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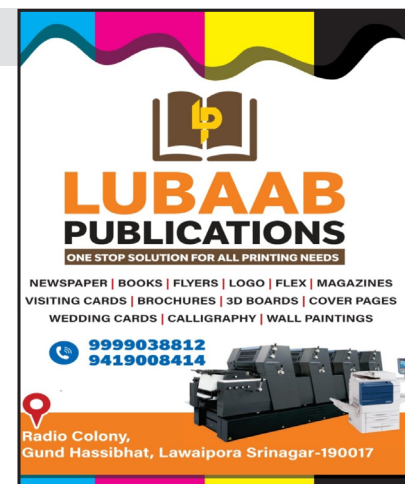
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HEADLINES TODAY

16TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

Voice To The Voiceless



DRDO Weaponry Turned The Tide in Operation Sindoor: Rajnath Singh

Hails Indigenous Systems, Pushes for Faster Innovations

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 1: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday credited indigenously developed weapon systems of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) with playing a decisive role in the success of Operation Sindoor, underlining India's growing self-reliance in critical defence technologies.

Addressing the gathering at the 68th Foundation Day of DRDO in the nation-

al capital, Singh said the performance of DRDO-designed systems during the operation reflected the organisation's professionalism, technological excellence and unwavering commitment to national security.

"The effectiveness of DRDO-developed weapon systems in Operation Sindoor clearly demonstrated their reliability and combat readiness. These systems not only safeguarded national interests but also significantly boosted the morale of our armed forces," Singh



said.

The Defence Minister lauded DRDO for Continuously Strengthening India's indigenous Defence Capabilities by Supplying the armed forces with cutting-edge equipment that performed seamlessly under operational conditions. He said the operation highlighted the strategic importance of home-grown defence solutions in modern warfare.

Singh also expressed confidence that DRDO would soon realise the

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Higher Reaches of J&K Drape in Fresh Snow; Dry Spell Likely Till Jan 20

MeT Rules Out Major Western Disturbances

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

SRINAGAR, JAN 1: Fresh snowfall covered the higher reaches of Jammu and Kashmir over the past 24 to 48 hours, while light rain was recorded in several lower-lying areas, even as the Meteorological Department forecast largely dry weather across the Union Territory till January 20.

Officials said Sadhna Top and Razdan Top witnessed the heaviest snowfall, accumulating nearly two feet each during the last two days. Gurez Valley in north Kashmir's Bandipora district and the strategic Zojila Pass received

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Div Com Kashmir's 2026 Vision Unveiled

■ HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

SRINAGAR, JAN 01: Entering 2026 with renewed optimism after a challenging 2025, Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Thursday outlined the administration's developmental priorities, calling for consolidating growth, reviving tourism, empowering youth, and promoting sustainability across the Valley.

Garg said the recent snowfall in Gulmarg, Sonmarg, and Pahalgam has been a positive sign, with expectations of a record tourist influx this year. He said the administration is fully prepared to support stakeholders in this regard.

Speaking to a select group of media persons at his office, the Div Com, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), highlighted ongoing infrastructure projects. "Key projects under the Public Works Department are progressing rapidly. The Noor Jahan Bridge and Sanat Nagar Flyover have enhanced Srinagar's connectivity. Work on the Ring Road and the Srinagar-Baramulla-Uri highway is

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AI Must Empower Every Indian, Especially the Underserved: President Murmu

From Classrooms to Careers, Artificial Intelligence Set to Drive Inclusive Growth, Jobs and India's Tech Leadership

■ HT NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI, JAN 1: President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday described Artificial Intelligence as a transformative force capable of reshaping India's economy and society, while stressing that its benefits must reach all sections of the population, particularly the underprivileged.

Addressing a programme organised by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, the President said AI is rapidly emerging as a critical growth engine for the country and will make a substantial contribution to India's GDP, employment generation and overall productivity in the coming decades. As India moves steadily towards becoming the world's

third-largest economy, she noted, artificial intelligence will play a decisive role in accelerating this journey.

Emphasising inclusive development, President Murmu said AI must be used to reduce societal, economic and technological barriers rather than deepen existing inequalities. She underlined that future-oriented skills such as data



science, AI engineering and data analytics will be central to building a robust national talent pool capable of driving innovation and competitiveness.

The President highlighted that the government, in collaboration with industry and academic institutions, is working to ensure that India not only adopts cutting-edge

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Centre Releases Rs 944 Crore For Flood Rehab Works In J&K

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, JAN 1: The Centre has released the first installment of Rs 944 crore for reconstruction and rehabilitation works in flood-affected areas of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Thursday.

The amount has been

released against a total sanctioned package of Rs 1,430 crore, approved for rebuilding infrastructure damaged due to floods and cloudburst incidents, including the devastating Kishtwar cloudburst.

Officials said that the sanction for the reconstruction

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BJP thanks Modi Government for 1,430 crore relief package

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, JAN 01: Senior BJP leader and MLA Sham Lal Sharma on Thursday expressed gratitude to

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Prof. Wahid Makhdoomi set to be appointed chairman BOSE

■ HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

SRINAGAR, JAN 01: Prof. Wahid Makhdoomi, Registrar of the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), is set to be appointed Chairman of the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education (BOSE), sources disclosed.

Sources in the J&K administration told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the cabinet, headed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, in its meeting on December 22, 2025, finalized the name of Prof. Wahid Makhdoomi from among three candidates recommended by the search panel constituted by the J&K government.

The cabinet decision was then sent to Lok Bhavan, formerly Raj Bhavan, for approval, which has

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Indian Army Pivots to Digital Battlefield, Names 2026 'Year of Networking & Data Centricity'

Gen Upendra Dwivedi Reiterated That Operation Sindoor Continues as Force Enters Decisive Phase of Modernisation

■ HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 1: Signalling a major push towards digital warfare and integrated operations, the Indian Army on

Thursday announced 2026 as the 'Year of Networking & Data Centricity', underscoring its focus on real-time connectivity, faster decision-making and enhanced combat effectiveness.

In his New Year message, Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi said the force is in the midst of a "decade of transformation," with jointness, self-reliance and innovation forming the backbone of India's military

preparedness.

"The effective use of indigenous technologies, fresh ideas and continuous reforms is making the Army more capable

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Zero tolerance for unhygienic hospitals in Jammu: Sakeena

Chairs high-level review meeting on sanitation measures

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, JAN 01: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Thursday emphasized on the urgent need for a complete revamp of sanitation and cleanliness measures in all Government Medical Colleges (GMCs), District Hospitals, Sub-District Hospitals (SDHs) and other healthcare facilities across the J&K, underscoring that hygiene and sanitation is central to quality patient care and public trust.

Chairing a high-level review meeting on cleanliness

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Ansari Family of Delina Bereaved

Jameel Ansari's Mother-in-Law Passed Away

■ HT NEWS DESK

BARAMULLA, JAN 1: The Editor-in-Chief of Daily Headlines Today, Jahangir Bukhari, along with the entire team, has expressed profound grief over the demise of Zeenat Begum, mother-in-law of Jameel Ansari, a valued member of the Headlines Today family.

Zeenat Begum, wife of late Fida Hussain Ansari and

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DC Srinagar, Director SKIMS take spot review of infrastructure upgradation & developmental needs of the Institute

Traffic Decongestion Reviewed for Patient Ease at Health Facility

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 01: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo along with the Director of Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura, Prof. Mohammad Ashraf Ahangar today conducted an on-spot review of infrastructure upgradation and developmental requirements of the Institute to further strengthen the healthcare facilities at the major tertiary care hospital of the valley.

Additional Director SKIMS, Zahoor Ahmad Mir; Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; Superintending Engineer R&B, Medical Superintendent SKIMS, Dr Farooq Jan; Executive Engineer of R&B, Dy SP Traffic, Tehsildar Eidgah, other senior Officers of District Administration and SKIMS were present on the occasion.



During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner and Director SKIMS held a detailed deliberations with regard to expansion of healthcare infrastructure of the SKIMS Soura, traffic decongestion measures outside the Institute, demarcation of SKIMS land, enhancing access

to SKIMS by way of road widening, land for proposed new OPD block of the institute.

The officers reviewed on the spot various measures aimed at making the Institute campus more patient-friendly. Special focus was laid on expanding the



entry and exit points of the main gate to ensure hassle-free movement of patients, attendants and emergency vehicles.

On the occasion, the DC stressed upon the concerned Officers to work out practical and feasible solutions to the issues

discussed and directed them to conduct follow-up spot visits within the coming weeks. He assured the SKIMS administration of all possible support from the District Administration to further strengthen healthcare infrastructure and improve patient care and service delivery, with the objective of making SKIMS a patient-friendly campus.

During the visit, the Officers also inspected the proposed site for construction of the new OPD Block and other facilities aimed at improving patient convenience and healthcare services. The DC emphasized the need for coordinated efforts among all line departments for timely execution of the proposed works.

Earlier, in a meeting held at SKIMS Soura, the Director SKIMS highlighted priority areas requiring immediate attention to enhance operational efficiency and patient convenience.

Editor-in-Chief, Headlines Today, Team Express Grief Over Demise of Jameel Ansari's Mother-in-Law

HT NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA, JAN 1: The Editor-in-Chief of Daily Headlines Today, Jahangir Bukhari, along with the entire team of the newspaper, has expressed deep sorrow and heartfelt condolences over the demise of Zeenat Begum, mother-in-law of Jameel Ansari, a valued member of the Headlines Today team.

Zeenat Begum, wife of late Fida Hussain Ansari and mother of Shuja Ansari, passed away after a prolonged illness, leaving behind a grieving family and relatives.

In his condolence message, Editor-in-Chief Jahangir Bukhari termed the demise as an irreparable loss for the bereaved family and said that Headlines Today stands in complete solidarity with its team member Jameel Ansari in this hour of grief. He prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and strength, patience and courage for the family to bear the loss.

The entire Team Headlines Today also joined in expressing profound grief and sympathy with Jameel Ansari and his family, remembering the departed as a dignified and noble soul.

Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raji'un.

The Chaharum (fourth-day ritual) of the departed soul will be observed on Sunday, January 4, 2026, at Imam Bargah Qadeem, Delina, Baramulla, where special prayers will be offered.

Delina Bids Tearful Farewell to Zeenat Begum, Mother-in-Law of Journalist Jameel Ansari

Manzoor Hashmi Cultural Forum extended its heartfelt condolences

HT NEWS DESK

BARAMULLA, JAN 1: Ansari family of Delina is mourning the demise of Zeenat Begum, mother-in-law of senior journalist Jameel Ansari, who passed away after a prolonged illness. She was the wife of late Fida Hussain Ansari and mother of Shuja Ansari.

Her passing has cast a deep pall of gloom over Delina and adjoining areas, with mourners from all walks of life visiting the bereaved family to offer condolences and remember the departed as a dignified, pious and compassionate woman.

Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raji'un. Expressing profound grief, the Manzoor Hashmi Cultural Forum extended its heartfelt condolences to the bereaved Ansari family. The Forum President, Syed Sarwar Hashmi, expressed deep sorrow over the demise and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul, while also seeking patience, strength and fortitude for the family to bear this irreparable loss.

He termed the demise a great personal loss for the family and the community, recalling Zeenat Begum as a woman of humility, grace and strong moral values.

Inder Cultural Forum Condoles Ansari Family

GULFAM BARJI

SRINAGAR, JAN 1: The pious and noble lady Late Zeenat Begum of the renowned literary and scholarly Ansari family of Delina, Baramulla, passed away after a brief illness and returned to her Creator.

The deceased was the mother-in-law of Jameel Ansari, a prominent calligrapher, writer, Media Secretary of Adabi Markaz Kamraz, and a widely respected personality known for his artistic talents. She was also the respected mother of Shuja Ansari.

On this sad occasion, several literary organizations of the Valley, along with social, religious, and literary figures, expressed deep grief and condolences with the Ansari family of Delina, Baramulla, especially with Jameel Ansari.

In this connection, the well-known literary organization Inner Cultural Forum, Inderkoet, Sumbal Sonawari, convened a condolence meeting under the chairmanship of its President Saleem Yousuf. During the meeting, heartfelt condolences and solidarity were expressed with the Ansari family, particularly with Jameel Ansari and Shuja Ansari.

While expressing his condolences, President Saleem Yousuf stated that all members of the Forum equally share the grief of the Ansari family, especially that of Jameel Ansari. At the conclusion of the meeting, prayers were offered for the forgiveness, eternal peace, and elevation of ranks of the deceased, and for strength and patience for the bereaved family to endure this great loss.

SKUAST-K rings in 2026 with 'achiever of the year' felicitations

VC sets sight on top spot among SAUs

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 1: On New Year's Day, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir held a special celebratory event to mark the start of 2026 by honouring the scientists, students, and university staff whose efforts propelled the institution to its current standing as the third-best state agricultural university (SAU) in the country.

Addressing a packed audience, Vice Chancellor Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai set a high bar for the coming year. While presenting the 'Achiever of the Year' awards, Prof Ganai credited the university's upward growth trajectory to the relentless hard work of its staff.

"It is your dedication that has made this university the third-best in the country," Prof Ganai remarked. "The surge in externally funded projects, patents, innovations, and startups is a testimony to your labour. We are a brand university now, and every initiative we take must be for the upliftment of our stakeholders. Our vision is clear: to emerge as a global transdisciplinary university, a strategic policy thinktank, and target J&K as a model bioeconomy for the nation."

Registrar, SKUAST-K, Prof Azmat Alam Khan, provided an overview of

the previous year's milestones, highlighting how the university has become central to the sustainable agriculture and economic development of Jammu and Kashmir.

