678 in June, 30,058 in July, 8,462 in August, 5,031 in September, 7,027 in October, 4,608 in November, and 4,265 pilgrims in December.

The highest footfall was recorded during July, followed by April and June, coinciding with peak pilgrimage and favourable weather conditions.

During the Kheerbawani mela, necessary arrangements related to security, crowd management and basic amenities were ensured

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When Given Equal Opportunity, Women Outperform Expectations: Rajnath Singh

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

VALSAD (GUJARAT), DEC 27: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday asserted that women have repeatedly demonstrated their excellence whenever they are provided equal opportunities, saying their achievements often surpass traditional expectations.

Inaugurating the Shrimad Rajchandra Sarvamangal Centre of Excellence for Women at Dharam-

pur in Gujarat's Valsad district, Singh said the new institution would become a powerful symbol of women-led development, self-reliance and spiritual growth. Spread across 11 acres, the centre is designed to enhance skill development and livelihood opportunities and will be fully managed by rural women.

"Women have proved that whenever they get equal opportunities, they perform as well as or



even better than men," Singh said, citing trailblazers like SEWA founder Ela Bhatt and Jaswantiben Popat of Shri Mahila Griha Udyog as examples of women transforming grassroots entrepreneurship.

The Defence Minister said the initiative reflects the government's larger vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, noting that once products manufactured at the centre reach global markets, they will strengthen India's economic self-reliance while

empowering women socially and financially.

Singh also paid rich tributes to Jain spiritual leader Shrimad Rajchandra, calling his teachings timeless and increasingly relevant. "The legacy he left behind in his short life will continue to guide humanity for centuries. Time has only enhanced his relevance," he said. Calling it a historic coincidence that 125 years of Shrimad

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Army Mounts Aggressive Winter Offensive in J&K to Hunt Down Pakistani Terrorists

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, DEC 27: Defying freezing temperatures and treacherous terrain, the Indian Army has intensified counter-terrorism operations across the Kishtwar and Doda districts of Jammu and Kashmir, targeting Pakistani terrorists attempting to exploit the harsh winter for concealment, defence

sources said on Saturday.

Traditionally, the onset of Chillai Kalan—the 40-day harshest winter phase from December 21 to January 31—has witnessed a temporary slowdown in terrorist activity due to heavy snowfall, disrupted communication routes and isolation of mountainous regions. This year, however, the Army

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Kashmiri Pandit Legacy Central To Kashmir's Composite Culture: Dr Jitendra

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 27 : Expressing concern over the continuing dilution of the community's cultural and linguistic ethos, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh has stressed the need for sustained efforts to preserve the Kashmiri Pandit legacy and emphasised that preserving the community's cultural, linguistic and civilisational ethos is essential for sustaining Kashmir's composite culture, which remains incomplete without the Kashmiri Pandits.

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Temperatures dip across Kashmir, fog in Jammu plains

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 27: Minimum temperatures declined across Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on Saturday, with a wide spread of sub-zero readings recorded compared to the previous day. According to the details available

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CBK files chargesheet in fraud case

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 26: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the Crime Branch Kashmir has filed a chargesheet before the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Srinagar,

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آہ! محمد حفیظ بخشی

چہارم 29 دسمبر سوموار 10 بجے انجام دیا جائے گا

زندگی سے پوچھیں یہ کیا چاہتی ہے
آہ! کتنی مصوم اور نادان ہے یہ زندگی
خود دے دیا ہے اور دونا چاہتی ہے
یہ خیر انجانی دکھ کے ساتھ جاتی ہے کہ محمد حفیظ بخشی ولد مرحوم ولی محمد بخشی
ساکن باران پور تھانہ مامور پتنگر حال عدول آباد تارکہ رز دیکٹر پڑا سر پتنگر
مورہ 25 دسمبر 2025ء بروز جمعرات کو طویل علالت کے بعد اس دار فانی
سے رحلت کر گئے۔ انا اللہ والہ الہ را جعون۔ مرحوم خوش اخلاق، بشریف انفس
ہا، اخلاق غریب پرور اور مصوم و سلاوا کے پابند تھے۔ اللہ سبحانہ و تعالیٰ مرحوم کو جنت الفردوس میں اعلیٰ مقام عطا
کرے۔ آمین۔ اس سلسلہ میں مرحوم کی انشائی فاقہ خوانی 29 دسمبر 2025ء بروز سوموار 10 بجے ان کے آبائی
مقبرہ واقع دودھ گنگا پتہ مالوئیں انجام دی جائے گی۔ فاقہ خوانی کے بعد تقریب پڑھی گھر پر بند بھر جاری رہے گی۔
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Health Secretary lauds PG scholars on orientation milestone

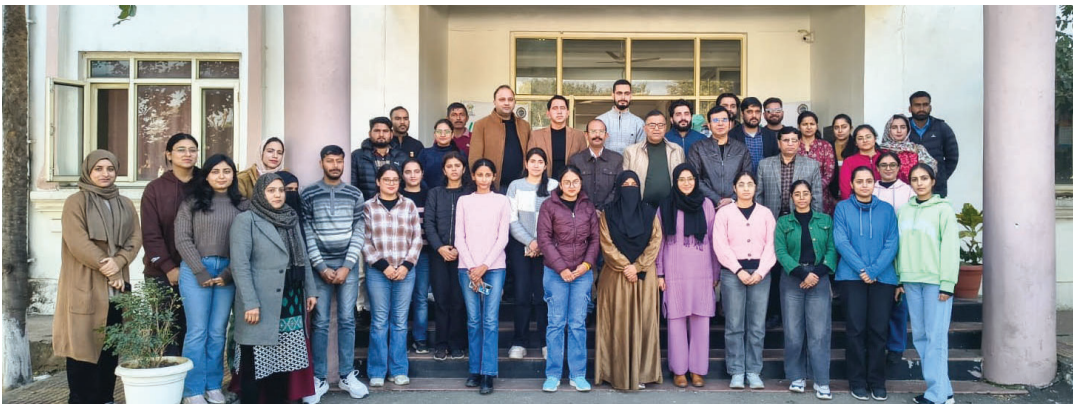
HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 27: Secretary Health & Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, today felicitated and congratulated the newly inducted PG scholars and faculty members for successful conduct of 15 day PG orientation program.

Significantly, the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine has approved 32 PG seats across seven specialties for the academic session 2025. In line with this development, 32 PG scholars, selected by the J&K BOPEE Authority, have been admitted to Government Ayurvedic Medical College Akhnoor, marking a major boost to postgraduate Ayurvedic education in the region.

Under the supervision of Professor Ashutosh Gupta, Principal cum Dean and Dr. Suresh Sharma, Director Ayush, the Government Ayurvedic Medical College Akhnoor conducted a 15 day PG orientation program for the PG scholars strictly as per the curriculum prescribed by NCISM, Gol.

Professor Vishal Tandon, a renowned Pharmacologist and Advisor IEC and Dr. Dev Raj, a Senior Biostatistician at Govern-



ment Medical College Jammu, delivered comprehensive sessions on Research Methodology and Biostatistics to PG scholars. The sessions aimed to enhance the scholars' skill development, personality growth and scientific acumen, equipping them with the tools necessary for academic and professional success.

The program featured a distinguished panel of speakers, including esteemed representatives from NCISM, Gol, All India Institute of Ayurveda New Delhi, National Institute of Ayurveda Jaipur, and senior scientists from CSIR-IIIM, Jammu. The PG scholars engaged with these experts, gaining valuable insights into the field of Ayurveda. Professor BL

Mehra, Senior Member of NCISM, provided an overview of the Commission's hierarchy and highlighted various policy initiatives and career opportunities in Ayurveda, inspiring the next generation of practitioners and researchers.

During the orientation programme, an expert panel of guest speakers from all over India shared their clinical/research experiences, valuable insights and various dimensions of Ayurveda Curriculum with career guidance.

Professor Acharya Shri Nidhi from the National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur, emphasized the significance of aligning the body's natural rhythms with those of nature to mitigate chronic dis-

eases, which account for over 60% of the total disease burden. By adopting Ayurvedic principles such as Dinacharya and Ritucharya, individuals can harmonize their circadian rhythms and effectively manage these conditions, promoting overall well-being and preventive healthcare.

Dr. Vidhya Bhushan Pandey from Orissa shed light on the applications of nanotechnology in Ayurveda, highlighting techniques to reduce particle size and enhance drug palatability.

Dr. SSMishra from Choudhary Brahm Prakash Charak Sansanthan, New Delhi, familiarized PG scholars with Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools, including relevant social

media software and e-literature resources.

Dr. Arun Mahapatra from All India Institute of Ayurveda emphasized the role of computational technology in new drug discovery and treatment innovations, inspiring scholars to leverage these advancements in their practice.

On 15th Day, Professor Kartar Dhiman, Vice Chancellor from Shri Krishna Ayurveda University Kurukshetra apprised of various career opportunities in Ayurveda and focused on integration of traditional system of medicine with modern technology.

Dr. Asha Caubey, Chief Scientist, CSIR-IIIM enlightened the PG scholars about pro-biotics and use of fermentation technology.

The faculty of Government Ayurvedic Medical College Akhnoor contributed to the program with insightful sessions, including Dr. Twinkle Gupta on Time Management, Dr. Sudesh Gupta on Effective Use of Podium, Dr. Bipan Chandra on Career Opportunities, Dr. Ankita on the Global Relevance of Ayurveda in Healthcare, Dr. Sukrant on BLS and Vision Ayurveda 2030 and Dr. D.K Sharma on Integrating Ayurvedic Medicines into Primary Healthcare.

Handwara Convention: NC Stresses Statehood, Rights

Without Statehood, Elected Govt Remains Helpless: Choudhary Mohd Ramzan

DR. AB QAYOOM

HANDWARA, DEC 27: Rajya Sabha Member and senior National Conference (NC) leader Choudhary Mohd Ramzan on Saturday said that his party will never compromise on the demand for restoration of Article 370 and 35A, reiterating that the NC continues its struggle through constitutional and democratic means. Addressing a workers' convention at Sheikh-ul-Alam Environment Hall, Handwara, Choudhary Ramzan said the restoration of statehood and special status remains the party's top priority. He said these issues have been repeatedly raised in Parliament, reflecting the sentiments of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Targeting the BJP, the NC leader said that good governance means equal rights for all citizens, alleging that minorities have faced discrimination under the present dispensation. He also questioned



the celebration of Good Governance Day, stating that governance should be measured by justice and equality. Choudhary Ramzan said the NC-led government is facing financial constraints but is actively pursuing approvals from the Centre. He informed that Chief Minister Omar Abdullah recently met the Union Finance Minister to seek financial packages for development and welfare measures. On statehood, he said a delegation had met Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who assured that policies are under review to strengthen local governance in Jammu and Kashmir. He expressed hope that a positive development may take place soon after 31st of Dec. 2025 as per the positive response of HM Amit Shah.

Choudhary Ramzan said it is time that party workers should prepare for the upcoming Panchayat and Urban Local Body elections, encouraging youth participation and effective use of social media.

Jammu students head to Gujarat for National Integration Camp

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, DEC 27: A team of the School Education Department today flagged off Jammu students for participation in the 26th Rashtra Katha Shivir, being organized by the Shri Vedic Mission Trust at village Pransala, Upleta in Rajkot district, Gujarat.

The flag-off ceremony took place at Teacher Bhawan, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, where the students were dispatched to Gujarat in multiple batches. The first batch, comprising 45 students and 3 escort teachers, departed on December 25, 2025, followed by the second batch of 77 students and 4 escort teachers on December 26, 2025. The third and final



batch, consisting of 85 students and 4 escort teachers, was flagged off today. In total, 207 students, accompanied by 11 escort teachers, are representing Jammu at this prestigious national-level camp.

During the send-off, the mentors highlighted the significance of such exposure programmes in fostering national integration, social and religious harmony besides overall personality development. The students were encouraged to seize this opportunity to imbibe new values, broaden their perspectives and cherish lifelong memories. Comprehensive arrangements have been put in place to ensure the participants' comfort and well-being throughout the programme, including arrangements for boarding and lodging.

The 26th Rashtra Katha Shivir aims to nurture youth by strengthening moral values, cultural understanding and leadership skills through motivational and value-based sessions.

Literary Event Held to Commemorate the 8th Death Anniversary of Gulzar Hazratbali by NCF

GULFAM BARJI

SRINAGAR, DEC 27: A literary event was organized by the Nigeeeni Cultural Foundation on the occasion of the eighth death anniversary of renowned writer and poet of the Valley, the late Gulzar Hazratbali. The event was held at the Foundation's head office located at Nigeeen Club, University Road, Hazratbali, where rich tributes were paid to the literary contributions of the late poet and writer.

The event was presided over by the Chairman of the Nigeeeni Cultural Foundation, Engineer Shabnam Bashir. Several prominent personalities, noted poets, intellectuals, and literary figures from across the Valley attended the gathering and shared their thoughts, memories, and heartfelt tributes to the late Gulzar Hazratbali.



Speaking on the occasion, Chairman Engineer Shabnam Bashir emphasized the need to take effective and concrete steps to bring the rare and unpublished works of this serious and impactful poet into the public domain at the earliest, so that future generations may benefit from his literary legacy.

The event concluded with special prayers offered for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

Aab-e-Rawan, Ehsaas Foundation & Reroot Foundation of India Observe Youm-e-Khawaja Ajmeeri in Srinagar

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, DEC 27: Aab-e-Rawan, in collaboration with the Ehsaas Foundation and the Reroot Foundation of India, on Saturday organised Youm-e-Khawaja Ajmeeri, a spiritually enriching and culturally significant gathering, at Bait-ul-Meeras, Aali Kadal.

The programme featured a Mehfil-e-Mushaira and a Mehfil-e-Sama, celebrating the timeless message of love, peace, harmony, and humanity as preached by the

great Sufi saint Hazrat Khawaja Garib Nawaz (RA). The event resonated with soulful poetic recitations and devotional performances, reflecting the rich spiritual and cultural heritage of the region.

Ms. Mantasha Rashid, KAS, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Speaking on the occasion, she highlighted the enduring relevance of Khawaja Garib Nawaz's teachings, emphasising their role in promoting communal harmony, compassion, and



mutual respect in today's society.

The gathering was attended by renowned scholars, poets, artists, and a large number of people from different walks of life. Participants paid rich tributes to the legacy of Khawaja Garib Nawaz (RA) and reaffirmed their commitment to the values of peace, brotherhood, and coexistence.

The organisers stated that such programmes aim to strengthen social unity and keep alive the spiritual traditions that inspire harmony and humanity.

'Mann Ki Baat' strengthens direct dialogue between PM Modi and the people: Ashok Koul

BJP holds meeting for 'Mann Ki Baat' outreach in Vijaypur Assembly Constituency

HT NEWS NETWORK

VIJAYPUR, DEC 27: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) J&K General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul addressed a meeting of Mandal Presidents, General Secretaries, and Mann Ki Baat Mandal Incharges of the Vijaypur Assembly constituency. Addressing the meeting, Ashok Koul highlighted the significance of the Mann Ki Baat

programme as a unique platform that fosters direct and meaningful communication between the people and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He emphasized that this initiative is not just a routine broadcast but a dynamic two-way communication channel that reflects the thoughts, aspirations, and achievements of citizens from all walks of life. He asked all office-bearers to

mobilize and engage prominent locals across every booth to actively participate in the programme's dissemination and discussions, thereby enhancing community involvement and public participation.

Koul highlighted how Mann Ki Baat has inspired citizens to contribute to social causes, encouraged awareness about national priorities, and ignited mass movements related to



cleanliness, women empowerment, youth innovation and environmental conservation.

These efforts demonstrate how the programme has transcended its radio broadcast origins to

become a catalyst for positive change and inclusive nation-building.

Ashok Koul further outlined strategies to maximize reach and impact, encouraging booth-level listening groups, discussions, and follow-up actions that align with the larger developmental goals articulated by the Prime Minister.

BJP Senior Leader Jai Ram Sharma, Mandal Presidents

Sushil Singh, Dheeraj Sharma and Narinder Singh, along with all Mann Ki Baat Mandal Incharges, were present at the meeting. They reaffirmed their commitment to ensure that Mann Ki Baat listening and engagement sessions are organized methodically at every booth in the Vijaypur constituency, with full participation from local prominent, youth leaders, women groups, and community elders.

Sakeena Itoo virtually inaugurates Training Programme on 'Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health' from Jammu

Also releases Health Calendar-2026

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 27: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo virtually inaugurated Training Programme-cum-Workshop on 'Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health' under the National Programme on Climate Change and Human Health (NPCCHH) from Civil Secretariat here today.

Addressing the participants, Minister Sakeena highlighted that climate change is one of the most serious global challenges of the present era, with far-reaching consequences for human health, particularly in vulnerable regions. She noted that rising temperatures, erratic weather patterns, increasing frequency of extreme climatic events, and deteriorating air and water quality are directly



contributing to a surge in climate-sensitive diseases.

The Minister emphasised that climate change is no longer only an environmental issue but a major public health concern, impacting disease patterns, food security, mental health, maternal and child health, and overall well-being. She underlined the

need for a proactive, evidence-based and coordinated health response to mitigate and adapt to these emerging challenges.

She added that programmes like NPCCHH play a crucial role in integrating climate considerations into public health planning and service delivery.

During the event, the Minister

also released the Health Calendar-2026, which highlights important national and international health days along with key public health information aimed at strengthening health awareness and promoting preventive healthcare.

Pertinently, the training programme aims to build the

capacity of healthcare professionals to understand and respond to the health implications of climate change, including emerging diseases, extreme weather events, and their impact on public health planning and service delivery.

The speakers during the programme highlighted the importance of sensitizing healthcare professionals about the health impacts of climate change and the need for a coordinated public health response under the NPCCHH framework.

Dr. Fazl ul Qadir Parry, Principal, SKIMS Medical College; Dr. Jehangir Bakshi, Director Health Services, Kashmir; Dr. Anjum Afshan Qadri, State Epidemiologist, DHSC; other senior officers of health department and medical professionals were also present on the occasion.

2 day orientation programme on POC SO Act begins at Jammu

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 27: Under the patronage of Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Judicial Academy), Justice Arun Palli and guidance of Chairperson and members of the Governing Committee for J&K Judicial Academy, the Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy today began a 2 day orientation programme on Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, with reference to SAMVAD's Training Manual on "Essential Interventions and Skills for Working with Child Sexual Abuse - Introducing Mental Health and Legal Dimensions of Forensics" and the National Judicial Academy's Training Module for Fast Track Special Courts, at Convention Centre, Canal Road, here.

Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Judge, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Chairperson, Governing Committee for J&K Judicial Academy) inaugurated the orientation programme. In his inaugural address, Justice Oswal underscored that children are the most vulnerable participants in the judicial system and must be dealt with utmost empathy and sensitivity. Addressing the judicial officers and other stakeholders, Justice Oswal observed that offences against children leave deep and lasting scars. "Child trauma is not a static event; it creates ripples that affect the child's entire future, family and society at large," he remarked.

While stressing the importance of expeditious disposal of POCSO cases, Justice Oswal cautioned that "fast-track injustice is not justice at all", reiterating that speed must never compromise fairness, due process or sensitivity towards the child victims. Justice Oswal called upon all stakeholders to act as guardians of child rights, ensuring that the courts remain safe, reassuring and child-friendly spaces for children seeking justice.

Justice Rahul Bharti, Judge, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Member, Governing Committee for J&K Judicial Academy), in his special address, underscored the responsibility of courts and allied stakeholders in protecting the dignity and best interests of the child.

Justice Rahul Bharti observed that we live in a society where our children need protection and the responsibility cast upon the stakeholders reflects their commitment towards this cause. Referring to landmark judicial pronouncements, he emphasised a child-centric and sensitive approach in dealing with POCSO cases.

Citing real-life courtroom experiences, Justice Bharti highlighted that insensitive handling can aggravate a child's trauma. He stressed the need for empathy, child-friendly courts and adherence to due process to truly safeguard child rights. The first technical session on day one commenced with an overview of the POCSO Act, 2012, delivered by Dr. Humayun Rasheed Khan, Senior Judicial Officer and Professor, National Judicial Academy, Bhopal. He explained the main objectives of the Act, which aims to protect the children from sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment. He highlighted the key provisions including definitions of offences, procedures for age determination, standards of consent and mandatory reporting obligations.

Dr. Khan discussed practical measures such as in-camera proceedings, minimizing direct confrontation with the accused and safeguarding the child's dignity throughout the judicial process.

Subsequent sessions were conducted by Saurabh Shashi Ashok, Resource Person Health (Policy & Law), Initiative for Child Protection and Mental Health, Azim Premji Foundation. He provided a comprehensive understanding of child sexual abuse through a psychosocial lens, forensic dimensions of child sexual abuse cases and essential interventions and skills for working with child victims.

The sessions sensitized the participants to trauma-informed interviewing, rapport building, avoidance of secondary victimisation, evidence preservation, inter-agency collaboration and victim compensation mechanisms.

Naseer Ahmad Dar, Director, J&K Judicial Academy formally gave the introduction of the programme. He said that the POCSO Act embodies a solemn commitment of the legal system to protect the children from sexual abuse and exploitation, ensuring a process that is not only legally sound but also sensitive, child-friendly and trauma-informed.

The programme was highly interactive and witnessed active participation from the Judicial Officers, Prosecutors, Police, Medical and Forensic Officers, Members of Committees of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Gender Sensitisation Committees and Law Students, reflecting a collective commitment towards strengthening the child protection mechanisms in the Union Territory.

250 KVA Electric Sub-Station Commissioned at CHC Thathri DDC Doda inaugurates newly developed sub station

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

DODA, DECEMBER 27: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Doda Harvinder Singh today inaugurated a 250 KVA Electric sub-station at Community Health Centre (CHC)-Thathri.

The commissioning of the sub-station will significantly enhance the operational efficiency of CHC Thathri by providing a stable power supply for critical medical equipment, emergency services and patient care. It will also benefit people living in adjoining areas.

The sub-station has been executed under the District Capex at a cost of Rs. 39.83 lakh by the Sub-Division Thathri falling under the JPDC Electric Division- Kishtwar.

The DDC underlined the urgency of strengthening essential infrastructure, especially in the health sector, to improve service delivery in rural and semi-urban areas. He directed the concerned department to ensure proper maintenance and efficient operation of the facility.

The inauguration ceremony was



attended by the local DDC Councillor, SDM, Tehsildar, PO ICDS, BMO, Ex-En JPDC along with other officers and officials.

Additionally the District Development Commissioner reviewed the status of ongoing developmental activities and assessed the functioning of government offices. He also convened public grievance redressal camp at the local Dak Banglow.

He inspected the offices of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Tehsil Office and Municipal Committee Office and took stock of the developmental works being executed in the sub-

division. He issued necessary directions to the concerned officers to ensure timely completion of projects with strict adherence to quality standards.

The DDC also interacted with local residents and public representatives to listen to their grievances and demands. He assured that genuine issues would be addressed on priority.

Later, the DDC inspected Tehsil Library, where he reviewed the available infrastructure and facilities for students. He interacted with the students present and encouraged them to make optimal use of library resources for academic excellence, competitive examinations and overall personality development.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Commissioner laid the foundation stone for the construction of a new Tehsil Office building at Phagsoo.

The foundation stone was laid in the presence of DDC Councillor Thathri, Sandeep Singh Manhas and Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Sheetal Sharma, along with other officers, officials and local representatives. The project is being constructed at an estimated cost of Rs. 75 lakh by PWD (R&B).

Rathkhada Mela inaugurated at Shri Narsingh Dev Ji Temple- Ghagwal

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SAMBA, DECEMBER 27: The age-old and spiritually significant Rathkhada Mela was inaugurated today at the revered Shri Narsingh Dev Ji Temple-Ghagwal, marking the commencement of the annual religious festivities with traditional fervour and devotion.

Deputy Commissioner, Ayushi Sudan inaugurated the Mela and also inspected the arrangements put in place for the devotees.

Later, the event witnessed the presence of MLA, Surjit Singh Salathia; MLA Vijaypur, Chander



Parkash Ganga; MLA Hiranagar, Vijay Kumar Sharma and DDC,

Suresh Kumar.

The legislators paid obeisance at the temple, took stock of the mela arrangements and interacted with the district administration, local public representatives, members of the Temple Management Committee, volunteers and a large number of devotees.

The inauguration ceremony was also attended by SDM Ghagwal, K.S. Bali; Additional SP, Garu Ram and other officers from the district administration.

The Legislators expressed satisfaction over the comprehensive

arrangements made for the event, including security, traffic management, sanitation, drinking water supply, health facilities and other essential services. They lauded the coordinated efforts of the administration, temple committee and volunteers in ensuring a smooth, peaceful and well-organized mela.

Volunteers and temple committee members played an active role in assisting devotees and maintaining order, reflecting strong community participation in the successful commencement of the mela.

MLA, PCCF inaugurate Biodiversity Park Cum Nagar Van at Sukral

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KATHUA, DECEMBER 27: Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Billawar Satish Kumar Sharma and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF J&K Suresh Kumar Gupta inaugurated the newly developed Biodiversity Park cum Nagar Van at Sukral- Billawar Forest Division here the other day.

Speaking on the occasion, the Member Legislative Assembly commended the efforts of the Forest Department for developing a green space near the Pilgrimage of Mata Sukrala.

The PCCF, while addressing the gathering, highlighted the works being undertaken by the Forest Department in the Division. He exhorted the Forest Department functionaries to put in their best efforts to protect the green wealth and wildlife.

Later, the Member Legislative Assembly & the Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests inspected the progress of up-gradation work at Neta Ji Subash Chander Bose Park-Phinter.

Earlier, the PCCF inspected progress of



up-gradation work at Challan Nursery, development of Eco-Park at Chown, development of awareness centre at Totali Park & up-gradation of inspection Hut at Nagrota Gujroo.

Member District Development Council Nagrota Gujroo, N.D Tripathi; Conservator of Forests East Circle Jammu, Pradeepchandra P. Wahule; Additional Deputy Commissioner Billawar, Vinay Khosla; Divisional Forest Officer Billawar, Divisional Forest Officer Basohli, Deputy Director Forest Protection Force, Gamma Unit J-04, Billawar & staff of Forest Division, Billawar accompanied the PCCF.

DC leads plantation drive at Mini Secretariat Kishtwar

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

KISHTWAR, DECEMBER 27: As a part of the ongoing J&K green initiative, the District Administration Kishtwar, in collaboration with Civil Society, organised a plantation drive here at the Mini Secretariat-New Deputy Commissioner Office Complex.

Saplings were planted within the DC Office premises to increase green cover, promote urban plantation and maintain ecological balance. The initiative forms part of the UT Government's continued commitment to environmental conservation and eco-friendly practices.

The Deputy Commissioner led the plantation drive by planting the first sapling. He highlighted the importance of tree plantation in addressing climate change, improving air quality and conserving natural resources.

He urged the government departments and the citizens to actively participate in such initiatives to contribute towards a greener future.

The plantation drive witnessed active participation from ADC, Pawan Kotwal;



CPO, Akhil Thakur; POICDS, Dr. Rishi Kumar Sharma and other district officers.

The programme highlighted the collective efforts of the district administration and civil society in promoting environmental awareness and encouraging community participation for sustainable development.

Javid Dar inaugurates mega Kisan Mela at Bishnah

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, DECEMBER 27: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today inaugurated a mega Kisan Mela at Bishnah.