The event also saw the high-profile launch of the SKUAST-K Calendar for 2026. Describing the publication as more than just a datebook, the Vice Chancellor noted that each page was designed to depict the institution's uniqueness and growth story. "Sky is our limit," he told the gathering, "and this calendar invites everyone to be a part of our transformative journey." Alongside the calendar, the December 2025 edition of Shalimar AgriTalk was released, featuring various happenings at the university, success stories and the Vice Chancellor's roadmap for the New Year.

In a move toward further industrial integration, the university held an e-launch for 550 MSME skill programs aimed at fostering skill development and entrepreneurship among the youth of Jammu and Kashmir.

The awards ceremony itself was diverse, recognizing a wide spectrum of contributions. "Achiever of the Year" certificates were handed out for innovations, academic excellence, community outreach, and Human Resource Development. Recipients included faculty and student startup

founders, Research Station and KVK heads, and Principal Investigators leading major projects like HADP and JKIP. Scientists who developed groundbreaking technologies and new crop varieties stood alongside administrative staff from various directorates, all recognized for their role in the university's ecosystem.

The proceedings were marked by a sense of community and a poignant farewell. Prof. Haroon R. Naik welcomed the faculty and officials, while Prof. Nasir Ahmad Dar conducted the day's events. The ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks by Joint Registrar Pervaiz Ahmad Bhat. Bhat, who is set to superannuate next month, received a warm acknowledgement from his colleagues for his years of service to the university administration. Vice Chancellor Prof Ganai thanked Bhat for his dedicated service as an astute administrator and a pillar of institutional integrity, whose tireless efforts significantly strengthened the university's governance during his long and distinguished tenure.

Director Extension, Prof Raihana Habib, Director Education Mohammad Altaf Bhat, Deans of various faculties, Comptroller SKUAST-K, Controller Examinations, and other officers of the university were also present at the occasion.

KU's NewGen IEDC holds design thinking workshop to strengthen innovation ecosystem

Five startups receive ₹20 lakh grant under MeitY GENESIS EIR

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 01: The NewGen IEDC, Business Innovation & Incubation Centre, University of Kashmir (KU), organised a two-day immersive workshop on 'Driving Innovation Through Design Thinking' at the Main Campus. It was supported by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, and RUSA 2.0.

The workshop aimed to equip students, innovators, and aspiring entrepreneurs with practical design thinking tools to develop user-centric, scalable, and socially relevant solutions to real-world problems. It followed globally accepted design thinking frameworks, emphasising user empathy, ideation, prototyping, and

testing through experiential and collaborative learning.

Addressing the gathering at the valedictory ceremony, Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, highlighted the importance of innovation-led learning in higher education and said, "Such initiatives prepare our students to think critically, engage with real-life challenges, and develop solutions that are both creative and responsible. Universities must nurture such spaces where ideas can be tested, refined, and transformed into impact-driven outcomes."

Dean Research KU, Prof. Mohammad Sultan Bhat, and Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, said that design thinking helps translate academic research into practical outcomes and reaffirmed the University's focus on



strengthening its innovation and startup ecosystem through mentoring and incubation.

During the valedictory ceremony, five startups under the MeitY GENESIS Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR) Scheme were awarded sanction letters for a cumulative

grant of ₹20 lakh and formally onboarded as incubates of the NewGen IEDC, KU. Top-performing participants were also felicitated for their outstanding engagement during the workshop.

Earlier, Coordinator, NewGen IEDC KU, Dr. Irfana Rashid, out-

lined the rationale of the workshop and highlighted the Centre's recent initiatives aimed at promoting student innovation and entrepreneurial capacity building. The workshop sessions were led by Dr. Radhika Mia, a globally recognised design thinker, and Mr. Harshil Parikh, a tech founder and AI strategist, who offered inputs on human-centred design, systems thinking, and technology-driven, startup-oriented innovation.

Participants worked in interdisciplinary teams on field-based problem exploration, collaborative ideation, and solution validation. The workshop culminated in team presentations, several of which demonstrated strong potential for incubation and further development.

CEO SSCL conducts site review of Heritage Wooden Footbridge at Amira Kadal

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 1: Chief Executive Officer, Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), Faz Lul Haseeb, today undertook a comprehensive site inspection of the heritage wooden pedestrian footbridge under construction at Amira Kadal to review the progress and quality of works.

He was accompanied by the Chief Engineer SSCL, Executive Engineers, and other senior officers.

During the visit, the CEO closely examined the pace of execution and the technical and structural aspects of the project being carried out on the existing piers of the old bridge. The inspection covered retrofitting and structural strengthening of the piers, construction of the wood-



en superstructure, and progress of all allied components.

On completion, the footbridge is expected to significantly enhance pedestrian mobility and walk ability across the Jhelum river while preserving the historic character of the Amira Kadal precinct. The project aims to provide safe and convenient pedestrian access to the Jhelum Riverfront and ensure seamless connectivity with key heritage and commercial areas, including Goni Khan, Maharaja Bazar, and Hari Singh High Street.

Emphasising the importance of quality, safety, and timely delivery, CEO directed the Chief Engineer, SSCL, to further accelerate the pace of work and ensure completion of the project within the stipulated time-frame. He also instructed the

executing agencies to strictly adhere to approved designs, technical specifications, and prescribed timelines, while integrating heritage-sensitive architectural elements in harmony with the historical and cultural landscape of the area.

Officials briefed that the project is envisaged as a strategic urban intervention aimed at promoting pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, revitalising the city's historic core, and enhancing the overall urban environment for residents, traders, and visitors.

Expressing satisfaction with the progress achieved so far, the CEO urged all concerned agencies to maintain momentum and ensure the timely delivery of a safe, durable, and aesthetically refined public infrastructure asset for the city of Srinagar.

DC Budgam Chairs Meeting on Facilitation and Authentication of Hokersar Wetland

DIRECTS TO EXPEDITE AUTHENTICATION PROCESS TO PREVENT ENCROACHMENTS

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM, JAN 1: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-din Bhat, today chaired a coordination meeting regarding the facilitation and authentication of Hokersar Wetland, a designated Ramsar Site, through Revenue Authorities.

The meeting was convened to ensure accurate demarcation, authentication of land records, and strengthened inter-departmental coordination for the long-term conservation and protection of the wetland.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on revenue record authentication, boundary verification, geo-referencing, demarcation of wetland areas, and removal of ambiguities in land ownership records to ensure that Hokersar Wetland is legally and physically protected from encroachments and unregulated activities.

The DC addressing the officers, emphasized the ecological significance of Hokersar Wetland, stating that it is not only a critical habitat for migratory birds but also plays a vital role in maintaining environmental balance in the region. "Hokersar Wetland is a natural heritage site of international importance. Accurate authentication of revenue records and scientific demarcation are essential to safeguard this Ramsar Site from encroachments and degradation," the DC said.

He further stressed the need for seamless coordination between Revenue, Forest, Wildlife, Police, and Survey & Land Records departments to ensure time-bound completion of the assigned tasks.

The DC added that all concerned departments must work in close coordination and ensure that the process of facilitation and authentication is completed in a transparent, legally sound, and time-bound manner.

The DC also directed the concerned officers to share verified data, maps, and records and ensure proper documentation to strengthen the legal framework for wetland conservation.

The DC directed officer to expedite the authentication process and reinforce institutional mechanisms for the effective protection, management, and sustainable conservation of Hokersar Wetland, in line with national and international environmental commitments.

The meeting was attended by ADC Budgam, ACR Budgam, SDM West, Srinagar; SDM Beerwah, SDM Khanshaib, SDM Chadoora, SDPO Magam, Regional Wildlife Warden, Kashmir, Divisional Forest Officer, Photo Interpretation (PI) Division, Divisional Forest Officer, Settlement & Demarcation, Srinagar, Kashmir; Range Officer, Hokersar, Budgam; Naib Tehsildar, Regional Director, Survey and Land Records, Srinagar; Settlement Assistant, Regional Director Survey & Land Records, Srinagar, besides other concerned officers.

DC Bandipora inaugurates Road Safety Month, flag-off awareness rally

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA, JAN 1: As part of the Road Safety Month observance, Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today flagged off a road safety awareness rally from the Mini Secretariat, Bandipora.

The awareness rally saw active participation from Sumo drivers and departmental officials, who carried placards conveying key messages on traffic discipline, safe driving, and accident prevention. Moving through major areas of Bandipora town, the rally aimed to sensitise the public about the importance of following traffic rules and adopting responsible road behaviour.

Addressing the participants, the Deputy Com-



missioner said the initiative was focused on building a culture of road safety among motorists, commuters, pedestrians, and students alike. She stressed that responsible conduct on roads and strict adherence to traffic norms are essential to reducing accidents and saving lives.

Officials informed that a series of activities including awareness camps, rallies, seminars, and interactive sessions will be organised across the district throughout Road Safety Month to further strengthen public awareness and promote safe and disciplined driving practices.

ARTO Bandipora was also present on the occasion.

DC Bandipora conducts Extensive Tour of Ajas Tehsil; reviews office functioning, interacts with public

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA, JAN 01: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, conducted an extensive tour of Ajas Tehsil to review the functioning of government offices, inspect public facilities and listen to public grievances.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner inspected the Tehsil Office Ajas and reviewed routine administrative work, including the progress of ongoing digitisation. She directed the staff to ensure timely delivery of services and maintain efficiency, transparency and responsiveness in public dealing.

The DC also visited Panchayat Ghar Ajas C, where she inspected the library and emphasized optimal utilisation of such facilities for the benefit of local residents, especially students and youth.

Interacting with the general public at various locations, the Deputy Commissioner patiently listened to their issues and assured them that



genuine grievances would be addressed on priority by the district administration.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner visited the Higher Secondary School and Government Degree College Ajas, where she interacted with the staff and reviewed the overall functioning of the institutions. She stressed the

importance of maintaining academic discipline, improving learning outcomes and fostering a student-friendly environment.

The visit reiterated the district administration's commitment to grassroots governance, effective service delivery and direct public outreach.

DC Budgam distributes SVAMITVA Property Cards to beneficiaries

Says SVAMITVA is a transformational initiative strengthening grassroots governance

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM, JAN 01: Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-din Bhat, today distributed SVAMITVA Property Cards to beneficiaries belonging to Tehsils of Khag and Khanshaib at a function held here in the Conference Hall, Budgam.

Addressing the gathering, the DC highlighted that the SVAMITVA Scheme has been launched with the objective of providing legal ownership of residential properties in rural areas through modern drone-based survey technology.

He stated that the scheme aims to empower villagers by ensuring clarity of land records, minimizing disputes, and enabling planned and sustainable development of rural areas.

On the occasion, the DC maintained that holistic development of villages can be achieved only when people develop a sense of ownership towards their land and settlements. He emphasised that community participation plays a crucial role in translating developmental initiatives into lasting outcomes.

The DC further stressed that special responsibility lies with families and society to nurture youth and children into responsible and aware citizens. He underlined that along with awareness of rights, equal importance must be given to duties, discipline, and civic sense so that villages progress in a harmonious and organized manner.

The DC noted that the SVAMITVA Scheme is not merely a documentation exercise but



a transformational initiative aimed at strengthening grassroots governance. He said that the issuance of property cards provides legal security to rural households, enhances access to institutional credit, and supports

economic empowerment.

As per the district status under the SVAMITVA Scheme, property cards have been generated for 33 villages, with 118 property cards generated so far, out of which 88 property cards have

already been distributed to rightful beneficiaries.

The DC appreciated the coordinated efforts of the concerned departments and Survey of India in implementing the scheme and assured that remaining villages will be covered in a phased and time-bound manner. He reaffirmed that all technical and procedural issues are being addressed to ensure saturation of the SVAMITVA Scheme across the district. The programme concluded with an appeal to beneficiaries to make prudent use of the property cards and actively contribute towards the overall development of their villages.

Besides, ACR Budgam, Tehsildar khag/Khanshaib, beneficiaries from tehsil khag and Khanshaib, other concerned revenue officials were present during the event.

DC Anantnag reviews arrangements for Republic Day-2026 celebrations

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG, JAN 01: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, SF Hamid, reviewed the arrangements for the upcoming Republic Day-2026 celebrations during a comprehensive meeting with concerned officers today at Dak Bangalow, Khanabal.

The meeting was attended by ADCs, GM DIC, ACR, ACD, SDMs, CPO, CMO, CEO, CAO, CAHO, DSEO, representative of SSP, district and sectoral officers, representatives of Educational Institutions and other concerned officials. At the outset, the DC noted that Republic Day marks an important milestone in the history of our country. He called for celebrating the occasion with

traditional zeal and enthusiasm, and directed all officers and departments to make necessary arrangements befitting the national event. He further remarked that all concerned officers and agencies must execute their assigned tasks seamlessly to ensure the celebrations are a grand success.

During the meeting, arrangements related to the timing and schedule of the event, security, sanitation and cleanliness, seating, medical facilities, power and water supply, illumination and decoration, deployment of fire tenders, transportation, invitations besides stage management, PA system installation, and prize distribution were reviewed in detail.



The meeting was informed that the main function will be held at Shaheed Humayun Muzammil Memorial, Government Degree College (Boys), Khanabal, where the National

Flag will be unfurled by the Chief Guest, followed by a parade by contingents of the J&K Police and other security forces. Colourful cultural items highlighting patriotism, nationalism, and folk tra-

ditions will also be presented on the occasion.

It was further informed that similar functions will be organized at the Sub-Division and Tehsil levels, where the respective



SDMs and Tehsildars shall ensure that all necessary arrangements are made well in advance for smooth conduct of the Republic Day celebrations.

Urging officers to perform

their duties diligently, the DC emphasized that coordinated efforts of all departments are essential to organize the Republic Day celebrations with festive and patriotic fervour.