The event was jointly organised by the J&K Kisan Advisory Board and the Directorate of Agriculture, Jammu, with the aim of taking government schemes and services directly to the farming community.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the government is committed towards ensuring that the farmers receive all facilities at their doorsteps. He stated that such fairs provide a direct interface between the farmers and the departments, helping them understand and avail the benefits of various schemes.

Referring to the challenges posed by climatic change and global



warming, the Minister stressed the need to move beyond traditional cropping patterns and adopt cash crops, horticulture and allied activities. He informed that the department is extending skill training to youth along with financial assistance under different schemes, including subsidies of over 50 per cent, to make agriculture a

sustainable and attractive livelihood option.

MLA Bishnah, Dr Rajeev Bhagat, said the mela was organised to create awareness among the farmers about the government programmes. He emphasized that steps are being taken to reduce the role of middlemen in marketing of farm produce so that the farmers receive fair returns.

He added that under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), priority is being given to small and marginal farmers.

Secretary, J&K Kisan Advisory Board, members of the Board and heads of agriculture and allied departments also addressed the gathering. They highlighted various initiatives being implemented for the welfare of farmers.

A Nukkad Natak was also presented to educate the farmers about the financial assistance schemes in agriculture and allied sectors and the process of availing these benefits.

Among those present were DDC Bishnah Davinder Kumar, DDC Arnia Surekha Bhagat, MD HADP Sandeep Kumar, Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta, Director Sheep Husbandry Jammu, Director Horticulture Jammu, Director HM&P Jammu, senior officers from allied departments and a large number of farmers from the area.

ARTO Ramban disqualifies Driving Licences of 3 Persons for illegal Activities

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

RAMBAN, DECEMBER 27: The Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Ramban has disqualified the driving licences of three persons involved in serious illegal activities, including bovine smuggling.

As per official orders issued by the ARTO, Driving Licence No. JK1920180000395 issued in favour of Mohammad Akram S/o Mohd Rafiq Khan, R/o Shaban Bass, Banihal, Licence No. JK1920250001293 issued in favour of Mohammad Yasin S/o Mohd Younis, R/o Ward No. 3, Tatrsoo, Ramban, and Licence No. JK1920120002911 issued in favour of Imtiaz Ahmed S/o Mohammad Yaqoob, R/o Chanderkote, have been disqualified for a period of three months with immediate effect. The action follows the registration of criminal cases by the Police Department against the licence holders for illegal transportation of bovine animals, an offence having the potential to disturb public order and hurt religious sentiments.

The disqualification has been effected under Section 19 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, read with Rule 21 of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1991, after following due legal procedure.

Prior to issuing the orders, show-cause notices were served to the licence holders, providing them an opportunity of being



heard in accordance with the principles of natural justice. However, the replies submitted were found unsatisfactory by the Licensing Authority.

The decision was taken on the recommendations of the Police Department and Transport Authorities, in line with the directions of the Supreme Court of India and the Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety, which mandate strict action against misuse of motor vehicles for criminal activities.

As per the ARTO, 58 driving licences have been suspended/ disqualified in the current year 2025 for different violations, while show-cause notices have been issued to 15 other licence holders.

The Transport Department has reiterated its commitment to ensuring road safety and preventing unlawful use of vehicles in Ramban district.

DDC Chairman Doda inaugurates Smart Classroom at GHS Bhallara-Chiralla

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

DODA, DECEMBER 27: A Smart Classroom was inaugurated today here at Government High School Bhallara-Block Chiralla by District Development Council Chairman, Dhananther Singh Kotwal. The local DDC member, Assistant Commissioner Development and Block Development Officer were also present.

The initiative marks a significant step towards strengthening digital education infrastructure in rural and far-flung areas, aiming to enhance learning outcomes through modern teaching aids.



Addressing the gathering, the DDC Chairman praised Prime Minister, Narendra Modi for the overall development of remote villages and transformative reforms in Jammu and Kashmir. He also lauded Union Minister, Dr Jitendra Singh for the inauguration of 31 road projects, stating that improved road connectivity is accelerating socio-economic development and improving access to essential services. He highlighted the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A as a historic move that opened new avenues for inclusive growth.

The DDC Chairman appreciated the dedicated efforts of BDO Chiralla for visible development works in the block. He assured the public that all pending road projects would be completed at the earliest, reiterating the Government of India's commitment to connecting remote villages. He further assured that genuine public demands would be addressed on priority.

IEC Programme under VB-GRAMG Act held at Panchayat Bhawan Nadihal Bandipora

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, DECEMBER 27:

A Special IEC programme was successfully conducted at Panchayat Bhawan Nadihal, Bandipora today to create awareness about the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Grameen) (VB-GRAMG Act). The programme was chaired by the Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD), Bandipora, and witnessed active participation from local residents, Self Help Group (SHG) members, youth, and officials of the Rural Development Department. During the programme, participants were sensitized about the key objectives and provisions of the Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar & Ajeevika Mission (Grameen), with special emphasis on the enhanced guarantee of 125 days of wage

employment, timely payment of wages, compensation in case of delays, and strengthened provisions for unemployment allowance.

While addressing the gathering, the Assistant Commissioner Development, Bandipora stressed the importance of active community participation in the planning and implementation of rural development schemes. He highlighted that the VB-GRAMG Act aims to strengthen livelihood security, promote transparency, and empower rural households through guaranteed employment and effective convergence of schemes at the Panchayat level.

Officials present on the occasion elaborated on various components of the scheme through IEC materials, pamphlets, posters, and interactive discussions.

The participants were informed



about the crucial role of Gram Panchayats in planning, execution,

monitoring of works, and grievance redressal mechanisms. They were encouraged to actively participate in Gram Sabhas to ensure that local needs and priorities are duly reflected in development plans.

The IEC programme concluded with an interactive question and answer session, during which participants raised queries related to different aspects of the VB-GRAMG Act. The queries were satisfactorily addressed by the Assistant Commissioner Development, Bandipora.

The event marked an important step towards spreading awareness about the Viksit Bharat vision and reaffirmed the Government's commitment to guaranteed employment, livelihood security, and grassroots empowerment in the rural areas of District Bandipora.

DC Ramban reviews progress of RDSS, installation of Rooftop Solar & Smart Meters

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

RAMBAN, DECEMBER 27: Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan today reviewed the progress of works under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), Rooftop Solar coverage, and installation of Smart Meters in the district.

The meeting was attended by Executive Engineer JPDCI Sunil Sharma, engineers from various divisions and representatives of executing agencies and vendors associated with these flagship power sector initiatives.

The Deputy Commissioner laid special emphasis on effective implementation and promotion of

the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, aimed at encouraging households to adopt rooftop solar systems for reducing electricity bills and ensuring reliable power supply. He directed the Executive Engineers and concerned agencies to accelerate the pace of rooftop solar installations to meet the set targets within stipulated timeline, while strictly adhering to quality standards.

The DC instructed officers and vendors to proactively mobilize public participation, promptly resolve field-level issues and create awareness about the long-term benefits of rooftop solar systems.

Reviewing the progress of Smart Meter installation, the Deputy Commissioner directed the executing

agencies to expedite the process and ensure smart metering in a time bound manner.

He further instructed that smart meters be mandatorily installed and made operational for all rooftop solar beneficiaries without delay. JPDCI officials were asked to verify and certify the installations of meters.

The DC also reviewed the status of works under RDSS and directed concerned agencies for fast-track execution. Assuring full administrative support, he emphasized timely completion of these projects to strengthen power infrastructure, enhance efficiency and improve consumer satisfaction in Ramban district.

Mission Vatsalya Bandipora organises awareness programme on "Child Marriage Free Bharat"

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BANDIPORA, DECEMBER 27 : Under the aegis of Mission Vatsalya, District Bandipora today organized an awareness programme on the theme "Child Marriage Free Bharat" at SSM School of Education, Sonarwani, Bandipora.

The programme was conducted with the objective of creating awareness among students and staff about the harmful consequences of child marriage and the importance of safeguarding child rights.

Officials from District Child Protection Unit, Child Helpline, and Child Helpdesk participated in the programme and sensitized the audience about the legal provisions related to the prevention of child marriage, child protection mechanisms, and the role of society in ensuring a safe and secure environment for children.

The officials emphasized the importance of timely reporting of child rights violations and highlighted the services and support systems available under Mission Vatsalya for the welfare and protection of children.

The awareness programme witnessed active participation from students and



faculty members and was highly appreciated by the participants for its informative and meaningful engagement aimed at building a child-friendly and child-marriage-free society.

SWD organises Awareness Camp for various Welfare Schemes at Syedpora

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 27: Social Welfare Department (SWD), SANKALP- Hub For Empowerment of Women- Mission Shakti Srinagar organized one day Awareness cum on-spot facilitation camp for various welfare schemes for local community members at Syedpora today.

During the camp, on-the-spot registrations were facilitated for several schemes, including Old Age Pension, Women in Distress Pension, Physically Challenged Pension, and Marriage Assistance Scheme, ensuring that no eligible beneficiary is left out from availing the benefits. Besides, registrations of local community members were also carried out under different Social Security Pension Schemes, Ladli Beti Scheme, and other livelihood generation schemes.

The objective of organising the awareness camp was to bring the local population under the ambit of various social welfare schemes and to strengthen outreach at the grassroots level. The general public was also educated and sensitised about the benefits and eligibility criteria of different schemes aimed at improving their quality



of life. Approximately 200 people participated in the camp and nearly 50 beneficiaries were onspot linked to different welfare schemes.

Multi-Departmental Outreach Camp held at Aspirational Block Mankote to strengthen grassroots services

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

POONCH, DECEMBER 27: On the directions of the District Development Commissioner Ashok Kumar Sharma, a Multi-Departmental Outreach Camp was organized today at Middle School Balahar Sagra in



Aspirational Block Mankote. The camp saw active participation from the Health, Nutrition (ICDS), Agriculture and NRLM departments, reflecting strong inter-departmental convergence to strengthen grassroots service delivery.

Along with health and nutrition services, organic inputs were distributed among farmers to promote sustainable and climate-resilient agricultural practices.

Aspirational Block Programme Fellow Ajaz Ahmed was present during the camp and played an active role in coordination and field-level monitoring, contributing to the smooth execution of the outreach initiative. The camp was supported by a dedicated team comprising Dr. Sajid Mujtaba, Dr. Rabnawaz Khan, Dr. Rajeev Sharma, Fareed Ahmed (Pharmacist, NTPHC Dabraj), Imtiaz Ahmed (Pharmacist, AAM Chhajla), Mohd Yaseen (HE, Mankote), Mohd Janghir (LA, Mankote), Ishtiaq Ahmed (MTS, SC Nar Mankote), Shazia Malik (FMPHW, SC Sagra), Mohd Bashir (MTS), Mohd Shakoor (NTEP), Vinod Kumar (NTEP) and Sudhir (AEO, Agriculture Department).

The Nutrition component was strengthened by ICDS Supervisors, Nahima Kouser, Safia Bibi and Ms. Naseem Begum. The camp witnessed encouraging community participation and reaffirmed the district administration's commitment to integrated, inclusive, and people-centric development in the Aspirational Block.

HT EDITORIAL

Cause of worry as cat bite cases increase alarmingly

Over the years the dog bite cases have caused panic among the people of the Kashmir valley and in the recent past yet another disturbing trend has come to the fore. The same is in the form of the rise in the cat bite cases in Srinagar and other parts of the valley. The rise in the cat bite cases has led to anxiety among the valley residents and they are quite worried about the same.

The anti-rabies clinic at Shri Maharaja Hari Singh (SMHS) hospital in Srinagar has reported as many as 6,500 cat bite cases during this year so far. In fact, the cat bite cases have outnumbered the dog bite cases for this year.

The increase in cat bite cases means that more and more people are coming into contact with cats. In most of the cases the cat bites have been due to the reason that they have bit their masters while being at their houses.

Over the past few years, it has been observed that many people have started to have cats as their pets at their respective homes. This was not the trend earlier with people only having dogs as their pets and in some cases, rabbits were being used as pets. It seems that the people who have cats as their pets are not fully aware about the precautions that need to be taken while keeping them at their respective homes.

It is important that the people who want to or intend to have some pet at their home should consult a veterinarian so that they come to know about the various facets associated with the same. Most of the people are not aware about the precautions that need to be taken while rearing an animal at their home. At the same time, it is important that food is given to the pet animals at the appropriate time so that they don't feel starved.

Like humans, animals are to be given food at regular intervals and this needs to be kept in mind by the people who have cats or dogs as pets at their homes. Timely vaccination of the pets is also very important and most of the time it is skipped by the masters. It is essential that vaccines are administered to the pets well on time so that they are protected from different ailments and diseases.

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We Need A Pollution-Free Environment



■ SAHIL MANZOOR

Environment is a broad term; it needs several books to describe every single component of it. Briefly, the environment can be defined as our surroundings, like plants, trees, herbs, shrubs, birds, water bodies, soil, hills, mountains, and small water bodies like ponds and canals etc. It means everything surrounding us is included in the environment. Our environment must be neat, clean, and free from all types of pollutants. Nature is kind; be kind to it. Nature bestows us with unlimited blessings in different forms; it includes living as well as non-living things.

There are two main components of the environment: biotic and abiotic components.

Biotic components include all living things, like plants, trees, animals, microorganisms, fish, grass, etc.

Abiotic components: these include non-living things like water, soil, and air, which are abiotic components of the environment.

One thing that is quite awesome is that abiotic and biotic components are interrelated. Every micro- to macro-object in this universe is beneficial, and none is unwanted or harmful until any human interference takes place and disturbs nature.

Today, the whole world is concerned about the environment. Every year on the 5th of June, World Environment Day is observed. I think instead of celebration, we should observe, as there is nothing special that humanity has given to this environment. Humans are the main culprits who pollute the environment in different ways. I will mention this in this article at the end. World Environment Day can be brief, as the United Nations established World Environment Day in 1972, which was the first day of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. World Environment Day is observed every year with a specific theme and slogan that reflect the environmental issues of that time. The theme of 2024 is land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience.