CEO Srinagar hosts Orientation Program on "Post-PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024"

Dir. SEK calls for unified stakeholder action to achieve national excellence in competency-based learning

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 1: In a significant step towards transforming educational practices in alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the vision of Viksit Bharat, the Chief Education Officer Srinagar, in collaboration with DIET Srinagar (associated with SCERT Kashmir), hosted a one-day orientation programme on "Post-PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024: Interventional Plan and Role of Stakeholder Engagement in Improving Learning Outcomes."

The event, held at Teachers Bhavan Auditorium, SCERT Srinagar, brought together key stakeholders to deliberate on leveraging PARAKH findings for systemic improvements in learning outcomes across public and private schools.

The programme was graced by Naseer Ahmad Wani, Director School Education Kashmir (SEK), as the chief guest, along with distinguished educationists including Prof. Seema Naz, Principal IASE Srinagar; Prof. Tasleem Jan, Dean, School of Education and Behavioural Sciences, University of Kashmir; Dr. Arif Jan, Deputy Director JKBOSE Bemina; Anjum Raja, District Education Planning Officer Sri-

nagar/PARAKH Nodal Officer for District Srinagar; Ghulam Hassan Rishi, UT Nodal Officer for PARAKH, and Nazrul Islam Baba, President, Private Schools Association Kashmir. Principals of Government Higher Secondary Schools, representatives from private schools of Srinagar district, heads of institutions from middle schools, and other officials actively participated.

Addressing the gathering, Naseer Ahmad Wani lauded District Srinagar's commendable performance in the PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan 2024. He urged participants to view this achievement as a foundational milestone rather than a final goal. "We must strive relentlessly to reach national benchmarks," he emphasized, stressing the need to attain expected outcomes across all competencies.

Highlighting PARAKH as a diagnostic tool rather than a judgmental assessment, DSEK underscored the importance of aligning with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023. He called for robust collaboration among stakeholders and outlined concrete action points for cluster heads, Zonal Education Officers, headmasters, and private school representatives. Additionally, he announced plans for a foundation-level study in March to pre-



pare learners systematically for future assessments.

Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Bhat, Chief Education Officer Srinagar, advocates the use of PARAKH insights as a roadmap for enhancing learning outcomes in both public and private sectors. He linked the initiative to the Viksit Bharat Sankalp, emphasizing competency-based education to foster 21st-century skills like critical thinking,

creativity, and problem-solving, alongside foundational literacy and numeracy. "Such focused interventions will nurture holistic development, life skills, and values, preparing confident citizens and leaders for a self-reliant India," he stated.

Anjum Raja presented a detailed PARAKH report card of district Srinagar, offering a proposed targeted intervention strategies to address learning

gaps. These initiatives will feature dedicated sessions with teachers aimed at collaboratively devising effective strategies and tailored lesson plans to achieve the desired competencies outlined in the PARAKH findings.

The programmes will empower educators across Srinagar district to bridge learning gaps through competency-based approaches, fostering innovative teaching practices aligned with NEP 2020.

Prof. Seema Naz focused on NEP 2020-aligned pedagogies, advocating experiential learning, activity-based approaches, and ICT integration, while drawing attention to persistent learning deficits supported by data.

Prof. Tasleema Jan, who chaired a panel discussion, emphasized constructivist education, continuous professional development (CPD), and collaborative practices to realize NEP 2020's vision of a progressive learning society.

Dr. Arif Jan addressed governance challenges from fragmented assessment standards, urging adoption of common blueprints from the PARAKH dashboard.

The programme concluded with a collective pledge to transcend traditional pedagogies, embracing innovative, learner-centric approaches.

Preparations for Republic Day 2026 reviewed at Sumbal

HT NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA, JAN 01: In connection with the celebration of Republic Day 2026, a preparatory meeting of officers of Sumbal Sub-Division was held today under the chairmanship of Sub Divisional Magistrate, Sumbal, Murtaza Ahmad Sheikh at Dak Bungalow, Irrigation Colony, Sumbal.

During the meeting, the SDM reviewed arrangements related to security, parade, cultural programmes, public participation, sanitation, power and water supply, healthcare facilities, traffic regulation and overall coordination among departments to ensure smooth and dignified celebrations on January 26.

The SDM stressed upon effective inter-departmental coordination and directed all concerned officers to ensure timely completion of assigned responsibilities. He emphasized that arrangements should reflect the spirit of national pride while



ensuring safety and convenience of the general public.

Security agencies were directed to put in place a robust security and traffic management plan, while the Health Department was asked to keep medical teams and ambulances on standby. Line departments were instructed to ensure uninterrupted essential services during the celebrations.

The meeting concluded with directions to all concerned to work in close coordination to ensure that the Republic Day function is celebrated smoothly and peacefully.

The meeting was attended by tehsildar Sumbal, Syed Shabbir Sarwar; Sub-Divisional Police Officer Sumbal, Mohammad Nawaz Khanday; BDO Sumbal, Block Medical Officer, besides officers from CRPF, R&B, PDD, I&FC, Jal Shakti, MID Shadipora, Education, Health, Municipal Committees, Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries, Sericulture, Floriculture, Fire and Emergency Services and other line departments.

DLSA Srinagar organizes Training Session on Prevention of Child Marriage

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 01: District Legal Services Authority Srinagar, in collaboration with the District Social Welfare Department Srinagar, organised a Training/Refresher Programme for Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs), Anganwadi Workers and ASHA Workers on the prevention of Child Marriage at the Conference Hall, ADR Centre, District Court Complex, Srinagar.

The programme was held under the aegis of the Jammu and Kashmir Legal Services Authority as part of the nationwide 100-day intensive awareness campaign



"Bal Vivah Mukht Bharat" launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, with the objective of strengthening legal awareness, outreach and rapid preventive intervention mechanisms at the grassroots level in line with the ASHA (Awareness, Support, Help & Action) framework.

The programme featured informative sessions by the resource persons including Deputy Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsels, Panel Lawyer of DLSA Srinagar and Member of the ASHA Unit, who highlighted the legal framework, preventive strategies and the critical role of frontline workers in identifying, reporting and preventing instances of child marriage.

The programme concluded with a reaffirmation of the mission of the District Legal Services Authority Srinagar to ensure access to justice, promote legal literacy and safeguard the rights of children, particularly those belonging to vulnerable sections of society, through sustained awareness initiatives and collaborative community engagement.

Training Program held to strengthen IEC Campaign against substance abuse at Kulgam

HT NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM, JAN 01: One-day training program for Resource Persons nominated by various Government Departments for the IEC (Information, Education and Communication) Campaign against Drug Abuse was conducted today here at conference hall Mini-secretariat Kulgam.

The programme aimed to sensitise and equip the nominated Resource Persons with effective communication strategies, awareness tools, and coordinated approaches to further strengthen the



campaign against drug abuse.

During the training, participants were briefed on the objectives of the IEC campaign, the harmful effects of drug abuse on individuals and society, and the pivotal role of inter-departmental coordination in disseminating awareness at the grassroots level.

Interactive sessions and deliberations were held to enhance the capacity of the Resource Persons to function as effective change agents within their respective departments and communities.

Awareness Program on PMVBRY, Labour Codes held in Budgam

HT NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM, JAN 1: An awareness programme was organised by the District Administration Budgam to review the rollout and implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PMVBRY) and the Four Labour Codes, under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-din Bhat.

Besides, CEO Budgam, CEO Municipal Committee Budgam, Executive Engineers of R&B, Jal Shakti, and REW divisions, ALC Budgam, and AD Handicrafts Budgam, the programme witnessed active participation from stakeholders of Government and private establishments enhancing awareness regarding labour welfare schemes, statutory compliance, and employment generation initiatives.

During the session, detailed presentations were made highlighting the objectives and benefits of PMVBRY, particularly its role in job creation, skill support, and extension of social security coverage to workers across various sectors.

Key provisions of the Four Labour Codes covering wages, industrial relations, social security, and occupational safety, health and working conditions were also elaborated upon for better understanding and effective implementation.

While chairing the programme,



the DC Budgam underscored the importance of creating an informed ecosystem among employers and implementing agencies to ensure that the intended benefits of labour reforms and employment schemes reach the grassroots level.

He said that PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana has been envisaged as a significant intervention to promote formal employment, incentivise employers, and strengthen the social security framework, thereby contributing to inclusive economic growth.

The DC further stressed that awareness and compliance with the Labour Codes are essential for ensuring fair wages, safe working conditions, industrial harmony, and protection of workers' rights, while simultaneously facilitating ease of doing business.

The DC said that coordination

between Government departments, private stakeholders, and implementing agencies is crucial for the successful rollout of these initiatives. Directions were issued for continued outreach programmes and regular engagement with stakeholders to address implementation challenges and clarify procedural aspects.

The DC said that District Administration is commitment towards effective implementation of labour reforms and employment-oriented schemes, in alignment with national priorities for a developed and inclusive India.

The initiative was widely appreciated by participants for strengthening awareness, promoting statutory compliance, and fostering a collaborative approach towards labour welfare and employment generation in the district.

National Road Safety Month 2026:

DC Ganderbal Flags off Road Safety awareness Rally

HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, JAN 01: As part of the National Road Safety Month 2026, commenced from today, the Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore flagged off a Road Safety Awareness Rally from the Mini Secretariat Ganderbal.

The rally witnessed active participation from various stakeholders, including local transporters, drivers, traffic officials and locals. The rally passed through major roads of Ganderbal town, spreading awareness about road safety norms and the precautions to be observed while driving.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of collective



responsibility in ensuring road safety and urged all to strictly adhere to traffic rules to prevent accidents and save lives.

Pertinently, transport department has scheduled series of awareness and enforcement

activities across the district like programmes in schools and colleges to educate students about traffic rules, pedestrian safety, and responsible road behaviour. Special awareness drives will also be organized at bus stands, trans-

port unions, and other public places to sensitize drivers and commuters about safe driving practices.

Meanwhile, the Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Ganderbal informed that, in addition

to awareness programmes licence checking, vehicle fitness inspections, and awareness sessions at fitness grounds will be carried out to ensure compliance with traffic laws and vehicle safety norms.



HT EDITORIAL

New year celebrations, latest trend in Kashmir

There is an old saying that change is the only constant in this world and time changes with the passage of time. Each and every person undergoes a change and the same holds true with the people of the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir. Over the years trends have changed in the Kashmir valley with the people accepting the changes with open arms. There has been no going back in this regard with the valley residents being receptive to the changes.

Some years back there was no concept of celebrations on the occasion of new year with the people preferring to remain indoors. There were hardly few celebrations at Gulmarg in North Kashmir while as in Jammu division the arrival of the new year was marked with celebrations at some places. However, over the past few years the trend has changed and the new year is celebrated with pomp and show across Jammu & Kashmir.

The celebrations are held in such a magnitude in Kashmir that the valley outscored the Jammu division at the end of the day. In the Kashmir valley more and more venues are being added to the new year celebrations and the same are not confined to Gulmarg only. As on date these celebrations are held at Pahalgam and Sonamarg. Lal Chowk, the city centre of Srinagar is also not far behind in this regard since night long celebrations take place at this place as well.

In the present day context, the people of Kashmir valley are more interested in real life rather than reel life. In the past the new year celebrations of people in Kashmir were confined to watching some programmes on their television sets and listening to new year programmes on the radio sets. Given the fact that electricity was also not available to the people as it is at present people would not prefer to go out and explore the options of taking part in new year celebrations.

It is important that the government puts in place all the facilities at all the health resorts that host the new year celebrations. Once all the things are in proper order then these places would be visited by more and more people not only on the eve of new year but on other occasions as well. This would give a new dimension to the tourism sector in Kashmir with the concerned stakeholders feeling satisfied at the end of the day.

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The Sports Sector Has Great Potential To Generate Employment



■ SAHIL MANZOOR

Sports may support your health-related issues and keep your fitness at its best. When we are not physically fit, it means we have to be ready for several health-related problems. Like stress, excessive belly fat, unnecessary cholesterol, the risk of heart-related diseases, the weakness of general body parts, fatigue, insomnia, and many more health-related issues. If you ask me, "What is exercise?" My answer is that every body movement is an exercise. So then, what is the need for engaging in other activities? Being engaged in different activities may involve our whole body, which feels quite delightful and uplifting.

There are hundreds of sports activities being played around the world, and the same activities are being played in the country as well. In our country, there are a few games that are very popular among the people, and most of them are likely to take part in them. Cricket is one of the prominent sports in India. It's very pleasing that India has the richest cricket board in the world. The BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) has a market capitalisation of Rs 18,000 crore. The BCCI held the IPL (Indian Premier League) across the world, with top-class cricket players taking part in the mega event. There are about ten teams that participate in the Mega League every year. I mentioned in an

article about the net worth of the BCCI that sports are now becoming a profession. You can get name recognition, fame, and whatever else you want in sports.

India has great records in different sports at the international level, and there are great and renowned sports personalities the country has produced, such as Kapil Dev, Sunil Gavaskar, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, and others from the cricket world; Sania Mirza, Mahesh Bhupathi, and others from badminton; Bhutia (football), and many more who have represented India at an international level and won prestigious awards for the country. Every country has a separate sports budget for the fiscal year, and every country promotes sports activities at the district, state, and country levels; only the lucky ones get to the international level.

Promoting sports activities sends a clear and fair message to the people of the country to participate, stay healthy, and always smile, regardless of the circumstances. It is very impressive that the government administration is interested in sports. Every August 29th, we celebrate Sports Day to commemorate the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand. On this day, schools, colleges, and universities are packed with students and teachers who celebrate by participating in various sports activities and sending a message to the entire country about the value of sports.

The government's administration is heavily focused on sports infrastructure and promoting it among the nation's youth. Sports stadiums constructed at every panchayat level and laced with adequate infrastructure, like levelling off the ground and fencing the stadium, etc., are quite an appreciable step and need to be considered as part of the development of the sports sector. Every year, a large number of athletes from various sports are chosen

at the national and international levels. In Kashmir, a number of leagues are being held by the sports departments and other agencies; this has helped produce great sports personalities in J&K.

Benefits of sports activities: Sports activities are quite interesting, and everyone wants to participate in and play them. Sports activities keep us healthy and happy, strengthen our body parts, and keep us happy and stress-free. Sports activities are the best alternative against drug addiction among the youth of the country, as sports activities reduce the taking of drugs, which has some scientific logic. Sports activities are the best healthy package for your loved ones and kith and kin, as they have several health benefits and keep your children away from drug addiction and other wayward activities. Sports activities have a vast field, and today most of the sportsmen are earning their livelihoods by doing coaching, so they can open gym centres and boxing centres and have many more opportunities. One has a great opportunity to promote sports activities by organising cricket tournaments, football tournaments, and volleyball tournaments in their areas after getting proper permission from the concerned authorities. The sports sector has great potential to generate employment in the country and plays an important role in uplifting the country's economy by various means. Gulmarg is one of the renowned, luscious, mesmerizing, and winsome tourist destinations in the Kashmir valley. This very place has great potential for the tourists who come from across the world here to participate in skiing, sports, adventures, mountaineering, etc. Recently, in Khelo, India, one of the mega sports events came to an end with great success and players from across the world participating in the mega event.

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One More Year Departs, One More New Year Begins

The Need for Individual and Collective Accountability



■ KHURSHID RESHI

With every passing day, we step into a new one, and in this continuous journey, days, weeks, months, and years gradually become part of our lives. This journey of time never stops; rather, it silently carries us forward. At the beginning of every new year, we make fresh plans, nurture new hopes, and draw new outlines for our lives—promising ourselves that we will do this or that and move forward on the path of progress. But the question is: do we truly succeed in turning these plans into reality? Do we move ahead with renewed enthusiasm after learning lessons from our past mistakes? The answer to this lies deep within the heart and conscience of every individual.

More often than not, instead of learning from past shortcomings, we allow our present to be consumed by worries. As a result, difficulties in our lives continue to grow—because neither did we have a clear and solid plan in the past year, nor did we seriously prepare for the year ahead. In this way, time keeps slipping away, and life simply passes by.

This situation is not limited to a single individual; rather, it is a shared dilemma of us all to some extent. At the end of the year, we are often heard in streets, crossroads, gatherings, and even within mosque premises saying that the year was not good for us. Contrary to our expectations, rains did not arrive on time, businesses suffered losses, employment opportunities declined, and overall, nothing seemed to go according to plan.

Uploading congratulatory videos on social media, posting good wishes on WhatsApp statuses, or sharing poetry on the occasion of the New Year may have their place, but such

outward expressions of celebration alone cannot bring about change. For real improvement, consistent hard work, struggle, and above all, self-accountability are essential—across the past, present, and future.

First and foremost, we must question ourselves: how much effort did I put in during the past year? In which tasks did I fail to gain benefits despite sincerity? How did I spend my time? How many welfare activities did I undertake to make life easier for others? How many helpless and needy people did I assist? The income I earned to support my family—what were its sources? And how honestly did I fulfill my professional duties and responsibilities?

We must also reflect on how many charitable initiatives we joined to the best of our ability without waiting for others to act. How many conveniences did we create in our surroundings, and how many obstacles did we place instead? Where did we dispose of our household waste, and how many problems did that create for passersby? To what extent did we dedicate ourselves to improving society, and how many difficulties did we unknowingly cause?

We should also remember how

many orphans we supported with compassion and encouraged to move forward—or, through negligence and indifference, how much we contributed to their hardships. Did we accept others' happiness with an open heart, or did we fall prey to jealousy and ego? How many times did we set aside our pride and extend the hand of friendship and reconciliation? Through our actions, how many smiles did we bring to people's faces, and through our behavior, how many hearts did we hurt?

All these questions must be asked individually by each of us. At the same time, we must also evaluate ourselves collectively—what did we achieve as a nation and as a society during the past year? Every one of us is connected to some field: students, government and non-government employees, members of mosque committees, social organizations, laborers, contractors, politicians, journalists, and ordinary voters. Each must reflect on how honestly they fulfilled their responsibilities and how much relief they provided to the public.

It is essential that everyone—from students to government and private employees; from mosque committee

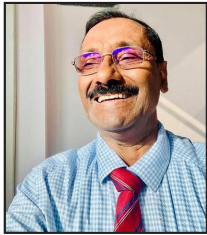
members to office-bearers of various organizations; from village heads to watchmen; from laborers to contractors; from politicians to ordinary voters; from journalists to readers and viewers; and from worshippers to religious leaders—reflect on where they made mistakes in the past year and where there was room for improvement, yet due to negligence or misleading influences, they failed to live up to the hopes and aspirations of the people.

If, in the new year, we strengthen with sincerity those actions through which we reduced people's suffering in the past year, and firmly resolve to avoid those deeds that leave our conscience uneasy, then this new year will truly become a new beginning for us.

Self-accountability not only improves individual lives but can also change the destiny of nations. Mere social media posts filled with good wishes and beautiful words cannot bring transformation. Real change comes through action, integrity, and continuous hard work—and that is the true message of the New Year.

The author from Shartgund
Payeen Mawar Langate

The Janus-Headed December: Looking Back in Anger and Forward with Hopes



■ DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

December has always been a month of paradox, a time when the human imagination is compelled to look both backward and forward. The Romans captured this duality in the god Janus, whose two faces gazed simultaneously at the past and the future. In December 2025, as the world prepared to step into 2026, this Janus-headed spirit was palpable everywhere. There was celebration, anticipation, and hope, but also anger, regret, and reckoning. To write of the new mood of 2026 is to understand how December's double vision shaped the way societies, communities, and individuals confronted their histories and projected their futures. The backward glance was filled with fury at broken promises, failures, and injustices, while the forward gaze imagined renewal, resilience, and possibility. The tension between these two visions created the mood of 2026: restless, impatient, but determined.

We look back in Anger and we look forward with Hopes. 'Looking back in anger' is not merely a phrase borrowed from John Osborne's famous play; it is a description of the collective mood that accompanied the end of 2025. The anger was not always destructive—it was clarifying, a force that compelled societies to confront hypocrisies and failures. December was filled with retrospection: the climate disasters that scarred continents, the wars that displaced millions, the political betrayals that eroded trust, the technological disruptions that unsettled economies and cultures. Anger simmered in protests, in editorials, in conversations at dinner tables. Yet alongside this anger was the yearning for renewal, the desire to step into 2026 with a different mood, a mood of resilience, creativity, and hope. December forced us to hold two contradictory emotions at once. On one side, disappointment and rage at the year gone by. On the other, optimism and determination for the year to come. This duality defines the human condition, and in 2025 it defined the global mood.

The climate agenda dominated December 2025. The Seventh Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly convened in Nairobi from December 8 to 12, focusing on advancing sustainable solu-

tions for a resilient planet.. December's backward glance was filled with fury at broken promises and inadequate action. Yet the forward gaze imagined 2026 as a year when commitments might finally translate into implementation, when resilience might become more than rhetoric. The Janus head looked backward at betrayal but forward at possibility. The new mood of 2026 was shaped by this paradox: anger at climate inaction, determination for climate renewal. Politics in December 2025 was equally turbulent. In Europe, debates over migration and populism intensified, with protests in Berlin and Paris demanding more humane policies. In the United States, the political climate remained polarized, with year-end congressional battles over technology regulation and climate funding. In South Asia, corruption scandals and environmental neglect fueled public anger. Technology was another arena where December 2025 revealed the Janus paradox. Artificial intelligence dominated headlines, with debates about regulation, ethics, and the future of work. In Silicon Valley, year-end reports highlighted both breakthroughs in generative AI and concerns about misinformation, bias, and surveillance. In Asia, governments grappled with balancing innovation and privacy. The anger of December was directed at the misuse of technology, at the erosion of trust, at the widening digital divide. Yet the hope of January was alive in visions of AI used for climate modeling, medical breakthroughs, and education. The Janus head looked backward at technological anxieties but forward at technological possibilities. The new mood of 2026 was technological as well as political and environmental: cautious but imaginative, skeptical but hopeful.

The rituals of New Year's Eve themselves embodied this paradox. People gathered to count down the seconds, toasting the end of 2025 and the beginning of 2026. Fireworks exploded, symbolizing both closure and commencement. Resolutions were made, often with the implicit acknowledgment of past failures. "This year I will change," people said, knowing how many times they had said it before. The Janus-headed December was present in every resolution: one face looked back at the broken promises of 2025, the other looked forward to the hopeful pledges of 2026. The anger at failure fueled the determination to try again. The new mood of 2026 was forged in this crucible: restless, impatient, but determined.

In literature and philosophy, December has often been portrayed as a month of reckoning. Nietzsche's idea of eternal recurrence—the endless repetition of choices—resonated strongly in December 2025. The

anger at repetition—the same wars, the same injustices, the same failures—was palpable. Yet the mood of 2026 was not entirely cynical. There was recognition that repetition also offers opportunities: to do better, to correct mistakes, to learn. The Janus head does not only glare backward in fury; it also gazes forward with determination. The anger of December was personal as well as collective. Individuals looked back at their own lives—the missed opportunities, the broken relationships, the unfulfilled dreams. December was a month of self-criticism, sometimes harsh, sometimes necessary. Yet it was also a month of self-forgiveness, of allowing oneself to imagine a different future. The new mood of 2026 was shaped by millions of such personal reckonings. People resolved to be kinder, healthier, more creative, more engaged. The anger at oneself became the fuel for transformation. The Janus head within each person looked backward with regret but forward with resolve.

The Janus-headed December also forced societies to confront the cyclical nature of time. Every year ends, every year begins. The anger of December is always followed by the hope of January. This cycle can be frustrating, but it can also be comforting. It reminds us that renewal is always possible, that no failure is final, that no anger is permanent. In 2025, the cycle felt particularly poignant. The world had endured crises, but it had also shown resilience. The new mood of 2026 was shaped by this resilience, by the recognition that even in anger there is energy, and that energy can be directed toward renewal. The anger of December was expressed in art, literature, and music. Protest songs, satirical plays, biting editorials—all flourished at the end of the year. Yet so did hopeful poems, celebratory dances, and joyful gatherings. The Janus head was present in culture as well as politics. In 2025, artists captured the anger of the year in powerful works, but they also imagined the possibilities of 2026. The new mood of 2026 was thus cultural as well as political, aesthetic as well as practical. It was a mood of creativity born from anger, of imagination born from disappointment.

The Janus-headed December also taught us about the importance of memory. Looking back in anger required remembering, refusing to forget injustices and failures. But looking forward required imagining, refusing to be trapped by memory. The balance between memory and imagination was delicate but essential. In 2025, memory was heavy: of disasters, betrayals, losses. But imagination was alive: of solutions, solidarities, futures. The new mood of 2026 was shaped by this balance, by the

determination to remember without being paralyzed, to imagine without being naïve. The anger of December was often directed at institutions—governments, corporations, media. But it was also directed at fate, at the randomness of life, at the inevitability of death. December was a month of existential anger, of questioning the meaning of it all. Yet it was also a month of existential hope, of affirming life despite its absurdities. The new mood of 2026 was existential in this sense: a recognition of life's fragility, but also of its possibilities. The Janus head looked backward at mortality but forward at vitality. December also reminded us of the importance of community. Anger is often isolating, but hope is often communal. In December 2025, communities gathered to protest, to mourn, to celebrate. The new mood of 2026 was communal, shaped by the recognition that change requires solidarity. The anger at isolation was transformed into the hope of connection. The Janus head looked backward at loneliness but forward at togetherness. The anger of December was often about time itself—the sense that time has been wasted, that life has slipped away. Yet the hope of January was about time regained—the sense that life can still be lived, that time can still be meaningful. The new mood of 2026 was temporal in this sense: a recognition of time's passage but also of its possibilities. The Janus head looked backward at wasted time but forward at renewed time. The new mood of 2026 is shaped by this paradox—anger at failures, yet determination to renew. To look back in anger is to confront the failures of the past.

Operation Sindur was India's decisive tri-services campaign launched in May 2025 after the Pahalgam terror attack. It dismantled multiple terror camps across the Line of Control, showcasing India's military precision and technological self-reliance. The operation also highlighted India's growing concern about the hostile designs of some neighbouring countries that resent the rise of a prosperous Vikshit Bharat. Operation Sindur, initiated on May 7, 2025, was a calibrated response to the brutal terror strike in Pahalgam that claimed 26 innocent lives. India's armed forces acted in synergy, embodying the principle of "One Force" and demonstrating the strength of jointness in modern warfare. Intelligence confirmed nine major terror camps operating across the Line of Control and deeper inside Pakistan, which were systematically targeted during the operation. What stood out was not only the tactical brilliance but also the seamless integration of indigenous hi-tech systems—drones, surveillance platforms, precision weapons—into national defence, reflecting

India's march toward Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

For India, Operation Sindur was more than a military campaign; it was a statement of resolve. It underscored that terror attacks on civilians would not go unanswered, and that India's defence architecture is capable of swift, precise, and proportionate retaliation. The operation also revealed India's growing concern about the designs of neighbouring countries that is being said to continue to sponsor cross-border terrorism. These countries, jealous of India's economic rise and the vision of Vikshit Bharat—a developed, self-reliant, and globally respected India—seek to destabilize through asymmetric warfare. Their strategy is not only to inflict casualties but to undermine India's social harmony and economic progress. The Indian response, however, is not limited to military action. Operation Sindur symbolized a broader national strategy: combining defence preparedness with technological innovation, diplomatic outreach, and economic resilience. By relying on indigenous systems, India demonstrated that it is no longer dependent on external suppliers for critical defence needs. By coordinating across services, it showed that jointness is the future of warfare. By acting decisively yet responsibly—without crossing international boundaries—it reinforced its image as a responsible power that defends itself without destabilizing the region. Operation Sindur was a reminder that India has learned from this history and is prepared to act. The jealousy of neighbours at India's prosperity is matched by India's determination to protect its vision of Vikshit Bharat. It showed that India's prosperity is not fragile, that its rise cannot be derailed by terror, and that its vision of Vikshit Bharat is backed by the strength of its armed forces and the unity of its people. The anger of December 2025 at the Pahalgam attack was transformed into resolve, and the new mood of 2026 is one of vigilance, confidence, and determination. It is important to note that while hostile rhetoric may surface, Bangladesh's government officially values its relationship with India. India is alert to any campaigns or rhetoric that question its sovereignty over the Seven Sisters or threaten its prosperity.