■ How can our environment

cause pollution?

Environmental pollution is caused by human interference and can occur naturally.

How the environment gets polluted naturally, due to intense earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, etc.

How humans can pollute the environment: Humans play an immense role in polluting the environment, like the construction of giant buildings, roads, bridges, railway networks, etc. Where there is the presence of humans, there is pollution. Humans are not adopting and implementing scientific techniques to tackle environmental-related issues.

In my district, Budgam brick kilns are the main source of air pollution and cause desertification-like scenes. Villages like Panzan and Gutlibagh in the district of Budgam are looking deserted due to sterile land and dust. Brick kilns should be minimized, and alternatives should be found for the construction of buildings, houses, etc.

■ Types of pollution, like

Air pollution: the composition of the air consists of different gases like 78% nitrogen (N), 21% oxygen (O), 0.003% carbon dioxide, and CO2. The remaining gases are present in trace amounts in the air, like krypton, xenon, argon, etc. Air can be polluted due to harmful gases released from factories and vehicles. As we know today, transport is increasing rapidly. As we can consider the situation in Delhi during the winter, the air pollution makes the lives of people dreadful. The air should be pollution-free. Plantation drives are very important in cities along the roads. The government should provide fresh plants to residents annually during the peak season, or it should be mandatory for households to plant trees if they have available spaces in their lawns. Plants and trees play a great role in minimizing the CO2 concentration in the atmosphere and providing us with fresh and healthy oxygen to survive.

Soil pollution: Every day, we are experiencing new products on the market: packets with harmful polythene, plastic boxes, and chip wrappers. Solid waste is destroying the soil as it gets sterile, and harmful microorganisms are generated from unwanted solid waste in cities, towns, etc. Soil pollution can be minimized by keeping available garbage sheds in the village, and proper management should be taken into consideration.

Water pollution: water bodies are

getting polluted due to household sewage, garbage, etc. and need the attention of vigilant individuals everywhere.

We have several pollutant-causing agents, and every pollution-causing agent should be taken into consideration and should be addressed on a priority basis.

Polythene is one of the major causes of soil pollution, and it stops the growth of plants as its presence under the soil stops the roots from getting important nutrients from beneath the soil. Polythene takes 700 years to decompose.

Pollution causes disturbances in the weather and pollutes our environment wholly, and Solly.no snow, no enjoyment

Kashmir Valley has different faces throughout the year. During the winter, the Kashmir valley looks whitish. The lofty, snow-clad mountains look so charming and enhance the beauty of the Kashmir Valley. Winters are quite special in Kashmir, as during this period tourists come from all over the world to see snowfall. Snow is the soul of Kashmir during the winter. Without snow, Kashmir looks deserted, and there is no doubt that Kashmir has no alternative throughout the globe. But snow enhances the beauty of Kashmir and has great and beneficial benefits. Even today, literate or illiterate people know the value of snow, understand the importance of environmental-related changes and climatic conditions, and know the severity of prolonged drought. So every Kashmiri prays and wishes for fresh snowfall.

■ Why is snow important in Kashmir?

Literally, snow is the solid form of water. Countries that lie in the northern parts of the world receive snowfall. In Kashmir, there are several rivers, like the Lidder River in Pahalgam, Shaliganag in Doodhpathri, Doodhganga in Yousmarg, and waterfalls. The main source of all these rivers and canals is the glaciers. Glaciers are the snow-covered mountains that provide water to rivers for drinking purposes and keep the surrounding area cold and charming during the summer. Snow keeps the soil moist and has immense benefits.

The best season for snowfall in Kashmir.

From the arrival of winter to mid-chilai kalan, snowfall might play an important role. Snowfall should happen at the beginning of January, then stay for a longer time. The harsh cold

season starts from the 21st of December to the 31st of January. But we should never lose hope. The Almighty has the best plans for humanity and knows what is better and what is not. So we are predicting things, discussing them as per the scientific facts, etc. Snow is not important only in winter. Snow plays a great role in Kashmir for all four seasons. So, snow has great importance and attracts thousands of tourists.

Spring: During the spring, the Kashmir Valley looks lush green, and flowers everywhere in the gardens look so winsome. Spring starts from the 21st of March to the 21st of June. During spring, the Tulip Garden (Kashmir Valley Tulip Gardens, the largest in Asia) is one of the most immense attractions for local tourists and visitors from all over the world. Mughal gardens like Nishat, Shalimar, Harvan, Pari Mahal, and Chesh Mashahi look mesmerizing, lavish, charming, and sensuous.

We still have something to lose. Let's pray together, and I hope almighty Allah will bless us with the favorable and beneficial snowfall that we have been waiting for the last couple of months. Prayers are so valuable and powerful. Again, never lose hope and hope for the best results. I hope we will see fresh snowfall soon. Snow covers the whole surface in Kashmir and looks like it is painted white.

For the last couple of decades, the impact of environmental-related issues has been observed in the Kashmir Valley. Like an increase in temperature and more rainfall during June and July. Dryness in winters; less rainfall in March and April. This is quite alarming, and we have to keep in mind that we have to preserve all the natural resources, like forests. Forests play a necessary role in climate change. When there are adequate forests, we have good and favorable seasons. Awareness programs can inform the general public in remote areas where we have forests. Tribal people should be provided with jobs so that they will stay away from the forests for their livelihood purposes.

In all the tourist destinations, locals should be aware of environment-related issues and should be engaged in the safeguarding of all the natural resources, like water bodies, forests, and social forestry areas.

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SAVE VILLAGES



■ M.S. MAGRAY

The main features of a typical village are
I. Areas designated for construction of houses for living called Abadi Deh.

II. Land for cultivation of crops like rice, oil seeds etc. in plain areas and maize, wheat in upper reach villages.

III. Areas meant for cultivation of vegetables for consumption.

IV. Areas meant for grazing of animals like cow, bulls, sheep. These areas served as pastures for the animals. These areas were commonly known as Kahcherai (gascharai) and khalsa Sarkar.

V. Presence of springs and streams for irrigation and to meet drinking water needs.

A village was looked after by a lambardar who was the head of the village mostly responsible for collection of land revenue and as head to look after small village problems. With the dawn of democracy, elected panchayats came up which led to narrowing of role of lambardar.

The dawn of democracy led to
I. Increase in production of food crops and fruits as a result of modern techniques of farming and use of fertilisers.

II. Better connectivity through road transport

III. Expansion of education as a result of coming up of educational institutions.

IV. Availability of better health care through

All these developments led to change in standard of living of the village population. The living standards were improved and one of its important consequences was disintegration of joint families which led to coming up of separate houses for various family members. New constructions were not properly planned. People used kahcharai land, khalsa and even cultivable land for this purpose. In the process the springs and streams were also not spared. Besides this, increase of commercial activities in villages also led to shrinking of cultivable land.

dispensaries and hospitals.

All these developments led to change in standard of living of the village population. The living standards were improved and one of its important consequences was disintegration of joint families which led to coming up of separate houses for various family members. New constructions were not properly planned. People used kahcharai land, khalsa and even cultivable land for this purpose. In the process the springs and streams were also not spared. Besides this, increase of commercial activities in villages also led to shrinking of cultivable land.

The authorities like lambardars, Panchayats and revenue officials could not intervene and were helpless due to militancy which created a situation of havoc.

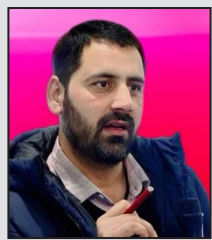
The ill planned constructions pose great threat to the development of villages which in due course will lead to dependence of a large population of villages on outside resources like the cities and will decrease cultivable land and consequent drop in food production and ultimate dependence of villages on outside resources. This will be a great deterrent to economic development.

It is high time that the Government pays attention to these problems and creates a necessary mechanism to treat the disease before it becomes viral and leads to more land grabbing and consequent economic disaster.

The solution lies in proper long term planning mechanism of every village aiming at proper use of existing resources and its implementation which should start before it is too late to improve things.

The author is retired Director Finance Department

A Wake-Up Call to the Forgetful Soul



■ **ALTAF HUSSAIN PEERZADA**

We humans live with a painful contradiction. Deep inside, we know that this world is temporary, yet our actions reflect as if we are here forever. We witness death every day—someone from our neighbourhood, our valley, our country, or a distant land. Funerals pass before our eyes, graves are filled daily, and yet our hearts remain heedless. We comfort ourselves by thinking, "It is not my time yet." But the truth is, death does not announce its arrival.

Allah reminds us clearly in the Qur'an: "Every soul shall taste death, and you will only be given your full compensation on the Day of Resurrection."

(Surah Aal-e-Imran 3:185)

Despite this certainty, we become greedy for wealth, power, and status.

We fight over money that will never follow us to the grave. We disrespect our elders, forgetting their sacrifices and the value Allah has given them. We harm one another, spread hatred, and sometimes even shed innocent blood—while forgetting the Creator who gave life to all.

Allah warns us:

"Competition in worldly increase distracts you, until you visit the graves." (Surah At-Takathur 102:1-2)

How true these words are. We are so busy competing for more, more wealth, more fame, more influence that we forget the ultimate destination: the grave. This world deceives us with its temporary shine, while the Hereafter remains neglected.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

"Be in this world as though you were a stranger or a traveler."

(Sahih al-Bukhari)

A traveler does not burden himself with unnecessary luggage. He carries only what is essential. Yet we burden our souls with arrogance, greed, jealousy, and hatred—things that will only weigh us down on the Day we stand before Allah.

Every graveyard is a silent reminder.



Beneath the soil lie people who once walked proudly, laughed loudly, and planned endlessly. Today, their wealth has been distributed, their positions filled by others, and their homes occupied by strangers. Only their deeds remain.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

"When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, or a righteous

child who prays for him."

(Sahih Muslim)

This is the real legacy. Not bank balances, not titles, not worldly praise—but deeds that continue to benefit others even after death.

Why don't we strive to become people who are remembered with love and respect? A well-respected person lives on in the hearts of people through kindness, honesty, humility, and service. Even

after death, such a person remains alive—in prayers, in good memories, and in sincere Duas.

Allah says:

"Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it."

(Surah Az-Zalzalah 99:7-8)

Life, in its true meaning, is not about how long we lived, but how purely we lived. It is about how often we turned back to Allah, how gently we treated His creation, and how sincerely we prepared for the Hereafter.

Before death comes without warning, let us awaken our hearts. Let us soften our egos, mend our relationships, respect our elders, help the weak, forgive those who hurt us, and remember Allah in every step of life.

Because in the end, life is nothing but the good we have done in this world, and success is only in meeting Allah with a clean heart.

"The Day when neither wealth nor children will benefit, except one who comes to Allah with a sound heart."

(Surah Ash-Shu'ara 26:88-89)

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Prof. Mohammad Zaman Azurdah: A Beacon of Knowledge, Research and Cultural Consciousness



■ **JAMEEL ANSARI**

Prof. Mohammad Zaman Azurdah stands as one of the most distinguished intellectual figures in the literary and academic landscape of Kashmir and the broader subcontinent. A scholar of rare depth and vision, he represents a living bridge between classical literary traditions and modern critical thought. His life and work reflect a profound commitment to knowledge, cultural integrity, and intellectual excellence.

Born on March 17, 1945, in Amritsar, Prof. Azurdah grew up during a period of intense political and social transformation in the subcontinent. These formative circumstances played a decisive role in shaping his intellectual sensibility, instilling in him a deep awareness of history, identity, and human values. After migrating to Kashmir, he began a lifelong academic journey that would leave an indelible mark on Urdu and Kashmiri literary traditions.

He pursued his higher education at the University of Kashmir, where he completed his Master's degree in Urdu and later earned a PhD. His doctoral thesis, "Mirza Salamat Ali Dabeer: Life and Works," is regarded as a landmark contribution to Urdu literary research. Widely cited in academic circles both in India and abroad, the work offers an in-depth critical analysis of the classical marsiya tradition and highlights Dabeer's intellectual and artistic stature with exceptional scholarly rigor.

Prof. Azurdah's literary personality is remarkably multidimensional. He has made enduring contributions in poetry, criticism, research, translation, and prose writing in both Urdu and Kashmiri languages. His notable Urdu works include Ghubar-i-Khayaal, Sheereen kay Khutoot, Woh Top Kar Gaye, Guldasta, Sun To Sahi, and Loh-i-Qalam. In Kashmiri,



his writings such as Essay, Fikri Hanz Tikir, and Nun Posh have played a vital role in enriching the linguistic and cultural heritage of the region.

As a translator, Professor Azurdah rendered invaluable service to Indian literature. Through his translations for institutions such as the Sahitya Akademi and the National Book Trust of India, he introduced Urdu readers to significant literary works from Hindi, English, Kannad, Malayalam, and other Indian languages. His translations go beyond linguistic conversion; they represent a meaningful cultural dialogue that bridges diverse literary traditions.

In the academic sphere, Prof. Azurdah served with distinction as Head of the Department of Urdu and Kashmiri, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, and a member of several important academic and administrative bodies at the University of Kashmir. He supervised numerous MPhil and PhD scholars, shaping generations of researchers and teachers. His pedagogy was marked not merely

by instruction but by intellectual mentorship, encouraging critical thinking, ethical scholarship, and creative inquiry.

In recognition of his outstanding contributions, Prof. Azurdah has been honoured with several prestigious awards, including the Sahitya Akademi Award, Sahitya Akademi Translation Award, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Award, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Award, Sharf-i-Kamraz and other state-level honors. These accolades stand as a testament to his enduring influence on Indian literary and cultural life.

Prof. Mohammad Zaman Azurdah is not merely an individual scholar but an institution in himself. His lifelong dedication to learning, cultural dialogue, and literary excellence has left an enduring legacy for future generations. Urdu and Kashmiri literature remain deeply indebted to his vision, scholarship, and unwavering commitment to the enrichment of human thought and expression.

Indian Air Force: Hearts in Duty Wings In The Sky



■ **MOOL RAJ**

The Indian Air Force (IAF) stands as a prominent pillar of the country's defence forces, tasked with safeguarding the skies and ensuring the security of the nation. With a rich history and a tradition of excellence, the IAF embodies dedication, professionalism, and courage in protecting India's sovereignty. The essential role of the Indian Air Force, exploring its operational capabilities, training regimes, technological advancements and the commitment of its personnel.

In addition to its defensive role, the IAF also contributes to various humanitarian and peacekeeping missions within India and abroad. The IAF has been actively involved in disaster relief operations, search and rescue missions, and peacekeeping efforts under the United Nations. By leveraging its air assets and expertise, the IAF has been instrumental in providing critical support during natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, and humanitarian crises.

The IAF boasts a sophisticated fleet of aircraft, including fighter jets, transport planes, and helicopters, equipped with cutting-edge technology to defend India's airspace. The Rafal, Mig-21 and Akash jointly developed with USA, has become a symbol of technological prowess, showcasing the IAF's commitment to modernization and self-reliance in defence production. Moreover, the IAF's Air defence system, radar coverage, and strategic partnerships with other air forces contribute to a robust defence mechanism, ensuring the protection of Indian skies.

The rigorous training programs of the IAF are

designed to produce highly skilled pilots, engineers, and ground personnel. The Indian Air Force Academy, is the cradle of excellence where aspiring cadets undergo rigorous physical, mental, and academic training to become future leaders of the IAF. The IAF's emphasis on continuous training, simulation exercises, and joint operations with allied forces enhances its operational readiness and response capabilities in times of crisis.

The IAF continuously invests in cutting-edge technology to maintain its competitive edge and stay abreast of global advancements in aviation and defence. Acquisition of state-of-the-art aircraft, avionics systems, and precision-guided munitions enables the IAF for combat operations to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Moreover, collaborations with international partners for training, maintenance and technology transfer enhance the IAF's operational capabilities and foster inter-operability with other air forces.

The men and women of the IAF exemplify unwavering dedication, courage, and professionalism in serving their country. From pilots flying combat missions to engineers maintaining aircraft and ground crews ensuring operational readiness, every member of the IAF plays a vital role in upholding its motto of "Second to None." The sacrifices and valor of IAF personnel in defending India's sovereignty and safeguarding its skies epitomize the spirit of duty and honor that runs through the veins of the organization. Indian Air Force stands as a symbol of national pride, embodying the values of duty, honor, and sacrifice in its mission to protect the skies of India. With a tradition of excellence, a commitment to technological advancement, and a dedicated team of professionals, the IAF continues to uphold its legacy as a formidable force in the region. As the guardians of the nation's airspace, the hearts of the IAF beat with duty, while its wings soar high in the sky, ready to defend India at a moment's notice.

THE AUTHOR IS A REGULAR COLUMNIST AND FREELANCE WRITER

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8

Diabetes Care And Diabetics



■ DR. TASADUK HUSSAIN ITOO

Diabetes is emerging as a global public health concern. As per a report from World Health Organization(WHO),the number of people with diabetes rose from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014. In 2019, diabetes was the ninth leading cause of death with an estimated 1.5 million deaths directly caused by diabetes. Moreover, the prevalence has been found to be rising more rapidly in low and middle-income countries.

As per a report published in Lancet in 2014, India houses over 61 million diabetics and the forecast is that there will be 100 million diabetics by 2030. China is the world capital for diabetes with India a close second. More than 70 per cent of middle aged Indians will suffer with non-insulin dependent diabetes during their lifetime. India contributes nearly one-sixth to the global disease burden of 422 million.

Though diabetes is caused by a complex interaction of genetic and lifestyle factors, the most obvious reason for this increase is the rising levels of obesity due to frenetic lifestyle changes among Indians. According to the same paper published in Lancet, the number of men in India with obesity increased from 0.4 million in 1975 to 9.8 million in 2014; and from 0.8 million to 20 million women during the same period. Moreover, in 2014 there were 3.7 million severely obese women in the country.

Diabetes is one of the diseases that affects the endocrine system. The pancreas pro-

duces the hormone insulin. In Type 1 diabetes, the insulin producing cells in the pancreas are destroyed. In Type 2 diabetes, insulin is still produced but the body becomes resistant to it. Almost every organ in the body can be adversely affected with the onset of diabetes. But with regular screening, timely intervention and care, the disease can be kept under check.

The initial symptoms could be excessive thirst, excessive appetite and excessive urination and swelling of feet. Delayed wound healing, frequent infections, nausea, vomiting and weight loss may be other symptoms.

While diabetes cause damage to almost every tissue and organ, the kidney being one of them. If neglected, a person could land into diabetic nephropathy. Serum proteins like albumin in the urine, blood urea and creatinine levels should be checked after every 3 months. Moreover, diabetics should usually limit painkillers. They should watch out for swelling of the feet, extreme fatigue, weakness and breathlessness.

A diabetic should take special care of his feet. Watch out for numbness, foot ulcers and carefully examine spaces between the toes and the soles of the feet. Socks should be washed regularly and one should use footwear, preferably with ankle support. Nails should not be cut too short and sharp edges should be filed. It has been seen that high percentage of amputations are carried out in neuropathic feet with secondary infection, which are potentially preventable.

The eyes of a diabetic also need special attention and care. The retina could get affected, and blood vessels in the eye could leak blood causing diminution of vision with other symptoms including diabetic retinopathy. Diabetes also produces early cataract and in extreme cases, the patient may lose eyesight. So, regular eye check-ups are

a must.

There is also a link between depression and diabetes. Research studies have also shown that the chances of developing diabetes was more amongst persons with current depressive and/or anxiety disorders. Some of the newer drugs used in the treatment of mental disorders might increase blood sugar levels. It is now important to monitor all patients on such drugs for their blood sugar levels.

Diabetics have a higher risk of developing cardio vascular diseases (CVDs). Diabetes causes generalised micro and macro vascular disease, affecting multiple organs. Because of increased production of cholesterol and triglycerides levels as a result of insulin resistance in diabetes, there are increased chances of development of atherosclerosis and narrowing of the heart arteries.

More to say, diabetes leads to increased tendency for blood clotting resulting in heart attacks. There is impaired heart cell structure and function, leading to enlarged heart and reduced heart pumping function, a condition known as dilated cardiomyopathy - the condition that may eventually lead to heart failure.

A comprehensive attempt to identify pre-diabetics and intervene to reverse the metabolic abnormality will prevent further increase in the prevalence of diabetes. Preventive health check-up and a year-round management of health and wellness customised to one's health profile and screening in the community are absolutely essential. Diabetes care and services should be augmented at all levels of healthcare - to ensure basic access of services to every individual of the society.

Coherent efforts must be directed at preventing and delaying the onset of the disease by conducting mass awareness programs and education in the society. Moreover, adopting healthy lifestyle changes

including physical activity and dietary approach besides working on the various modifiable risk factors of diabetes could prove beneficial in prevention of diabetes.

SPECIAL TIPS TO BEAT DIABETES

- **CUTTING SUGAR AND REFINED CARBS FROM ONE'S DIET:** Eating foods high in refined carbs and sugar increases blood sugar levels, which may lead to diabetes over time. Avoiding these foods may help reduce the risk.
- **WORKING OUT REGULARLY :** Performing physical activity on a regular basis can increase insulin secretion and sensitivity, which may help prevent the progression from pre-diabetes to diabetes.
- **DRINKING WATER AS YOUR PRIMARY BEVERAGE :**
- **Drinking water instead of other beverages may help in regulation of blood sugar and insulin levels, thereby reducing the risk of diabetes.**
- **LOSING WEIGHT IF OVER-WEIGHT OR OBESE :** Carrying excess weight, particularly in the abdominal area, increases the likelihood of developing diabetes. Losing weight may significantly reduce the risk of diabetes.
- **QUITTING SMOKING:** Smoking is strongly linked to the risk of diabetes, especially in heavy smokers. Quitting has been shown to reduce this risk over time.
- **FOLLOWING A VERY LOW-CARB DIET :** Following a ketogenic or very-low-carb diet can help

keep blood sugar and insulin levels under control, which may protect against diabetes.

- **AVOIDING LARGE PORTION SIZES:** Avoiding large portion sizes can help reduce blood sugar levels and decrease the risk of diabetes.
- **AVOIDING SEDENTARY BEHAVIORS :** Avoiding sedentary behaviours like excessive sitting has been shown to reduce your risk of getting diabetes.
- **EATING A HIGH-FIBER DIET :** Consuming a good fiber source at each meal can help prevent spikes in blood sugar and insulin levels, which may help reduce the risk of developing diabetes.
- **OPTIMIZING VITAMIN D LEVELS :** Consuming foods high in vitamin D or taking supplements can help optimize vitamin D blood levels, which can reduce one's risk of diabetes.
- **MINIMIZING INTAKE OF PROCESSED FOODS :** Minimizing processed foods and focusing on whole foods with protective effects on health may help decrease the risk of diabetes.
- **DRINKING COFFEE OR TEA :** Drinking coffee or tea may help reduce blood sugar levels, increase insulin sensitivity and reduce the risk of diabetes.
- **TAKING NATURAL HERBS :** The herbs like curcumin increase insulin sensitivity, reduce blood sugar levels and may help prevent diabetes.

drtasadukitoo@gmail.com

Suffering from Knee Pain? Try These Basic Knee Strengthening Exercises

Weak knees are a problem that many face. The seemingly simple issue can bring your life to a standstill or at the very least create hindrances in your regular activities. Touching upon this subject, health expert Yasmin Karachiwala said on Instagram that there can be several factors that could cause knee pain and it is important to identify them. Offering a solution that may provide relief, she shared a set of simple exercises that you could practise to strengthen your knees. Along with the video, she also added a note that said that it was extremely important to consult a doctor to evaluate the cause of pain.

Knee pain exercise: Try these exercises for relief

In the note, she said, "The most effective thing to do is ice it (knees) for 15-20 mins. Next, consult a doctor to evaluate the cause of the pain. Whether it's due to overuse, tight muscles around the knee, a sudden injury which has caused a tear or any underlying condition like arthritis, bursitis, chondromalacia patella."

Demonstrating some easy exercises that focus on strengthening the joint, she further added, "Today, I'm sharing with you some basic knee strengthening exercises.

The following exercises are part of the special routine

1. Bridging with Pillow (15 reps)
2. Double Leg Kick (10 reps)
3. Modified Clams (20 reps each side)
4. Seated on Chair, Leg Extension (5-10 reps each side)
5. Staggered Sit to Stand with Pillow on Chair (5 reps each side)

Yasmin also added, "If you have pain or swelling please consult your doctor before doing these exercises."

Previously, the celebrity fitness trainer had shared a bunch of videos that would help you say fit from the comforts of your home. One of the most popular video series on her list is the Cardio/Fat Burn HIIT Series. The trainer has dedicated the entire month to focus on fat-burning routines. She has also added a modified version for those who want to scale down the intensity of exercises.

The latest video in the series comprised exercises such as Reverse Lunge + Alt Knee Up + Kick (left leg), Reverse Lunge + Alt Knee Up + Kick (right leg), Push-up + Alternate Leg Lift, Superman + Reverse Angel. Sharing the video, she had written, "Perform 3 rounds of 45 seconds each, take 15 seconds of active rest in between exercises and a full minute between rounds!"

So, keep your knee pain in control with these exercises at home.

Working From Home? Try These 3 Stretches To Give Your Body The Required Break

The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown has kept us indoors for a large part of the last 18 months. With the lockdown came hectic work-from-home (WFH) routines that force us to stay glued to our desks and computers for long hours at a stretch. While experts have recommended periodic breaks from work to walk around and stretch the body, a large part of the population does not get the time to indulge in such healthy practices. But now celebrity fitness expert Rujuta Diwekar has come up with a set of three simple stretching exercises that you can do on a workday, all while sitting on a chair.

Work from home: Take a break with these three stretches

Sharing a video on Instagram, Rujuta said that the first few steps involve shutting your laptop, turning the chair away from the desk and sitting on it while looking ahead. This is important, she says,



as you have not looked at anything except a screen for hours. Explaining further, Rujuta wrote in the caption, "3 easy stretches to break your sitting" and demonstrated the simple

stretches.

1. Take your arms up. Ensure that you are not pushing your stomach in front. You need to tuck your stomach in and thrust you back in front. Don't raise your

shoulders. Extend your arms and wrists. Now, look straight and bring your arms downwards on either side. Spread your legs on either side of the chair. Take your arms up once again and bend

forward. When you bend forward ensure that your hip is not rising. Now, squeeze your shoulder blade and take your arms backwards.

If possible, hold the back of your chair and stretch. While stretching, open your chest and keep your chest and chin raised. Hold this position for five counts. Slowly come back to your original positions and relax.

2. In the second stretch, spread your legs on either side of the chair and try to push the knee backwards. "Many women are experiencing period issues, leg cramps etc due to work from home. It is important to ensure that your thighs remain strong," she said.

Hold the position for 5 counts.

3. If you find this difficult, Rujuta suggested that you can sit facing the back of the chair. In this position, the edges of the chair can be used to push the inner thighs outwards. Hold the back of the chair, roll your shoulder backwards and lift the chest and open it. Hold the position for 5 counts.

Weight Loss Tips: Mistakes You Should Avoid For Sustainable Weight Loss

Losing weight should be a gradual process, requiring a lot of patience and perseverance, along with a balanced diet and workout regime. Taking a shortcut, such as eating less or starving, has never helped. At the same time, people also should not fall for fad or quick-fix diets, which promise to make losing weight an easy process and appear too good to be true. In short, there is no magic formula for weight loss. That's what even nutritionist Nmami Agarwal reiterates in her latest post on Instagram, where she says that a restrictive diet plan is never a good idea.