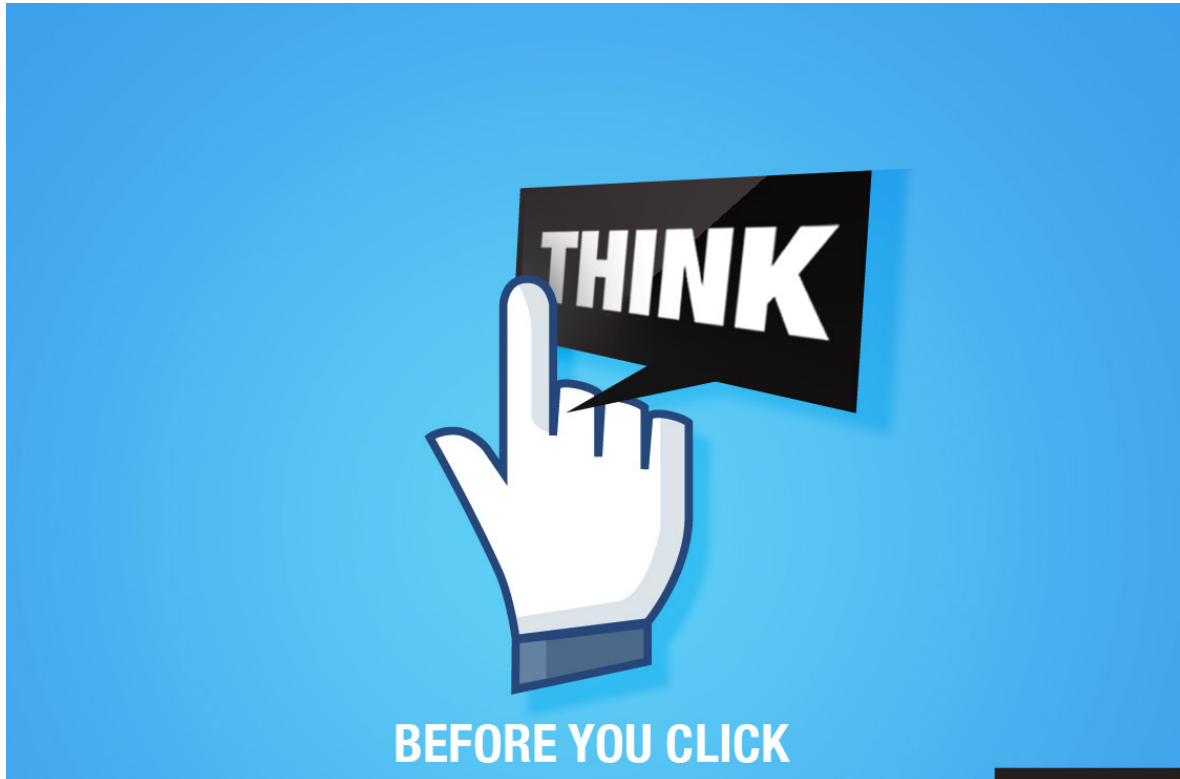
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Think Before You Click



■ MOOL RAJ

We live in a world where a single click can start a trend, spark a debate or spread a lie. The scrolling of social media and watching of the news clips to online shopping and schoolwork, the internet became the primary source of information and communication in India. However, as millions of people are now connected, there is one significant issue, and that is, most people do not know how to distinguish between the truth and lies on the Internet. This expanding issue is known as the digital divide and it is not about who has access to the internet anymore, but who has the ability to apply it in a prudent manner. In India, nearly million of individuals use social media, but not many of them actually have the idea of how information on the internet works. False news is more likely to spread compared to the fact and people tend to share the post without verifying the source. As an illustration, rumours, and fake videos circulate within minutes during national elections or natural disasters and disorient the public, causing panic. It is not that people are not connected but rather that they are not media literate. Media literacy refers to the possibility of reading, doubting and checking online information. It makes people pose the question: Is this source real? Who is



behind it? Why am I seeing this post? In the absence of these fundamental questions, human beings get easy targets of manipulations, scams and propaganda. The Ministry of Information in India and UNESCO have recently introduced a Media and Information Literacy (MIL) strategy to establish these skills in schools and

within the communities. This attempt is meant to educate citizens and particularly young learners on how to recognize fake news, know how social media works, and critically evaluate what they read and share on social media. It is all about making each internet user a smart and responsible digital citizen. However,

it is not all about what is taught in the classroom. There are still numerous rural regions where it is impossible to find good education and digital training programs. Poor, children, and elderly citizens tend to be left aside and, therefore, are more prone to misinformation. Digital literacy is not a tool to them but an insurance. By knowing how to verify information before taking action or responding, people safeguard themselves and other people. There is also a change in the media of India. Viral content and influencers have now taken over the national conversation that traditional TV and newspapers could no longer dominate. That is why having the civic ability to think before you click has become a civic skill, as essential as voting or paying taxes. Each comment, like and forward influence the opinion of people. In a digital era, irresponsible dissemination may lead to physical harm to the circulation of hate speech to the destruction of faith in democratic institutions. So what can be done? Media literacy should be an element in the school syllabus, and journalists and social media sites should encourage the use of factual information and openness. The government and technology firms may collaborate to conduct campaigns at national levels to educate people about simple routines. Check the sources first, think before posting, and doubt what you see online! The future of India lies in the way the citizens use information wisely. Having access to the internet is no more than knowing it. Media literacy is not a luxury in a world full of misinformation, it is a skill a person needs in order to survive. This is a message that is easy to remember, think before you click, because what you post now creates the reality of tomorrow.

THE AUTHOR IS A REGULAR COLUMNIST AND FREELANCE WRITER

EMBRACING THE ALKALINE DIET: A PATH TO BETTER HEALTH

■ **DR. (H.C) SURINDERPAL SINGH**

In recent years, the alkaline diet has steadily gained popularity as people across the world search for natural and sustainable ways to improve their health. With lifestyle-related disorders on the rise and growing awareness about the link between diet and overall well-being, many individuals are rethinking what they eat and how it affects their bodies. The alkaline diet has emerged as one such holistic approach, promising improved vitality, better digestion, reduced inflammation and a lower risk of chronic disease. While it continues to be debated in scientific circles, its emphasis on fresh, plant-based foods resonates strongly with modern nutritional wisdom.

At its core, the alkaline diet encourages conscious eating and a closer relationship with food. It shifts attention away from heavily processed and refined items toward natural, nutrient-dense options that nourish the body. Supporters believe that this dietary approach helps restore balance within the body, allowing its natural healing and regulatory mechanisms to function more efficiently. In an era dominated by fast food and sedentary lifestyles, such a philosophy has found wide appeal.

The alkaline diet is based on the concept that the foods we consume influence the body's internal pH balance. The pH scale measures how acidic or alkaline a substance is, ranging from 0 to 14, with 7 considered neutral. Proponents of the alkaline diet argue that while the body tightly regulates blood pH, long-term dietary habits may influence overall health by affecting acid or alkaline load in tissues. According to this theory, excessive consumption of acid-forming foods can place stress on bodily systems, whereas alkaline-forming foods help maintain balance and promote optimal functioning.

Alkaline-forming foods primarily include fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds and legumes. These foods are rich in essential minerals such as potassium,

magnesium and calcium, which are believed to contribute to an alkaline environment. In contrast, acid-forming foods include red meat, poultry, dairy products, refined grains, processed foods, sugar, caffeine and alcohol. The alkaline diet does not necessarily require complete elimination of acidic foods but encourages moderation and a strong emphasis on plant-based nutrition.

One of the most widely cited benefits of the alkaline diet is improved digestion. Fruits and vegetables, which form the foundation of this diet, are naturally high in dietary fiber. Fiber plays a crucial role in maintaining a healthy digestive system by supporting regular bowel movements and promoting the growth of beneficial gut bacteria. A healthy gut microbiome is increasingly recognized as essential not only for digestion but also for immunity, mental health and metabolic balance. Many people who adopt an alkaline-focused diet report reduced bloating, improved bowel regularity and a general sense of digestive comfort.

Increased energy levels are another benefit frequently associated with the alkaline diet. Nutrient-dense foods such as leafy greens, fresh fruits and nuts provide vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that support cellular function and energy production. Unlike processed foods, which often lead to energy spikes followed by crashes, whole foods deliver sustained nourishment. As a result, individuals may experience improved stamina, mental clarity and reduced fatigue over time.

Weight management is also closely linked to the principles of the alkaline diet. By encouraging whole, unprocessed foods and discouraging sugary, calorie-dense items, the diet naturally supports healthier eating patterns. Fruits and vegetables are generally low in calories but high in volume and nutrients, helping individuals feel full without overeating. This can contribute to gradual and sustainable weight loss, as well as a reduced risk of obesity-related conditions such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and metabolic syndrome.



Another significant area of interest is inflammation. Chronic inflammation has been identified as a contributing factor in a wide range of health conditions, including heart disease, arthritis, autoimmune disorders and even some cancers. Alkaline foods are rich in antioxidants and phytochemicals that help neutralize free radicals and reduce oxidative stress in the body. By emphasizing these foods, the alkaline diet may help lower inflammatory markers and support long-term health.

Bone health is another aspect often discussed in relation to alkaline eating. Some studies suggest that diets high in acid-forming foods may contribute to calcium loss from bones as the body attempts to neutralize acidity. In contrast, alkaline diets rich in potassium and magnesium, found in foods such as bananas, spinach and other leafy greens, may support bone density and strength. While research in this area continues, the emphasis on mineral-rich plant foods aligns with broader nutritional recommendations for skeletal health.

The alkaline diet is also associated with a reduced risk of chronic diseases. A growing body of research supports the

benefits of diets high in fruits and vegetables for preventing conditions such as hypertension, heart disease and certain cancers. By prioritizing these food groups, the alkaline diet naturally complements established public health guidelines. While it may not be a cure-all, it encourages habits that are widely recognized as beneficial for long-term wellness.

Adopting an alkaline diet does not require drastic or overwhelming changes. In fact, gradual adjustments are often more sustainable and effective. Beginning the day with a nourishing breakfast such as a green smoothie made from spinach, kale and fruits can set a positive tone for the rest of the day. Replacing processed snacks with fresh fruit or raw nuts introduces healthier options without sacrificing satisfaction. Experimenting with a variety of vegetables in meals keeps the diet interesting while expanding nutrient intake.

Hydration also plays an important role in supporting overall health. Drinking adequate water throughout the day helps flush toxins, supports digestion and maintains cellular balance. Some followers of the alkaline diet add lemon

or cucumber to water, not because of their immediate pH, but due to their mineral content and refreshing qualities. Reducing the intake of highly processed foods, refined sugars and excessive animal products can be done gradually, allowing the body and mind to adapt comfortably.

Despite its growing popularity, it is important to approach the alkaline diet with balance and awareness. The human body has sophisticated mechanisms to regulate blood pH, and no single diet can override these systems. Critics argue that the benefits of the alkaline diet are largely due to its emphasis on fruits, vegetables and whole foods rather than pH changes themselves. Nonetheless, these dietary shifts are widely acknowledged as positive and health-promoting.

As with any significant dietary change, consultation with healthcare professionals is essential, particularly for individuals with existing medical conditions or nutritional needs. Personalized guidance ensures that dietary choices support overall health without unintended consequences. When adopted thoughtfully, the alkaline diet can serve as a framework for healthier living rather than a rigid set of rules.

In conclusion, embracing the alkaline diet represents more than a nutritional trend; it reflects a broader movement toward mindful eating and preventive health. By prioritizing whole, plant-based foods and reducing reliance on processed and acid-forming items, individuals may experience improved digestion, enhanced energy, better weight management and reduced inflammation. While scientific debate continues regarding specific mechanisms, the diet's core principles align closely with established nutritional science. Ultimately, the alkaline diet encourages a balanced, conscious and nourishing approach to food, offering a pathway toward better health and overall well-being.

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

Heart Clinic on Wheels: J&K Bank dedicates cardiac-care unit for the people

■ **HT NEWS NETWORK**

SRINAGAR, JAN 01: Marking the first day of the New Year with a meaningful public welfare initiative, J&K Bank dedicated a 'Heart Clinic on Wheels' for the people of Jammu & Kashmir under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program.

Today, the Bank's Executive Director Sudhir Gupta handed over the Keys of fully-equipped mobile cardiac-care unit to the Regional Head of Ummeed Foundation Dr Zubair Saleem in presence of Chief General Manager Intiyaz Ahmad, General Manager (CSR) Mohammad Muzaffar Wani, DGM Hafeeza Rahim, senior cardiologist and Project Advisor Dr Khurshed Aslam Khan and other senior functionaries here at the Bank's Corporate Headquarters.

Implemented by a not-for-profit organization Ummeed Foundation with nation wide presence, which has over a decade of experience in community healthcare and cardiac interventions, the project also includes training of community health workers, public awareness programmes on cardiac-health and the creation of a digital health registry to ensure follow-up and continuity of care.

While extending New Year greetings to the people on the occasion, Executive Director Sudhir Gupta said that the Bank remains steadfast in its mission of serving-to-empower through its meaningful people-centric interventions.

He further said, "We are happy to have begun this year by making a tangible difference in people's lives as every CSR initiative is guided by our commitment to the progress and well-being of people. Access to timely cardiac care can make the difference between life and loss, particularly in the geographically challenging regions of Jammu & Kashmir. Through the 'Heart Clinic on Wheels', the Bank has facilitated the access of critical healthcare services to the doorsteps of those who need them the most."

Executive Director further noted that the initiative goes beyond treatment and focuses equally on prevention and aware-



ness. "By combining screening, counselling, referrals and community awareness, this project addresses a critical healthcare gap while aligning with our CSR vision of inclusive and sustainable development," he added.

Speaking about the mobile cardiac-care unit, Dr Khurshed Aslam Khan said, "The Heart Clinic on Wheels is equipped with advanced AI-enabled diagnostic systems that enable on-the-spot evaluation and real-time clinical decision-making, ensuring timely and evidence-based treatment. The mobile unit is fully equipped with life-saving emergency facilities, including a ventilator, defibrillator, and essential cardiac support systems, enabling immediate stabilization of patients."

Wherever required, he added, structured and rapid referrals to higher centres are seamlessly coordinated to ensure continuity of advanced care.

The fully-funded project aims to screen and diagnose over 5000 people in its first

year—primarily elderly citizens, defence personnel and their families, and high-risk individuals—while facilitating referrals and transport for advanced treatment where required. Over the coming years, the initiative is expected to benefit tens of thousands of people across the UT.

Designed as a single-stop mobile cardiac emergency and diagnostic facility, the Heart Clinic on Wheels will take essential heart healthcare services directly to underserved populations across the UT's remote and border districts. The mobile unit is equipped to conduct instant cardiac investigations including ECG, Holter monitoring, ambulatory blood pressure monitoring and rapid blood tests such as lipid profile, enabling timely diagnosis and early intervention.

Pertinently, the initiative supports key Sustainable Development Goals, which include good-health and well-being besides helping in reducing inequalities, and aligns well with the Bank's CSR focus areas.

Deadly Fungus Spreads Globally

■ **HEALTHLINE**

A drug-resistant variety of the common fungus *Candida auris* is gaining virulence and spreading across the globe, scientists warn in a new review. Fungal infections, which affect nearly 6.5 million people each year, are associated with a high mortality rate of over 50 per cent even with antifungal therapy.

Candida auris is a type of invasive yeast that can cause deadly infections, especially in people with weakened immune systems.

It was first discovered in 2009 in the ear canal of a patient in Japan and soon spread to many countries, including India, where it was identified as a major public health threat in 2014.

The latest research review reveals several unique traits of the fungus that enable it to spread rapidly. *Candida auris* is already found in at least 61 countries on six continents.

The study notes that the fungus is rapidly

becoming resistant to drugs due to its ability to switch from a yeast-like growth form to a filament-driven spread. It also has cell wall proteins that enable it to stick to human skin "like glue" and colonise it. "Skin colonisation by *C. auris* is a significant medical concern because colonised patients may facilitate inter- and intra-hospital transmission of *C. auris* to other patients," the study, published in the *Microbiology and Molecular Biology Reviews*, points out.

The fungus is equipped with "efflux pumps" on its cell membrane that can remove antifungal drugs before they can kill it. It also sticks together to form slimy biofilm layers on surfaces making it hard for drugs to penetrate.

It's unclear if there are any other means by which the fungus resists drugs, the study says. "The diagnosis of *C. auris* infections is often hampered by misidentification, leading to delays in starting appropriate antifungal therapy," the review explains.

DR. JIBRAN BASHIR

Orthopedic Surgeon

MBBS, DNB ORTHOPAEDICS, D.ORTHO, MNAMS.
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Senior IAS Officer Ashish Kundra Takes Charge As Chief Secretary Of Ladakh

HT NEWS NETWORK

LEH/JAMMU, JAN 1: Senior IAS officer Ashish Kundra on Thursday took charge as the chief secretary of Ladakh and reaffirmed his commitment to effective governance, transparent administration and inclusive development across the Union territory, officials said.

A 1996-batch IAS officer of AGMUT cadre, Kundra took over from Pawan Kotwal, who retired from service on Wednesday, an official statement said.

Upon assuming office, Kundra reiterated his commitment to effective governance, transparent administration and inclusive development, emphasising the need to strengthen institutional mechanisms, enhance

service delivery, and ensure timely implementation of developmental programmes.

Addressing the aspirations of the people of Ladakh would remain a key priority of the administration, Kundra said.

He emphasised an accessible administration that reaches out to all parts of the Union territory, in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas', the statement said.

The administration, he said, must gear up to meet the economic aspirations of the youth and unlock the economic potential of the territory.

"Ladakh has a civilisational history and has always been emblematic of peace. This must always be

treasured and preserved," he said.

Kundra underscored that given Ladakh's fragile ecology, the model of development must necessarily address issues of sustainability and climate change, and that the region must not pursue reckless construction in the name of development.

Administrative secretaries and senior officials welcomed Kundra and expressed confidence that his vast administrative experience and leadership would further strengthen governance and accelerate the overall development of Ladakh, the statement said.

Earlier, a ceremonial guard of honour was accorded to Kundra at the UT Secretariat in Leh after he assumed charge as the chief secretary. (PTI)

Public Notice

I FATIMA BEGUM W/O LATE ABDUL RASHID RATHER R/O TAKIYA YOUSUF SHAH Block WAGOORA Dist BARAMULLA hereby inform the general public that my Son FAROOQ AHMAD RATHER S/O ABDUL RASHID RATHER R/O Takiya Yousuf Shah expired 04/06/1993. That I am now applying for issuance of his Death Certificate from concerned authorities .If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file the same before the BDO office WAGOORA / TEHSIL office WAGOORA within seven days from the date of publication of this notice .After the expiry of the said period no objection shall be entertained.

**Name....FATIMA BEGUM
W/OABDUL RASHID RATHER
R/O TAKIYA YOUSUF SHAH
BLOCK.... WAGOORA**

Public Notice

I Syed Nazir Ahmad Father of Syed Tasaduq Hussain resident of Kreeri District Baramulla want to inform the general public through this notice that our electricity bill is registered in my name bearing Consumer ID No-0212040000404 and I want to register it in the name of my son , In this regard if anybody has any objection He/she may contact the AEE KPDCI Sub Division Wagoora within seven days after that no objection will be entertained.

**Syed Nazir Ahmad, F/O:- Syed Tasaduq Hussain
R/O:- Kreeri Baramulla.
KPDCI Sub Division Wagoora**

Public Notice

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection is registered on my Fathers name AB AZIZ TEELI R/O WATERGAM .Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040001028 wants to be registered on my name GH HASSAN TEELI S/O. ABDUL AZIZ TEELI R/O WATERGA .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

**Name.GH HASSAN TEELI
S/O ... AB AZIZ TEELI
R/O ...WATERGAM**

Public Notice

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection is registered on my Fathers name HABIB GANAIE S/O MAHAD GANAIE R/O WATERGAM .Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040000995 wants to be registered on my name MOHD YOUSUF GANAIE S/O HABIB GANAIE R/O WATERGA .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

**Name..MOHD YOUSUF GANAIE
S/O ... HABIB GANAIE
R/O ...WATERGAM**

Dr Sanjeev Koul Conferred with RAAST Associate Fellowship Award 2025

AMIR IQBAL KHAN

BHADARWAH, JAN 1: Educator and researcher Dr Sanjeev Kumar Koul has been honoured with the prestigious Associate Fellowship Award–2025 by the Western Ghat Researcher Association for Agriculture Science and Technology (RAAST), Madurai.

Dr Koul, an Associate NCC Officer and faculty member at PM SHRI Government Higher Secondary School Bhalra, was recognised for his "outstanding contribution to scientific research, innovation and community oriented initiatives," particularly his pioneering work in mushroom documentation and environmental awareness. An alumnus of Jammu University, Dr Koul recently received the Best Teacher Award 2025 from the Lieutenant Governor of J&K,



further cementing his status as a leading academic figure in the Union Territory.

Expressing his gratitude, Dr Koul described the accolade as a "matter of immense pride" that would further motivate his efforts towards meaningful scientific advancement for societal benefit.

With a prolific record of over 55 research papers and participation in 83 national and international conferences, he has been a pivotal force in integrating traditional knowledge with modern science to foster sustainable development. His dual commitment to the NCC and academia continues to inspire the youth of the region bringing significant national recognition to the scientific and educational fraternity of Jammu & Kashmir.

Public Notice

I, Syed Haffizullah Bukhari, son of the late Ghulam Nabi Bukhari and resident of Kreeri, hereby wish to formally inform the general public that I was the owner of a white Alto car with registration number JK05B 8543. This vehicle was declared completely lost by the National Insurance Company Ltd at Jamkash Sangrama following an accident at Hygam on 29 May 2014. An FIR was duly lodged at PP Putkha at that time. Recently, I have learnt through reliable sources that the vehicle remains operational and is being driven. I have now submitted a file before ARTO Baramulla for the blacklisting of the vehicle, and if any unlawful activities or incidents occur involving this vehicle during this period, the responsibility will solely and entirely rest with Jamkash Vehicleleads Sangrama and the National Insurance Company. In this regard, if anybody has any objection, they may contact the ARTO office, Baramulla, within seven days. After that, no objection will be entertained.

**Syed Haffizullah Bukhari
S/O:- late Syed Ghulam Nabi Bukhari
R/O:- Kreeri, District Baramulla
Contact No. 9797260022**

Office of The Executive Magistrate 1st Class Ashpora

Subject: Issuance of Order for Delayed Registration of Birth
Reference: Registrar Birth/Death Qaziabad Vide letter no: BDO/ Q8/D&B/732 and 733,Dated 27,12,2025.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas Registrar Birth/Death Qaziabad Supernaghama (BDO) vide above cited referral letter number has forwarded an application/ file for the delayed registration of Birth/ Death Pertaining to the applicant Abdul Ahad Mir,S/o,Abdul Aziz Mir R/o,Harweth,Tehsil QAZIABAD. Who has Submitted the application on behalf of his Son and Daughter whose particulars (as per the Documentary evidences and letter submitted by the Registrar of birth & Death Qaziabad) are as follows:MIR AALIM-DoB,04,04,2015 and AIREEN JAN-DoB,03,02,2014. Parentage, Ab Ahad Mir, R/o,Harweth, and Therefore, any person having any objection with regard to Date of Birth/ Date of Death of the aforementioned applicant's carry above shall submit his/her objection to the office of undersigned with in a period of seven (07) days from issuance of this public notice either personally or through an authorized person. After the expiry of stipulated period no objection shall be entertained.

**Name: Abdul Ahad Mir, S/o: Abdul Aziz Mir
R/o: Harweth, Tahsil: Qaziabad, Kupwara**

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertainingto Birth of ABDUL GANI MIR S/O ABDUL AZIZ MIR R/O PUSNAG Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 04/08/1965 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order .In this connection.

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

Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir Office Of The Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject: Application of AJAZ AHMAD BHAT S/O GH MOHD BHAT R/O DOLIPORA for the issuance of LEGAL HEIR certificate

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above in this context a report sought from patwari halqa concerned and the Death certificate issued by the competent authority reveals that GH MOHD BHAT S/O ABDUL KHALIQ BHAT has passed away on 02/11/2025. The report of the patwari further depicts that the deceased has left behind following dependent as tabulated below

- 1... , SHAMEEMA BEGUM wife ,63 pensioner
- 2.... , AJAZ AHMAD BHAT SON 42 years Govt employee
- 3...MUMTAZA BEGUM daughter 45 years H/W
- 4..IMTIYAZ AHMAD BHAT Son 37 years private job
- 5...TAWHEED AHMAD Son 32 shopkeeper

The applicant has applied for Issuance of Legal heir certificate in favour of Self.

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

Naib Tehsild Kreeri

Public Notice

I Subreena Bano wants to mention that my DOB in my aadhar card bearing no. 9632 1890 4609 has been wrongly mentioned as DOB 21/03/1999 instead of my DOB 13/03/2003 as for All regards Now i want to make correction in my aadhaar card.In this regard if any one he/She may approach concern office with in 7days after that no abjection will be excepted.

**Name : Sabreena Bano DOB 13/03/2003
D/o: Zia udin Mughal Mother's name,Rafiqa Begum
R/o: Palpora Tehsil Handwara
District Kupwara 193221**

Government of Jammu and Kashmir OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT SOPORE ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE

Applications on prescribed proforma (Annexure-I) are hereby invited from the eligible female candidates of the Panch wards/ Municipal Wards shown against the below mentioned Panchayat Halqas/ Municipal Wards, for the engagement of Sanginis (AWWs) for the Anganwadi Centres of POSHAN Project Sopore on "Honorarium basis". The applications along with required documents shall be deposited in the Office of undersigned i.e. the Child Development Project Officer Sopore by or before 17-01-2026 upto 4.30pm against proper receipt.