Weight loss tips: Why you should not try fad diets for sustainable weight loss

Nmami captioned the clip, "Things we go wrong on while planning to lose weight. Yo-yo effect. Following a restrictive diet plan is never sustainable. You end up craving a lot, demotivated



to follow, and eventually give up."

In the clip, the nutritionist explains the vicious cycle that restrictive diets engulfs us in. She says, "You tend to pick up a trending diet style, you get motivated, lose weight, which is generally the water weight, then you hit a plateau, get

confused and give up. Then again, you start everything back because you're feeling guilty. Finally, again you end up picking another trending diet and get motivated." She tells her followers to "choose wisely and start doing something which is more sustainable".

Earlier, Nmami had busted a few myths around a strict juice diet for detox and weight loss. "Remember there are no shortcuts and no magical drinks. All you need is dedication and motivation to work hard. Listen to your body and your body will listen to you back," she added in the note. Nmami clarified that the liver and kidney perform the function of detoxifying. "A glass of vegetable juice is okay but not an exclusive juice cleanse diet," she said.

Even celebrity nutritionist Pooja Makhija, too, had stated facts around eating less for losing weight. While it is necessary to follow a disciplined routine to stay fit, it should not be done without verifying the authenticity of the remedy.

So, next time you think of following any fad diet, just remember that it's always better to instead take up some healthy food resolutions you're likely to keep for life.



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Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan

District Administration, DIPR Rajouri organise awareness-cum-debate competition

■ HT NEWS BUREAU

RAJOURI, DEC 27: The District Administration Rajouri, in collaboration with the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), organised an awareness-cum-debate competition to mobilize students for a decisive anti-Drug Campaign in the district. Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma was the Chief Guest. Addressing the students, the DC emphasised the importance of spreading awareness in society and urged the participants to actively engage with their parents, teachers and peers. He advised students to openly communicate in case of stress or any mental health concerns. He underscored the need to identify vulnerable students at an early stage for timely intervention.

Highlighting the significance of such initiatives, the DC stated that awareness programmes play a vital role in preventing drug abuse. He further informed that enforcement activities are also being intensified in identified hotspot areas and added that selected officials would be trained as counselors to further propagate the message of awareness at the grassroots level.

Dr. Parvaiz Alam from GMC Rajouri delivered an informative lecture highlighting the basics of drug addiction, its adverse impact on physical and mental health and the role of rehabilitation centres in recovery and reintegration. Other speakers from the Health Department also shared valuable insights



on prevention strategies, counseling and community-based support mechanisms.

Students from different educational institutions actively participated in the debate competition, articulating their views with clarity and conviction. The participants were felicitated in recognition of their enthusiastic participation and commendable presentations.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks presented by the District Information Officer,

Ashiq Rafiq Malik. He expressed gratitude to the guests, speakers, students and all the stakeholders for making the event a success. Among others present on the occasion included DSWO Abdul Raheem; Chief Education Officer Mohammad Hafeez; A.P GMC Rajouri Dr. Parvaiz Alam; Principal Boys Model HSS Muslim Wani; Principal Girls HSS Gulzar Ahmed; Lecturer Dr. Tariq Aziz; Teacher Vikrant Sharma, besides other district and sectoral officers.

Public Notice

I want to change the Name of electricity connection Having consumer Id No:-0201020004124 From Mohammad Nazim Hajam to Saleema Bano D/o LATE ABDUL SAMAD GUROO R/O Abi Buchwara Dalgate Srinagar and also for Conversation of Commercial Electric Meter To Domestic

If any body has any objection regarding this . They will contact office of AEE sub-division TRC Srinagar within the period of seven days . After completion of said , No objection will be accepted.

Name:- Saleema Bano D/o LATE ABDUL sAMAD GUROO R/O Abi Buchwara Dalgate Ph No 8082767603

Public Notice

This is for the information of the general public that Mr. Gul Mohammad Khanday, father of Mr. Manzoor Ahmad Khanday, resident of Mamal, Pahalgam, expired on 28-03-2025.

If anyone has any objection/claim in this regard, the same may be submitted in writing to Municipal Committee Pahalgam (MC Pahalgam) within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, no claim shall be entertained later on.

Notifier: Manzoor Ahmad Khanday R/o: Mamal, Pahalgam

Public Notice

It is hereby informed to the general public that Mr. Abdul Ahad Bhat, resident of Lari Pora, Pahalgam, has expired.

Now, Mr. Mohammad Ramzan Bhat S/o Abdul Ahad Bhat, resident of Lari Pora, Pahalgam, is applying for transfer/registration of electricity connection in his name bearing Consumer ID No. 0209020006369. If anyone has any objection/claim in this regard, the same may be submitted in writing to the concerned office KPDC, Sub Division Ashmuqam, within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, no objection/claim shall be entertained thereafter.

Notifier: Mohammad Ramzan Bhat S/o Abdul Ahad Bhat, R/o Lari Pora, Pahalgam Consumer ID: 0209020006369

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Public Notice

I have changed my name from Old name)Hanaan Ahmad Malik to (New name)Abdul Hanaan Malik, in future I will be known as (New name)Abdul Hanaan Malik ,If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact concern govt office, authority and School office with in 7days,After 7days no objection will be accepted.

Abdul Hanaan Malik, S/o,Kaiser Mohi-ud-Din Malik R/o,Malikpora Trehgam Kupwara

Public Notice

It is hereby informed that Ghulam Nabi and Ghulam Nabi Masoodi are one and the same person. The variation in the name is due to the use of the surname Masoodi in some records.

The said person is a resident of Traggora, Rafiabad, Baramulla, Jammu and Kashmir.

If anyone has any objection to this declaration, the same may be raised within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, after which no objection shall be entertained.

Public Notice

It is hereby informed that Khalida Akhter and Khalida Begum are one and the same person. The variation in the name is due to the use of Begum in some records.

The said person is a resident of Traggora, Rafiabad, Baramulla, Jammu and Kashmir.

If anyone has any objection to this declaration, the same may be raised within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Thereafter, no objection shall be entertained.

بشیر احمد پوشش رحمت حق

اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی 28 دسمبر 2025 اتوار کو

بشیر احمد پوشش رحمت حق کے ساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ بشیر احمد پوشش ولد مرحوم غلام محمد پوشش ساکن پشاورہ فی ڈل گیٹ سری نگر 24 دسمبر 2025 بروز بدھوار کو دل کا دورہ پڑنے سے انتقال کر گئے۔

اناللہ وانا الیہ مرجعون

مرحوم اہلس ایم ایچ ایس اسپتال سرنگر میں بطور ملازم خدمات انجام دے رہے تھے۔ مرحوم کی اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی اتوار 28 دسمبر 2025 صبح 10 بجے 30 منٹ پر ان کے آبائی مقبرہ خالہ پورہ ڈل گیٹ میں انجام دی جائے گی۔

بذریعہ:- سوگواران

Office of the Executive Engineer (Mechanical), PW(R&B), Central Kashmir

Engineering Complex (PMGSY Building), Rajbagh Srinagar Kashmir-190008

BOQ CORRIGENDUM/ EXTENSION

Subject: Construction of Commercial Office Excise and Taxation Building, Solina, Srinagar (SITC of HVAC System for proposed office complex of commercial Tax Building at Solina, Srinagar.

Reference: eNIT No:- R&B/MDCK/NIT/22 of 2025-26. Dated:- 06.12.2025

It is hereby informed to all the intending bidders that "Unit" for Item No. 1 of BOQ be read as "Each" instead of "HP".

Due to the above corrections, the last date of Bid Submission will be 30-12-2025 (12:00 hrs.) & opening of technical bid will be 30-12-2025 (at 13:00 hrs.)

Rest, all other terms and conditions of the said e-NIT (with annexures) shall remain same.

No. XENMC/Sgr/2499-2501

Dated:- 27.12.2025

Sd/- Executive Engineer

PW(R&B) Mechanical Division Central Kashmir

DIPK: 9413/25 | Dated: 27-12-2025

Court of Sub-Judge/ Special Mobile Magistrate, Budgam

In the case of"

Hinan Bashir (Aged 36)

S/o: Bashir Ahmad Mir

R/o: Noor Line, Wanbal Rengreth, Budgam

Versus

Rayees Ahmad Bhat, S/o: Mohammad Ashraf Bhat

R/o: Gogoo, Humhama Budgam

CORAM: Mr. Easar-ul0Nabi

J.O.Code: JK00238

Order

Adv. Hinan present, Accused absent. Proclamation has been already issued against accused on 16/10/2025. Further a general warrant of arrest stand issued against the accused U/S 229 BNSS on 03/12/2025. Despite all these processes accused remains absconding leaving no option to this court but to proceed for attachment of property of accused. However, before proceeding for attachment, it is incumbent to procure the property details of the accused. Accordingly ACR Budgam in directed to get property details of accused, if any, recorded in the revenue record anywhere in District Budgam from concerned Tehsildar and Naib Tehsildar and submit a report to the court by or before next date of hearing. So that court would be in a position to proceed for attachment. Further, the general warrant of arrest already issued shall be forwarded to the competent authority, Director Information J&K, District Information Officer Budgam for wide circulation. List the file on 28-01-20026.

Announced: 20-12-2025

Special Mobile Budgam

GENERAT WARRANT OF ARREST

1. A complaint U/S 138 & 142 of N.I Act read with section 318(4) BNS has been presented in this Court against the above named accused person. Since proceedings have been taken under Section 299 BNSS against the above mentioned accused person as the accused person has failed to appear before the Court, a General Warrant of Arrest is hereby issued against accused.

2. It is directed that all police officials of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir are hereby authorized and required to arrest the accused wherever found and to produce him before this Court.

3. This warrant shall remain in force until the accused is arrested and produced before this Court, or until the warrant is recalled.

Announced: 03-12-2025

Sub-Judge / Special Mobile Magistrate Budgam

DIPK: 9387/25 | Dated: 27-12-2025



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Sakeena Itoo inaugurates newly constructed Academic Block of GDC Pouni Reasi

Govt Reaffirms Focus on Enhancing Higher Education Standards in J&K

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

REASI, DECEMBER 27: Minister for Education, Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare, Sakeena Itoo today inaugurated newly constructed Academic Block of Government Degree College (GDC) Pouni in Reasi district, marking a significant milestone in strengthening higher education infrastructure in the region.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister emphasized the Government's commitment to expanding access to quality higher education in rural and remote areas. She said that the new academic block will provide a conducive learning environment for students and help enhance academic activities at the college.

The Minister reiterated that Government is focused on improving the educational standards of higher educational institutions, adding that investment in education is an investment in the future of youth and society at large.

"The newly inaugurated block is equipped with modern classrooms, lecture halls and essential facilities aimed at improving teaching-learning outcomes", Minister Sakeena said.

She further highlighted that such infrastructure development reflects the Government's resolve to ensure equitable educational



opportunities for all.

Interacting with students and faculty members on the occasion, the Minister encouraged students to make optimum use of the facilities and focus on academic

excellence and skill development. She also assured that the government would continue to address the needs of educational institutions to further strengthen the higher education sector.

On the sidelines of the event, Minister Sakeena also interacted with public delegations and locals of the area and took stock of their grievances and issues. The locals projected various issues pertaining

to their respective areas before the Minister and sought their timely redressal.

While interacting with these delegations and locals, Minister Sakeena reiterated the Government's commitment to transparent, people-centric governance and emphasized that public outreach programmes play a vital role in bridging the gap between the administration and the common people. She stressed the need for coordinated efforts by line departments to ensure timely delivery of public services, particularly in far-flung and underserved areas.

The Minister also urged officers to remain accessible to the public and address grievances at the grassroots level, ensuring that welfare schemes reach their intended beneficiaries. She encouraged locals to actively participate in developmental initiatives and share constructive feedback for better planning and execution of projects.

MLA, Reasi, Kuldeep Raj Dubey; MLA Gulabgarh, Engineer Khurshed Ahmad; Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education, Shantamanu; Director Colleges, Prof. Sheikh Aijaz Bashir; Principal GDC Pouni Reasi, senior officers of Higher Education department, faculty members, students and large number of locals were also present on the occasion.

DC Budgam presides over Revenue Camp at Khansahib

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

BUDGAM, DECEMBER 27: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, today presided over a Revenue Camp organized at Sub-Division Khansahib with the objective of strengthening grassroots governance and ensuring effective, timely and hassle-free redressal of public grievances.

The camp witnessed significant participation from the general public, who raised various issues pertaining to revenue matters, land records, public service delivery and other civic concerns.

During the camp, grievances projected by the public were patiently heard by the DC, and interactions were held in a cordial and reassuring manner. It was observed that such outreach initiatives are being conducted to take administration to the doorsteps of the people and to ensure that genuine issues are addressed in a transparent, accountable and time-bound manner.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC stated that the district administration remains firmly committed to responsive, efficient and citizen-friendly governance. He emphasized that all genuine grievances brought before the administration are being examined on merit, with special focus on long-pending and deserving cases.

He also highlighted the pivotal role of public participation in strengthening governance and improving service delivery.

The DC impressed upon the revenue officers to adopt a humane, proactive and solution-oriented approach while dealing with public issues, particularly those related to mutations, inheritance cases, demarcation, land disputes and issuance of revenue documents. Directions were issued for expeditious disposal of cases within prescribed timelines to minimize inconvenience to the general public.

The DC emphasized that transparency, fairness and strict adherence to rules and procedures are being accorded top priority in revenue administration. He stated that accountability at all levels is being strengthened and conveyed that any laxity in service delivery will be viewed seriously.

Officers were directed to remain accessible to the public and to conduct regular field visits for effective grievance redressal.

While highlighting the importance of digital governance, the DC encouraged greater public awareness and utilisation of online revenue service platforms, including Jan Sugam and other digital initiatives of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, aimed at providing revenue-related services in a seamless, transparent and time-bound manner.

He stated that such platforms are being strengthened to reduce procedural delays, enhance transparency and minimize the need for repeated visits to offices.

The DC further underscored the importance of inter-departmental coordination and stated that convergence among departments is being actively pursued to resolve multi-sectoral issues in a holistic manner. He maintained that sustained engagement with the public is essential for ensuring inclusive and balanced development across all areas of the district.

During the camp, the DC redressed several grievances on the spot, while assuring that the remaining issues raised by the public will be closely monitored. He stated that necessary directions have already been issued to the concerned departments for prompt and effective redressal.

The DC reiterated that the district administration will continue to organize such public outreach programmes in future to further strengthen public trust and ensure transparent, participatory and people-centric governance.

On the occasion, besides Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Budgam, Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Khansahib, Tehsildar Khansahib, other senior district and sectoral officers were present. The presence of senior officers enabled on-the-spot assessment of issues and issuance of necessary instructions for timely follow-up action.

Monthly NCORD meeting convened to review measures against drug abuse in Ganderbal

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

GANDERBAL, DECEMBER 27: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore today emphasized the need for a coordinated and proactive approach by all concerned departments to effectively curb drug abuse and narcotics peddling, and stringent enforcement to dismantle the drug supply chain, besides booking of offenders under relevant laws.

The DC was chairing the monthly meeting of the District-Level Narco Coordination (NCORD) Committee, during which a detailed review of action taken on decisions of the previous meeting was conducted.

DC sought comprehensive feedback on key agenda points including ongoing Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns, implementation of CCTV surveillance and computerized billing systems by medical sale establishments, identification and monitoring of drug hotspot areas, progress towards declaration of Nasha Mukta Panchayats, and rehabilitation



measures for affected individuals.

The meeting also reviewed cases registered under the NDPS Act, seizures involving commercial quantities of contraband substances, identification of drug-use hotspots, and the status of wall paintings and other measures aimed at generating public awareness against drug abuse.

Expressing concern over the possible misuse of courier services for drug trafficking, the DC directed the Excise and Sales Tax department to conduct intensified joint drives to intercept illicit substances being transported through such channels.

The Education and Social Welfare departments were instructed to actively carry out awareness programmes.

Tehsildars and Block Development Officers, in coordination with concerned SHOs, were directed to regularly monitor identified drug hotspot areas and work towards declaration of Nasha Mukta Panchayats.

The DC reiterated the need for an aggressive and coordinated strategy focusing on prevention, surveillance, enforcement, and community engagement to effectively combat the drug menace in the district.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Superintendent of Police, Sub-Divisional Magistrate Kangan, Deputy Director Prosecution, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat/Development, Chief Education Officer, Chief Agriculture Officer, Assistant Controller Drugs Control Department, officers of the District Administration, and representatives of other concerned departments.

ADDC Shopian reviews implementation of POSH Act, 2013

Emphasises Mandatory Constitution of ICCs, Portal-Based Compliance

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SHOPIAN, DECEMBER 27: A review meeting regarding the implementation of the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 was today chaired by the Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone, at the Conference Hall of Mini Secretariat, Shopian.

During the meeting, the ADDC undertook a comprehensive review of all agenda points related to the constitution, functioning and compliance of Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs) in various government offices and establishments of the district. He stressed the mandatory constitution of ICCs in every office/establishment employing ten or more employees, strictly in accordance with Section 4 of the POSH Act, 2013.

The ADDC emphasized the responsibility of Heads of Offices to ensure full compliance with the Act, including the display of ICC details at prominent places, proper maintenance of records as prescribed under POSH



Rules, 2013, and timely submission of mandatory reports.

He also reviewed the status of offices where ICCs have been constituted and directed immediate action in cases where committees are yet to be formed.

District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO), Shopian, briefed the participants about the official POSH portal, highlighting that all ICC details, reports and related information must

be uploaded on the portal within the stipulated timelines to ensure transparency and compliance.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner Shopian Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; Assistant Commissioner (Revenue), Shakoor Ahmad Dar, ACD, CEO, CAO, DSEO, DLO, District Programme Manager NRLM, besides other concerned officers.

SMC organises AI-Robot-Based Dental Screening Camp

■ HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 27: Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) organised a comprehensive AI-Robot-based Dental Screening Camp today at its Head Office, Karan Nagar, in collaboration with "Safe Hands Dental Center" Baghat, Srinagar, as part of its continued commitment to employee welfare and preventive healthcare.

The camp was inaugurated by the Commissioner, SMC, Faz Lul Haseeb, and witnessed enthusiastic participation from officers and staff across various wings of the Corporation.

The initiative aimed to promote oral hygiene awareness, facilitate early detection of dental ailments, and encourage preventive healthcare practices, with special emphasis on sanitation workers and frontline staff.

The Dental Health Camp was organised under the supervision of Dr. Fauzia Habib, Health Officer, SMC, whose exemplary leadership, professionalism, dedication, and meticulous planning were instrumental in the successful conceptualisation, coordination,



and execution of the programme. Working in close collaboration with the medical team from "Safe Hands Dental Centre", Baghat,

Srinagar, she ensured the smooth, efficient, and impactful conduct of the camp.

A team of specialist dental

doctors and trained paramedical staff from Safe Hands conducted comprehensive dental check-ups and consultations using AI-robot-

enabled latest dental screening technology, facilitating precise diagnostics, early identification of oral health issues, and personalised treatment guidance for the participants. The adoption of advanced AI-based tools marked a significant step towards integrating modern, technology-driven healthcare solutions within the Corporation.

The Commissioner, SMC, lauded the efforts of Dr. Fauzia Habib and the Safe Hands medical team, describing the initiative as a progressive and impactful measure towards strengthening employee-centric health interventions. He reiterated that employee welfare remains a top priority for the Corporation and reaffirmed SMC's commitment to organising similar AI-enabled health and wellness programmes in the future.

Senior officers of the Corporation, including Joint Commissioner (Administration), Nuzhat Qureshi, Joint Commissioner, Suhail UI Islam and other senior officials, were present on the occasion and also availed themselves of the AI-robot-based dental screening facilities.



India to become third-largest economy by 2030: World Economic League Table

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 27 : India's economic rise is entering a decisive phase, with the country firmly on course to become the world's third largest economy by 2030 and hold that position well into the next decade, according to the World Economic League Table (WELT) 2026.

The WELT is an annual report released by UK-based Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) that ranks countries by their projected Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the next 15 years.

The report highlights India as one of the strongest long-term growth stories in the global economy, driven by scale, demographics, and sustained expansion across key sectors.

In 2026, India is projected to rank fourth globally in terms of GDP, overtaking Japan. By 2030, it is expected to move into third place, behind only the United States and China, and remain there through 2040.

This marks a dramatic improvement from India's ninth position in 2010 and fifth place in 2025, reflecting more than a decade of steady economic transformation.

The report comes at a time when the global economy is facing significant uncertainty. Trade tensions, geopolitical conflicts, fiscal pressures, and slowing global growth have weighed on many major economies. Despite these challenges, India's economic momentum has remained relatively strong.

While global growth slowed to around 2.6 per cent in 2025,



India continued to outperform many advanced and emerging economies. Its large domestic market has helped cushion the impact of global trade disruptions, while steady investment activity and expanding consumption have supported overall growth.

The league table underlines that India's rise is not the result of a short-term rebound, but part of a long-term structural trend that is reshaping the global economic order.

One of the most important drivers behind India's upward movement is its demographic profile. Unlike many advanced economies facing ageing populations and shrinking workforces, India continues to benefit from a young and expanding working-age population.

The report notes that demographic dynamics will play a critical role in determining future global rankings. India's growing

labour force is expected to support higher levels of production, consumption, and savings over the coming decades.

This demographic dividend gives India a clear advantage over countries such as Japan and several European nations, whose economic growth is increasingly constrained by ageing populations.

As Asia's share of global GDP rises sharply over the next 15 years, India is expected to be one of the central contributors to this shift.

According to the report, Asia's share of global GDP is projected to increase from around 36% in 2025 to over 42 per cent by 2040. South and Southeast Asia are key drivers of this trend, and India sits at the heart of this regional transformation.

While China remains the largest contributor to Asia's economic output, India's faster population growth and expanding domestic demand ensure it plays an

increasingly important role in lifting the region's overall economic weight.

By 2040, India is expected to stand alongside the US and China as one of the three most influential economies globally.

India's economic resilience is also linked to the size of its internal market. Unlike export-heavy economies that are highly sensitive to changes in global trade policy, India's growth is supported by strong domestic consumption, public investment, and services-led expansion. The report suggests that while global trade disruptions and geopolitical risks will continue to affect growth worldwide, India's diversified economy and internal demand base provide a degree of insulation from external shocks.

This structural stability is a key reason why India's ranking continues to improve even as several major economies experience slower growth or stagnation.

The World Economic League Table 2026 emphasises that long-term economic success depends on factors such as infrastructure development, investment levels, institutional stability, and the ability to adapt to changing global conditions.

India's steady climb in the rankings reflects progress across these areas. Continued investment in infrastructure, gradual improvements in productivity, and deeper integration into global value chains are expected to strengthen India's economic foundations further.

By 2040, India is projected to remain firmly entrenched as the third-largest economy in the world, highlighting its transition from a fast-growing emerging market to a central pillar of the global economic system.

India's rise also signals a broader shift in the balance of global economic power. The report projects that Europe and North America will see a gradual decline in their share of global GDP due to demographic pressures and slower growth, while Asia's influence expands.

Within this changing landscape, India's growing economic scale enhances its global influence across trade, investment, geopolitics, and international institutions.

Overall, the World Economic League Table 2026 paints a clear picture: India's economic ascent is set to continue, driven by long-term structural strengths rather than temporary factors, positioning the country as one of the defining forces in the global economy over the next two decades. UNI

AAP questions silence over Unnao, Ankita Bhandari cases

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 27 : The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Saturday raised questions over what it termed selective outrage and institutional insensitivity in cases involving violence against women, particularly the Unnao rape case and the Ankita Bhandari murder case.

Addressing the media, AAP's Delhi state president Saurabh Bharadwaj criticized the suspension of sentence granted to former BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar in the Unnao rape case and flagged the emergence of a BJP national general secretary's name in the Ankita Bhandari case.

He questioned the silence of so-called Hindu organizations and asked why there was no public outrage in either case.

Calling the Unnao rape case extremely serious, Bharadwaj said it was not merely a crime of sexual violence but a case where an elected MLA allegedly committed the offence and subsequently enjoyed the support of the administration.

He further alleged that the victim's FIR was not registered initially and that, after a prolonged struggle, her father was beaten to death in police custody. Subsequently, Bharadwaj claimed that attempts were made on the life of the victim, including a road accident in which two other people lost their lives. He said witnesses in the case continue to receive threats, raising concerns over their safety.

The AAP leader said the court should have shown greater sensitivity given the gravity of the case and the prevailing circumstances. He termed the court's refusal to recognize an MLA as a public servant as "beyond comprehension."

Questioning the legal interpretation, Bharadwaj argued that an MLA wielding such influence, where FIRs are allegedly not registered on instructions and deaths occur in custody, should be considered a public servant.

He urged institutions to take a more sensitive and serious approach in cases involving powerful individuals and crimes against women. UNI

Delhi AQI sways between 'very poor' and 'severe'; Experts question decision to lift GRAP 4 curbs

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 27 : Delhi's air quality continues to battle between 'very poor' and 'severe' categories as thick smog engulfed the city, affecting visibility throughout Saturday.

As per Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data at 4 pm, Delhi's AQI recorded was 385, with PM2.5 being the prominent pollutant present in the air. Earlier, Saturday morning, Delhi's AQI slipped to very poor category at 350.

Meanwhile, many parts of the city recorded 'severe' levels of air quality in the day. In Vivek Vihar AQI reached 440, closely followed by Jahangirpuri and Wazirpur, where AQI escalated to 434 and 425 respectively.

CAQM had revoked GRAP 4 curbs on Wednesday with AQI showing marginal improvements across the city.

Reacting to the action by CAQM in revoking the GRAP 4, Manu Singh, Environmentalist, said, "Revoking GRAP-IV within days of marginal improvement in air quality exposes a painful truth that we are far more eager to declare victory than to protect lives. Air does not heal the way a wound closes overnight, pollution lingers, settles, and returns often faster than our systems can respond."

He said that lifting of the curbs within a day of improvements, do not help the cause but take it back to square on the next day. "When restrictions are lifted the moment AQI numbers look 'comfortable,' it feels less like science guiding policy and more like exhaustion and convenience taking over. Every time this happens, the city is pushed back into the same slow suffocation we claim to fight. Clean air is treated as an event, not a responsibility, and the lungs of children, the elderly, and those with asthma pay the price for this impatience," Singh stated. UNI

Delhi CM lays foundation of Atal Garden in Uttam Nagar

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 27 : Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Saturday said the foundation stone was laid for the development of Atal Garden in Uttam Nagar area of west Delhi.

She said the garden, which is coming up in a densely populated area, will bring freshness to the air, help bring down pollution, and also provide the locals with modern amenities, cleanliness, and an organized public space.

Taking to social media platform X, CM stated that the Atal Garden project is inspired by former PM Vajpayee's thought, according to which development moves ahead along with nature and culture.

According to CM, the project is also an effort aimed to transform a neglected piece of land near the Najafgarh drain, into a beautiful and accessible public park, where people from all walks of life, including children, elderly, and families can come and spend time.

Facilities such as a pond and Chhath Ghat will be developed in Atal Garden, something which plays and important role during the Chhath festival where the devotees perform their rituals and observe the fast standing in water.