S.N O	NAME OF THE DISTRICT	NAME OF THE PROJECT	NAME OF PANCHAYAT/ MC WARD	VACANCY OF SANGINI (ANGANWADI WORKER)	
				NO. OF PANCH WARD.	NAME OF AWC
1.	BARAMULLA	Sopore	Pethseer	Panch ward 05	Dangerpora Pethseer C
2			Shahabad	MC Ward 08	Khushall Mattoo
3			Adipora	Panch Ward 04	Shalpora Adipora
4			Putkha Muqam	Panch Ward 02	Khan Mohalla Muqam
5			Nowpora A	Panch Ward 03	Bunpora Nowpora

Criteria for Selection of Sanginis (Anganwadi Workers) Shall remain as envisaged in the Govt. Order NO 103 JK (SWD) OF 2023 Dated 28.04.2023 i.e.

- ◆ Women candidates in the age group of 18-37 years as on 01-01-2026 shall be considered for the post.
- ◆ The candidate should be a domicile of the UT of J&K.
- ◆ The candidate should be a resident of the Electoral Ward where AWC is located.
- ◆ Minimum Education qualification should be 10+2 pass and maximum graduation.
- ◆ Weightage shall be given on the basis of marks obtained in 10+2 and selection shall be granted purely on academic merit basis & there shall not be any interview.
- ◆ In case eligible candidate is available within the family of retired AWW the said candidate shall qualify for additional two percent points.
- ◆ Candidates with qualification higher than graduation shall not be considered.
- ◆ In case of tie in merit of the eligible candidate, candidate with higher age will be preferred.

Self-attested copies of documents to be attached with the application form:

- ◆ Panch Ward /MC Ward Certificate/Electoral Card/Present /continuous, Ward residence certificate issued by the concerned BDO/Municipal Council Office Sopore.
- ◆ Domicile Certificate issued by TEHSILDAR concerned.
- ◆ Date of Birth Certificate.
- ◆ Academic Qualification Certificates with Marks card of 10+2.
- ◆ If candidate belong to family of retired AWW, Copy of document proof.
- ◆ Non employment Certificate from a Gazetted Officer.
- ◆ In case the applicant is unmarried certificate from the concerned TEHSILDAR certifying the same.
- ◆ Copy of Ration card/ e ticket
- ◆ Affidavit from first class magistrate stating following facts.
 - All Documents submitted are correct, without any mismatch, scanning, duplicate or fallacious in nature. If found incorrect or in any of the above stated situation the candidature of deponent may be cancelled ab-initio and liable for action under law.
 - Maximum qualification is Graduation for vacancy of Sanginis (AWWs) and this is as per facts and onus of proving it to be true lies with the deponent.
 - The deponent has read the HR policy no. 222-JK(SWD) of 2022 dated: 30.11.2022 and is well versed with all salient features of the policy and shall be applicable to the deponent in case of selection as Sangini (AWW).
 - Incomplete form submitted any respect shall be cancelled without any further correspondence/notice.

Note: Prescribed Application Proforma can also be had from the undersigned office "Free of Cost".

(ANNEXURE-I)

S.NO: _____

APPLICATION FORM FOR ENGAGEMENT OF SANGINI (ANGANWADI WORKER)

1. Name of the District: - Baramulla
2. Name of the ICDS Project: - SOPORE
3. Name of the Anganwadi Centre for which engagement sought.....
4. Panch Ward/MC Ward..... Panchayat Halqa/MC Ward.....
5. Name of the Candidate (In Block Letters)
6. Fathers Name (In Block Letters)
7. Marital Status: - Married /Un Married
8. Husbands Name (if married)
9. Place of Permanent Residence.....
Mohalla..... Village.....
Panch Ward Constituency.....
Name of the Panchayat Halqa.....
House No..... (As per latest Panchayat Ward Electoral)

Block:.....

10. Address for Correspondence.....Mobile No:.....
11. Date of Birth.....

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y

12. Age as on 01-01-2026.....
13. Academic Qualification

S.No	Examination passed	Board/School	Year of passing	Marks Obtained	Max. Marks	%age
1	10+2					
2	Graduation					

14. Do candidate belong to family of retired AWW (Yes/No).
15. Documents attached.

- ◆ Panch Ward /MC Ward Certificate/Electoral Card/Present /continuous, Ward residence certificate issued by the concerned BDO/Municipal Council Office Sopore.
- ◆ Domicile Certificate issued by Tehsildar concerned.
- ◆ Date of Birth Certificate.
- ◆ Academic Qualification Certificates with Marks card of 10+2.
- ◆ If candidate belong to family of retired AWW/AWH, then copy of the e-ration card.
- ◆ Non employment Certificate from a Gazetted Officer.
- ◆ In case the applicant is unmarried certificate from the concerned Tehsildar certifying the same.
- ◆ Copy of Ration card/ e ticket

Signature of Candidate

UNDERTAKING

I..... D/o, W/o.....R/o.....

do hereby certify that the contents of the application given above are correct and true to the best of my knowledge. In case any of the above contents is found incorrect, the selection committee shall have the right to reject my application and similarly revoke my engagement order.

Signature of Candidate

Sd/- Child Dev. Project Officer Poshan Sopore

DIPK: 9554/25

Dated: 01-01-2025

Rana announces streamlined E-disbursal of Post-Matric Scholarships among ST students

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, JANUARY 01: Aimed at facilitating the educational pursuits of tribal students across Jammu & Kashmir, Tribal Affairs Department, has commenced the electronic disbursal of Post-Matric Scholarships to eligible Scheduled Tribe (ST-I and ST-II) students, providing much-needed relief to thousands of beneficiaries.

The release of scholarships had earlier encountered unavoidable delays due to technical complications arising out of the transition from the SNA system to the SNA-SPARSH platform.

These challenges primarily involved issues related to data migration and porting across integrated digital platforms. Although the requisite funds had been released in a timely manner by the Tribal Affairs Department, the actual transfer to student accounts could not be executed owing to these system-level



technical constraints.

The prolonged delay had drawn the attention of student associations, civil society representatives and social activists, who consistently raised concerns and urged authorities to resolve the issue at the earliest to safeguard the educational interests of tribal students.

Following sustained efforts and coordinated intervention, the matter has now been successfully resolved by the National Informatics Centre (NIC). With this achievement, Jammu & Kashmir has emerged as the first Union Territory among UTs and States in the country to successfully complete the SNA-to-SNA SPARSH transition, marking a notable milestone in the implementation of digital public finance reforms and e-governance initiatives.

Subsequent to the resolution of the technical issues, the scholarship disbursal process has been formally initiated.

An amount of 16.65 crore is being released to eligible ST-I and ST-II students who have applied through the online scholarship portal, ensuring direct benefit transfer to their respective bank accounts.

Javed Ahmed Rana, Minister for Tribal Affairs, who is personally and continuously monitoring the situation, maintained regular follow-ups with the concerned authorities to expedite resolution of the long-pending issue. He directed the authorities in Tribal Affairs Department to fast track electronic disbursal so that educational pursuits of students are not hindered.

The Department further assured that all eligible beneficiaries will receive their scholarships at the earliest, underscoring the government's dedication towards supporting education and empowerment of tribal communities.

Secy RDD reviews PMAY-G progress, sets 1 month deadline for completion of pending houses

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, JANUARY 01: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, on Thursday directed for expeditious completion of all pending houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) across Jammu and Kashmir, setting a one month deadline for completing all remaining sanctioned units.

Stressing that delays would not be tolerated, the Secretary warned of strict action in cases of negligence. "All remaining houses must be completed by the end of the current month, failing which strict action will be taken," he asserted.

The officials informed the meeting that out of 3,35,452 houses sanctioned for the Union Territory, 3,20,894 houses have already been completed.

The Secretary instructed the Assistant Commissioners Development (ACDs) and Block Development Officers (BDOs) to conduct personal



field inspections and ensure direct outreach to every beneficiary to expedite the completion of the remaining houses. She further directed that detailed pre-execution surveys be undertaken to ensure that only genuine, need-based works serving the larger public interest, particularly in vulnerable areas, are proposed and executed.

The meeting also carried out a detailed assessment of both the pending and ongoing PMAY-G houses, with emphasis on timely execution and adherence to set targets. While commending the districts that have achieved high completion rates, the Secretary urged others to identify bottlenecks, improve performance metrics and emulate best practices.

Beyond completion of pending units, the Secretary emphasized the importance of meticulous planning for future housing projects to ensure sustainability and efficiency.

The meeting was attended by Director RDD Kashmir Shabir Hussain Bhat, Joint Director Planning Kamal Kumar, Additional Secretary Waseem Raja, and ACDs and BDOs from various blocks.

Commissioner Secretary launches literary collection, smart classroom at CCM

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, JANUARY 1: Commissioner Secretary Cooperative Department, Babila Rakwal, today inaugurated the Smart Classroom at the Centre for Cooperative Management besides launching the "Coop Heroes" magazine, releasing the calendar and unveiling the newsletter of CCM during an event organised by the Centre.

The future vision of CCM aimed at strengthening the cooperative education and capacity building in the Union Territory was also presented.

The programme was attended by Additional Registrar Jammu Division Bal Krishan, Joint Registrar (Audit) Jammu Division, Priyanka Bhat and Joint Registrar (Special) Jammu Division, Preeti Sharma, Deputy Registrar Jammu, Bhawani Atri and UNATI Chairman Vikrant Dogra along with the staff of CCM Jammu.

The Commissioner Secretary appreciated CCM's initiatives and emphasised innovation and skill development for strengthening the cooperative movement.

She also lauded the proactive role of CCM Jammu in nurturing a skilled cooperative workforce. She advised the institute to continue aligning its academic and training initiatives with emerging sectoral needs, innovation and good governance to ensure sustainable growth of the cooperative movement.

The Principal, Centre for Cooperative Management (CCM), Jammu, highlighted the significance of the initiatives launched during the programme. He stated that the Smart Classroom will modernize the teaching-learning processes by integrating digital tools and interactive methods, thereby enhancing the quality of cooperative education.

The Principal emphasized that the launch of the "Coop Heroes" magazine will motivate the stakeholders by showcasing success stories and best practices from the cooperative sector, while the CCM calendar and monthly newsletter will serve as effective communication tools to keep members and institutions informed about ongoing activities and achievements.

Elaborating on the future vision of CCM, the Principal said that the institute aims to strengthen capacity building, promote innovation and develop skilled human resources to support a transparent, inclusive, and sustainable cooperative movement in the Union Territory.

NSF chairman exposes 'hidden loot' through arbitrary making charges at Press Club Jammu

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, JANUARY 1 : Chairman National Sikh Front (NSF), S. Varinderjeet Singh, on Thursday alleged that common citizens are being subjected to a silent economic exploitation through arbitrary and opaque making charges in the gold jewellery trade, asserting that the issue lies not with the price of gold but with the flawed system governing its sale.

Addressing a press conference at the Press Club Jammu, Singh said gold in India occupies a unique position as a cultural, social and financial necessity rather than a discretionary purchase. "For most families, gold is associated with marriages, social obligations and long-term financial security, particularly for women. However, this deeply rooted trust is being misused through non-transparent pricing practices," he said.

Singh maintained that while international gold prices are often cited to justify rising jewellery costs, the real and largely unregulated burden on consumers comes from making charges. He pointed out that these charges are frequently calculated as a percentage of the gold price, instead of being linked to actual

labour, craftsmanship or production costs.

"In Jammu and similar markets, making charges commonly cross 15 per cent and, in many cases, go far beyond that. As gold prices rise, these charges automatically escalate, even though the effort, time and technology involved in making the jewellery remain unchanged," he said, describing the practice as economically illogical and unfair to consumers.

Highlighting a major market contradiction, Singh noted that despite gold prices touching record levels in 2025, jewellery demand has shown a clear downward trend. "People are buying less gold jewellery due to high prices, yet they are paying more per purchase. In a fair market, declining demand should moderate prices. That is not happening because excessive ancillary charges are cushioning the impact for sellers while burdening buyers," he observed.

Singh also dismissed claims that higher making charges translate into better earnings for artisans. He said most goldsmiths continue to work on fixed monthly salaries or daily wages that are unaffected by fluctuations in gold prices. "When craftsmen's incomes remain static but consumer costs rise sharply, it

becomes evident that the additional money is not going to the workers who actually shape the jewellery," he said, while also flagging concerns over long working hours, occupational hazards and job insecurity in the sector. Drawing attention to wastage charges, Singh alleged that despite advancements in jewellery manufacturing such as precision casting, laser cutting and recycling, consumers are still being charged 5 to 12 per cent wastage. "In many cases, this is neither transparently disclosed nor reconciled, and is often merged with making charges, leaving the buyer with no clarity," he said.

He further warned consumers about so-called "zero making charge" offers, calling them misleading. According to Singh, such schemes often recover costs through higher gold rates, inflated wastage, reduced buy-back values or increased GST liability.

Raising legal and constitutional concerns, Singh said that opaque pricing and uniform charging practices undermine consumer rights and fair competition. He urged the government and regulatory bodies to examine the role of trade associations and large players in promoting such practices.

DC inspects development works at Ramban

Reviews arrangements for starting KV classes at proposed accommodation

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

RAMBAN, JANUARY 01: Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan today inspected ongoing developmental works and reviewed the arrangements for the commencement of the long-awaited academic activities of Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV) at the proposed accommodation at

Kowbag.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner Varunjeet Singh Charak; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Shokat Hayat Mattoo; Tehsildar Deep Kumar and other concerned officers.

The NHAI and other executing agencies were directed to speed up the pace of work to achieve timely completion of the ongoing



construction and maintenance of roads and other projects. The DC instructed the officers to clear the identified land for its utilization as a parking facility.

The Deputy Commissioner also inspected the ongoing maintenance and preparatory works at the identified accommodation for KV. He reviewed the availability and condition of classrooms, sanitation facilities, drinking water supply

and overall infrastructure required for the smooth start of academic work.

Emphasizing the importance of a safe, clean and student-friendly environment, the DC directed the concerned officers to ensure proper maintenance of the premises with special focus on cleanliness and upkeep of toilets. He stressed completion of all necessary works before the start of classes.