Notably, a 12-foot-tall statue of former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee will be installed at the park, along with attractive fountains.

Interestingly, apart from greenery, landscaping and open plazas will be created in the park, so that people will be able to spend time with nature.

The garden will also have walking paths, an amphitheater, a playground, and also a provision for a proper food court.



There will be proper arrangements for public conveniences, and the government will also develop this as a secure palace.

Meanwhile, MP Kamaljeet Sehrawat, Delhi's PWD Minister Parvesh Verma, MLA Pawan Sharma, Sandeep Sehrawat, Shyam Sharma and district president of the BJP Raj Sharma, were also present on the occasion. UNI

Domestic air passenger traffic crosses 15 million-mark for first time in Nov: DGCA

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 27 : India's domestic air passenger traffic during January-November 2025 reached at 15.26 crore as against last year, registering an annual growth of 4.26 per cent and monthly growth of 6.92 per cent, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said on Saturday.

Monthly air passenger traffic has crossed 15 million for the first time, surpassing the previous record of 14.92 million set in December 2024, it said.

According to the data released by DGCA, a total of 15.26 crore passengers travelled by air between January and November this year, reflecting a 4.26 percent increase compared to the same period last year.

Notably, this record was set in November despite major travel-driven festivals such as Diwali and Chhath having concluded in October.

According to the data, in terms of Passenger Load Factor (PLF), Akasa Air ranked first with 93.8 percent, followed by IndiGo at 88.7 percent and SpiceJet at 87.7 percent. The Air India Group recorded a PLF of 87.5 percent, while IndiaOne Air stood at 82.7 percent.

In terms of passenger numbers, IndiGo and Akasa Air saw a decline in market share in November, while the market share of the Air India Group (Air India and Air India Express) and SpiceJet increased.

Meanwhile, IndiGo's market share fell from 65.6 percent in October to 63.6 percent. The Air India Group's share was 26.7 percent, Akasa Air's 4.7 percent, and SpiceJet's 3.7 percent.

Among the six metro cities, Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Chennai, and Kolkata, Akasa Air ranked first in on-



time departures with 72.2 percent. The Air India Group had 69.1 percent on-time departures, IndiGo 69 percent, Alliance Air 59 percent, and SpiceJet 48.4 percent.

In terms of airports, Chennai Airport ranked first for on-time departures with 86.4 percent, followed by Bengaluru (78.6 percent), Hyderabad (75.5 percent), Kolkata (74.4 percent), Delhi (62.2 percent), and Mumbai (50.1 percent). UNI

Guru Gobind Singh a symbol of struggle against injustice: Shah

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 27 : Remembering Guru Gobind Singh, union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said he is the symbol of struggle against injustice, resistance against oppression, and protection of humanity.

Shah, on the occasion of revered Sikh Guru's birth anniversary, said he made the supreme sacrifice of his life, his sons and Mata Gujri for the sake of religion and culture.

Guru Gobind Singh's birth anniversary is being observed across various places of the country, while religious events are also taking place in the country and abroad on the occasion.

The events are taking place to



commemorate the tenth Sikh Guru's birth anniversary, but also to remember the supreme sacrifice made by his sons and mother.

Shah has also said that the Panch Pyare of the Guru Gobind Singh, who

contributed in making Sikhism a strong pillar of service as well as protection through the establishment of the Khalsa Panth, became synonymous with protection of human society across the nation.

Notably, the Panch Pyare are referred to the 'Five Beloved,' the five Sikh men who were first initiated into the Khalsa tradition by Guru Gobind Singh.

Earlier, Shah had recently said that the saga of valor of Guru's Sahibzadas (sons) is synonymous with renunciation, dedication, and sacrifice for the motherland.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Guru Gobind Singh's life and teachings inspire an individual to stand for truth, justice, righteousness and also protect human dignity. UNI

CWC resolves to lead nationwide agitation from Jan 5 to save MGNREGA

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, DEC 27 : The Congress Working Committee (CWC) Saturday decisively resolved to launch a massive nationwide agitation starting January 5, 2026, to oppose the union Government's decision to repeal the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Party President Mallikarjun Kharge announced the decision at a press conference after a crucial meeting held today, emphasising the party's commitment to safeguarding the rights of rural workers.

"The Indian National Congress

solemnly vows to lead a MGNREGA Bachao Abhiyan from 5th January 2026. We will protest the repeal of MGNREGA at all costs," Kharge said during a press briefing following the CWC meeting.

Jointly addressing the press conference, senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi strongly criticised the government's move, stating, "The Prime Minister's Office has decided to replace MGNREGA. This is a devastating attack on federalism. MGNREGA strengthened panchayats and empowered rural India. The government is snatching the poor's right." Gandhi had earlier accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of harboring "a deep dislike" for the rights of poor

citizens and had called MGNREGA the "living embodiment" of Gandhi's vision of Gram Swaraj, especially vital during the COVID-19 pandemic. "For ten years, this government has weakened it; now it aims to erase it completely," he declared.

The CWC underscored that MGNREGA is not merely a government scheme but "the embodiment of the right to work envisioned by the Constitution of India."

The committee took a solemn pledge to collectively fight for the right to dignity, employment, and fair, timely compensation for India's rural workers. UNI





Josh Tongue succeeds where generations of greats could not

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

MELBOURNE: It is a feat that eluded two generations of England greats, from Steve Harmison and Matthew Hoggard to James Anderson and Stuart Broad. But after a Boxing Day five-for and seven wickets in the match, Josh Tongue became the first England bowler named player of the match in an Ashes Test in Australia since Dean Headley in 1998.

Tongue was only 13 months old when Headley - who, like Tongue, played age-group cricket for Worcestershire - took fourth-innings figures of 6 for 60 as Australia fell 12 runs short of their fourth-innings target of 175 (coincidentally, exactly the score that England chased down on Saturday). But the significance was not lost on him: "It's what dreams are made of," he said.

Tongue joined Headley on the honours board in the cavernous away-team dressing rooms at the MCG on Friday evening, with his figures of 5 for 45 immortalised in gold. It was notable, too, that the name of Jasprit Bumrah featured closely above Tongue's (in 2018 and 2024) given the trait that the two bowlers share in their action contributes to making them so dangerous.

Both Tongue and Bumrah release the ball from beyond the perpendicular - that is, their arm points towards 10 or 11 on a clock face, rather than the more commonplace 12 or 1. The result is that their natural shape is into the right-hander, tempting batters to play balls they may otherwise have left, and exacerbating the effects of any lateral movement.

Tongue is not in Bumrah's league when it comes to control - Bumrah concedes fewer than three runs per over across 52 Tests, while Tongue has leaked more than four runs per over in his first eight - but

his strike rate is comparable: Bumrah takes a wicket every 42.6 balls, and Tongue has struck every 39.6 balls across a much shorter career.

Tongue's first wicket of the match was a freebie, with Jake Weatherald strangling down the leg side, but his next two highlighted his threat. He was brave enough to pitch the ball up in a way that Brydon Carse was not on the first morning, and drew Marnus Labuschagne into an ill-judged drive, then cleaned up Steven Smith with a ball that nipped back appreciably. It was the fifth time out of five that Tongue had dismissed Smith across formats: once in the County Championship three seasons ago, twice in the 2023 Ashes Test at Lord's, and once in a Hundred game for Manchester Originals.

"He bowled nicely," Smith said. "He gets above the perpendicular, shapes the ball back into you with that angle, and draws you into playing, I suppose - similar to Scotty Boland in a way. [They have] similar release points and angles they create. He's a good bowler, bowled really nicely in this game, and he's done a pretty good job every time he's had the opportunity to play for England."

Tongue was twice asked to bowl long spells by Ben Stokes: eight overs in the first innings, then 11 unchanged in the second (eight before lunch, then three after). Given his chequered injury history - Tongue came close to retirement in 2022 after two failed shoulder operations - other bowlers might have been reluctant to do so, but he said that "adrenaline kicked in".

Stokes had little choice but to rely on him in the second innings after Gus Atkinson left the field early in the day with a hamstring strain, and said that Tongue's heavy workload in similar circumstances against India at The Oval five months

ago had given him "so much confidence" in his body that he was happy to push through.

"He's had his injuries and when you do have injuries, you do tend to lean on the side of caution," Stokes said, "but I think that Test match did so much good for him knowing that he can bowl long spells and then he can come back and back that up, and he's reaped the rewards since he's been given the opportunity out here."

"He's got those natural attributes - in particular to right-handers - with his release point and how he constantly makes right-handers feel like they need to play the ball. He's just got that natural wicket-taking ability that is so hard to come by."

"He should be very, very proud of himself the way that he's operated in this game, bowled some long, big, spells and he's also backed it up. He's been phenomenal in the two opportunities that he's been given so far in this series."

Tongue's success begged two obvious questions: should England have picked him earlier in the tour, having left him out for the first two Tests? And could Stokes have used him as an opening bowler rather than Carse, whose success in this series - and in his career to date - has come with an older ball?

They will dwell on both in the coming days, weeks and months as they reflect on this series. But as Tongue sat in a circle of team-mates on the outfield as the light faded at the MCG, he could at least look back at two days which vindicated the hard work that he has had to endure over the past three years. "I was in a tough situation with my body, potentially retiring," he said. "I'm glad I put in the hard work to get myself back playing cricket and now playing for England. It's what I've always wanted to do."

Short Tests Hurt Business, Says CA CEO

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

SYDNEY: Cricket Australia CEO Todd Greenberg said that "short Tests are bad for business" and admitted to a sleepless night following a 20-wicket day on Boxing Day despite a record crowd.

CA had been hoping to break crowd records across the entire Boxing Day Test between Australia and England despite the series being over given the number of pre-sold tickets across the first three days and the unprecedented demand across the series.

But having lost in the vicinity of AUD\$5 million (US\$3.3 million) for the two-day Test in Perth after 19 wickets fell on day one there, CA are staring another massive loss in the face if the MCG Test ends inside six sessions despite a record crowd of 94,199 on day one and another sell-out on day two.

Speaking on SEN prior to the start of day two, Greenberg was asked whether 20 wickets in a day was too many. "The short answer for that in my opinion is yes," Greenberg said. "As mesmerising and fascinating and enjoyable as it was to watch as a fan, we want Test cricket clearly to go for longer."

"A simple phrase I'd use is short Tests are bad for business. I can't be much more blunt than that. So I would like to see a slightly broader balance between the bat and the ball. I thought yesterday slightly favoured the ball. The batters have some ownership in some of that, it's not all around the pitch, but we've got some challenges." A raft of former players, turned pundits, were critical of the MCG surface on day one with suggestions it was far too much in favour of the seamers. Greenberg was asked whether his administration would have a larger say in the pitch preparation for Tests in Australia in the short-term to avoid short matches. "Historically we have taken a hands-off approach in all of our wicket preparation and allowed the staff and the conditions and those characteristics to be presented," Greenberg said. "But it's hard not to get more involved when you see the impact on the sport, particularly commercially. I'm not suggesting we're going to go around talking to ground-staff, but we do have to have a careful eye on what our expectations are over the course of a summer."

CA have already had to do some cost-cutting inside their business this year making several staff in their administration redundant while looking for cost savings in other areas including high performance. Greenberg is in the midst of the complex process of trying to bring private investment into the BBL within the next 12 months.

Another large financial loss in this Test match would be untimely. "I didn't sleep well last night, put it that way," Greenberg said. "It was an amazing day of Test cricket, so for that record number of people who were here, boy, they've had an experience. But our challenge is to make sure we can continue those experiences day after day. That's the challenge for all of us."

Australia's batting unit is drifting without a plan

ESPNCRICINFO

ADELAIDE: Australia have won these Ashes by being better for longer. But on the most difficult batting pitch they have seen at home, they were unable to extend the game long enough to be better than England.

Their quest for 5-0 came to an abrupt halt, much like the MCG mower it seems.

Teams are allowed to lose games at home. Particularly ones that become a lottery like this one did over two manic days.

For all the negativity around Australia's performance and the quality of the team at large, they

now slump to 17 wins, four losses and one rain-affected draw from their last 22 Tests since the 2023 Ashes, having won this one in 11 days. For supposedly the worst team since 2010-11, it's a hell of a record. It is hard to be critical. However, it's entirely possible that Australia will leave this series with the urn, and take an eight-month hiatus from Test cricket, with more questions than answers about a batting unit that already had huge question marks prior to the series.

Nowhere in Australia's long planning for this series did they have Travis Head opening the batting, Usman Khawaja at No.

5 and Cameron Green at No. 7 by the time the coin was tossed in Melbourne.

If that were a scenario presented to Australia's selectors by a fortune teller in October, that would have thought they would be 1-2 down at least rather than 3-0 to the good.

There is a sense brewing amongst an Australian fan base expectant of perfection that someone should pay the price at the selection table in Sydney. That would be harsh from a game where no player on either team reached 50 for the first time in a Test since 1932.

But what the difficulty of this

week highlights is how several of Australia's batters have squandered excellent batting conditions in Brisbane and Adelaide. Nicking off cheaply in brutal seaming conditions is often a far more minor crime as a professional than butchering a start when conditions are in your favour. In Australia, conditions have rarely been in the favour of Australia's batters in recent years as much as they were in Brisbane and Adelaide and apart from Head and Alex Carey, no one cashed in.

The central focus of the fans' ire are Marnus Labuschagne and Green. It is here where the selec-

tors are in the tightest bind.

Australia is on the cusp of a transition. The injuries to the bowling unit mean that it will happen naturally, if it isn't already in this series. How the batting unit is regenerated is a different story. At 31 and 26 respectively, Labuschagne and Green were to be the key pillars of the next iteration of Australia's side. From August next year Australia are set to play 20 Tests over a 12-month period. It would be a major surprise if the 39-year-old Khawaja played any. If he's needed to it would speak volumes about where the future of Australian batting.

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