Akhnoor farmers acquainted with modern fruit cultivation techniques, govt schemes

MPs Jugal Kishore, Sat Sharma interact with participants

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

JAMMU, JANUARY 01: The Department of Horticulture Jammu organised a comprehensive Horticulture Awareness and Development Camp at Chak Brahmana, Akhnoor under ATMA/MIDH for promoting modern cultivation techniques and imparting awareness to local farmers about the government schemes.

The camp was graced by the Member Parliament (Lok Sabha), Jugal Kishore Sharma; Member Parliament (Rajya Sabha) Sat Sharma; Member Legislative Assembly Akhnoor, Mohan Lal Bhagat; Director Horticulture Jammu, Gul Sayed; Chief

Horticulture Officer, R.K Kotwal; Horticulture Development Officer (HDO) Sandeep Sharma.

The programme commenced with a warm welcome to all participants followed by an overview of horticulture initiatives and objectives for boosting fruit production across the Akhnoor Zone.

The event saw enthusiastic participation from local farmers, agricultural stakeholders and community members.

Key highlights of the camp included presentations on scientific horticultural practices, high-value crop cultivation, soil health management and climate-smart farming techniques to enhance productivity.

A detailed briefing was delivered on central and UT government horticultural schemes including the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), JKICP and other support mechanisms for inputs, credit facilitation and marketing linkages.

Direct engagement between farmers and experts, including the Director Horticulture and the Chief Horticulture Officer addressed the queries on crop choices, improved sapling varieties, pest management, post-harvest practices and orchard care.

Emphasis was laid on adopting



modern horticultural methods and diversification of crops like cultivation of guava, dragon fruit, citrus, mango and Aonla - all well-suited to the agro-climatic conditions of Jammu region.

MP Sat Sharma highlighted the pivotal role of horticulture

in rural economy and urged farmers to avail themselves of the technical support and financial incentives provided by the government.

MP Jugal Kishore Sharma pitched for tapping the immense horticulture potential of the

region and assured continued support for horticulture-based economic growth.

Jugal Kishore Sharma laid special emphasis on the cultivation of dragon fruit, describing it as a high-value horticultural crop with immense income-generating potential for farmers. He stated that dragon fruit requires comparatively less water and is well-suited to the agro-climatic conditions of the Jammu region.

The MP encouraged farmers to move beyond traditional farming practices and adopt innovative and commercially viable crops like dragon fruit. He further urged them to avail the technical guidance and

subsidies provided under the government horticulture schemes to enhance their income and create new livelihood opportunities.

The MLA Akhnoor lauded the initiative for empowering farmers with knowledge and resources to improve crop yields and income levels.

The camp concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by the Director Horticulture, who reaffirmed the Department's commitment to supporting farmers with training, market access and scheme implementation in collaboration with field-level officers including the Chief Horticulture Officer and HDO Akhnoor.



Renault India sees strong turnaround in H2 2025; Dec sales jump 33 per cent

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JAN 1 : Renault India reported a strong recovery in sales performance in the second half of calendar year 2025, supported by improved quarterly momentum and a sharp rise in December sales.

The automaker posted an 18.2 per cent year-on-year growth in H2 2025, with the fourth quarter emerging as a key driver as sales increased by 27.3 per cent, indicating a clear turnaround in market traction.

December 2025 stood out as one of Renault India's strongest months during the year. The company sold 3,845 units in December, registering a year-on-year growth of 33.4 per cent compared to the same month in 2024.

The recovery trend began in the third quarter, which closed with positive annual growth, and strengthened further in the fourth quarter as refreshed products reached customers across markets.

The improved performance was driven largely by product updates and strategic initiatives undertaken during the year.

Renault India refreshed its core



portfolio with the launch of the new Triber in July and the new Kiger in August. These updates helped generated better customer response in the latter half of the year and supported the strong exit momentum seen in the final quarter.

Commenting on the performance, the company's leadership said the second-half results reflect the effectiveness of the course correction

implemented after a phase of portfolio transition. The steady recovery from the third quarter onwards, culminating in a strong fourth quarter and the best monthly performance in December, was seen as validation of the company's revised strategy for the Indian market.

The sales recovery also coincided with a series of strategic actions that underlined Renault India's long-

term commitment to the country.

During 2025, the company rolled out new 'R' stores to enhance the retail experience, set up the Renault Design Centre in India to strengthen local product relevance, and introduced a three-year standard warranty to improve ownership confidence.

Renault Group also consolidated 100 per cent ownership of its manufacturing facility, reinforcing India's position as a key growth market for the company.

Alongside sharper execution across sales and network operations, these initiatives helped Renault India close the year on a strong note. Building on this momentum, the company is preparing for the next phase of its India journey with the return of the iconic Duster, scheduled to be unveiled on January 26, 2026.

The strong second-half performance and positive exit momentum have positioned Renault India with renewed confidence as it enters 2026, supported by a refreshed product lineup and a clearer strategic direction for the market. UNI

RBI flags global uncertainties, says Indian Economy well-placed to withstand shocks

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JAN 1 : The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said India's economy and financial system remain resilient despite heightened global uncertainties, elevated asset valuations, and rising geopolitical risks, according to the Financial Stability Report (FSR), December 2025.

The report noted that global growth has shown greater resilience than anticipated, supported by fiscal measures, front-loaded trade, and strong investment in artificial intelligence (AI). However, it cautioned that risks to global financial stability remain elevated due to high public debt, stretched asset prices, growing interconnectedness of non-bank financial intermediaries, and the rapid expansion of private credit and stablecoins. On the domestic front, the RBI said India continues to grow at a robust pace, driven by strong domestic demand, easing inflation, and prudent macroeconomic policies. The financial system remains healthy, supported by strong balance sheets of banks and non-bank lenders, comfortable capital and liquidity buffers, and low market volatility. The Financial System Stress Indicator (FSSI) remains at relatively low levels, indicating limited systemic stress.

The report highlighted that India's near-term risks stem largely from external factors, including potential escalation of geopolitical and trade tensions and volatility in global financial markets.



A sharp correction in US equity markets could spill over to domestic markets, impacting investor confidence and financial conditions. India's external sector remains resilient, with manageable current account deficit levels and strong foreign exchange reserves of over USD 693 billion, sufficient to cover around 11 months of imports.

External vulnerability indicators, including external debt and short-term debt ratios, continue to show improvement.

The RBI also flagged emerging global risks such as rising leverage in hedge funds, increased reliance on short-term sovereign borrowing in advanced economies, and growing concentration in AI-driven equity markets, which could amplify market corrections. Overall, the RBI said strong domestic growth drivers, fiscal consolidation efforts, and adequate buffers across the financial and corporate sectors place India in a better position to withstand adverse global shocks, even as it remains vigilant to evolving macrofinancial risks. UNI

Tarun Garg takes charge as first Indian MD, CEO of Hyundai

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

CHENNAI, JAN 1 : Passenger car makers Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL) announced that Mr. Tarun Garg assumed charge

as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO), effective from today, January 1, 2026.

This historic milestone marks the first time an Indian national heading the HMIL since its inception 29 years ago - a testament to

Hyundai Motor Group's confidence in India's leadership and our country's growing strategic importance in the global automotive landscape.

With over three decades of automotive experience, Mr. Garg brings in the right expertise to lead HMIL's second phase of growth

in India, a company statement said.

Heralding a new chapter, Mr. Tarun Garg, said India's automotive industry is at an exciting inflection point, driven by innovation, sustainability, and evolving customer aspirations.

"It is an extraordinary honour to lead Hyundai Motor India at this defining moment in our three-decade long journey. My vision is to build on our strong foundation while accelerating HMIL's transformation towards sustainable growth, technological leadership, and unmatched customer delight. We will continue to reinforce our commitment to 'Make in India' and position HMIL as a global hub for exports", he said.

"Aligned with Hyundai's global vision of 'Progress for Humanity', we will strengthen Hyundai's legacy and create meaningful mobility solutions that not only empower people but also connect communities and enrich lives. The future is ours to build and I am committed

to leading HMIL with agility, conviction and purpose", he added

This leadership transition underscores Hyundai Motor Group's confidence in India's growth story and its strategic importance, setting the stage for a new era of innovation, resilience, and progress. Mr. Garg's leadership will focus on four key pillars:

Mr. Garg's leadership will focus on four key pillars Future-Ready Strategy: Accelerating EVs, hybrids, connected mobility and much more through Rs 45,000 crore investment roadmap by FY 2030; Empowering employees and strengthening HMIL dealer and supplier networks; Customer-Centric approach by deepening trust and delivering seamless experiences across all HMIL touchpoints and Make

in India, Made for the World Impetus--enhancing indigenization across HMIL plants and positioning HMIL as an export hub for emerging markets.UNI

Centre eased company laws, boosted investor protection in 2025

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JAN 1 : The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) undertook a wide range of reforms in 2025 with the objective of making corporate rules simpler, reducing compliance burden, and improving services for companies, directors and investors, an official statement said on Thursday.

These measures focused on ease of doing business while ensuring transparency and strong corporate governance.

One of the most important steps taken during the year was the expansion of the definition of "small companies." By increasing the limits for paid-up capital and turnover, many more companies now fall under this

category.

This change allows such companies to follow simpler compliance requirements, reducing costs and paperwork, and supporting their growth in the formal economy.

The Ministry also streamlined the process for closing down companies, especially government companies that are no longer operational.

Amendments to the rules for removing company names from the official register were introduced to make the procedure faster and less complicated. This helps in clearing inactive entities and improving administrative efficiency.

In a major relief for company directors, the MCA rationalised the Know Your Customer (KYC)

requirements. Instead of filing KYC details every year, directors are now required to update their information once every three years. This move significantly reduces repetitive filings while maintaining necessary regulatory checks.

To support companies during the transition to the upgraded MCA digital system, the Ministry issued several general circulars.

These provided additional time for statutory filings without late fees and allowed companies to hold meetings such as AGMs and EGMs through virtual mode, ensuring smoother compliance and continuity of operations.

Investor protection remained a key focus area. The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority strengthened its

grievance redressal mechanism by launching an integrated digital portal along with a dedicated call centre.

These steps have helped speed up the process of settling claims related to unclaimed dividends and shares, making the system more transparent and investor-friendly. Progress under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code also continued during the year.

A large number of resolution plans were approved, leading to substantial recovery for creditors. Ongoing reforms are aimed at further reducing resolution timelines and improving the overall efficiency of the insolvency framework.

The Ministry also expanded the scope of fast-track mergers and demergers, enabling certain

categories of companies to restructure more easily and at lower cost. This is expected to support business consolidation and operational efficiency.

To strengthen regulatory oversight and improve service delivery, the MCA expanded its institutional presence by setting up additional Regional Directorates and Registrar of Companies offices. This expansion is designed to meet the growing needs of India's expanding corporate sector.

Overall, the reforms carried out in 2025 reflect the Ministry of Corporate Affairs' continued effort to create a simpler, more efficient, and investor-friendly corporate ecosystem while maintaining strong governance standards.UNI

Pan masala, tobacco products to attract up to 40 Pc GST from Feb 1, says Govt

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JAN 1 : The union government has announced higher taxes on Pan Masala and tobacco products, effective from February 1, attracting a GST of up to 40 per cent, according to a notification issued by the Ministry of Finance on Wednesday.

The revised rates of Goods and Services Tax (GST) on tobacco products are in line with the National Security Cess Act for Health Protection, 2025 Bill, passed during the Winter Session of Parliament.

The Act proposes levying a cess on goods based on the machinery installed for manufacturing or the process undertaken to manufacture them. The revenue generated from this cess will be deposited into the Consolidated Fund of India and will help the government meet expenditures related



to national security and public health.

Initially, the cess has been applied to pan masala, though the government may notify the imposition of the cess on other goods as well, if required.

According to another notification, bids will attract 18 per cent GST from February 1. Pan masala; unmanufactured tobacco and its waste; cigarettes, cheroots, cigarillos and cigars made

of tobacco or tobacco substitutes; other manufactured tobacco and tobacco substitutes; tobacco products meant for consumption without combustion; and tobacco and nicotine substitutes meant for consumption without combustion will attract 40 per cent GST. The notification on the new rates has been issued on the recommendation of the GST Council.UNI

FIEO welcomes Centre's MAS intervention to boost global market access for exporters

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

HYDERABAD, JAN 1 : The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) on Wednesday welcomed the Government of India's launch of the Market Access Support (MAS) Intervention under the Export Promotion Mission (EPM).

The FIEO stated that the move will strengthen India's export competitiveness by improving structured access to global markets, particularly for MSMEs and first-time exporters.

Approved by the union Cabinet on November 12, the MAS Intervention provides targeted financial and institutional support for buyer-seller meets, international trade fairs and exhibitions, reverse buyer-seller meets in India, and



trade delegations to priority and emerging markets.

The scheme is being implemented under the NIRYAT DISHA sub-scheme of the Export

Promotion Mission.

In a statement, FIEO President S C Ralhan said the initiative marks a shift towards predictable and outcome-oriented export

promotion, addressing long-standing market access challenges faced by smaller exporters.

He noted that the provision of a three-to-five-year advance calendar of international events will improve planning certainty for exporters and trade bodies, while mandatory MSME participation will help broaden India's export base.

Under the framework, the government has rationalised financial support ceilings and cost-sharing ratios, with preferential treatment for priority sectors and markets.

Exporters with overseas shipments of up to 75 lakh in the previous year will also be eligible for partial airfare support, aimed at encouraging participation

of new and small exporters in overseas trade events.

The scheme is fully digitised through the trade.gov.in portal, enabling online approvals, feedback, lead tracking and outcome measurement.

Industry bodies said this is expected to improve transparency, reduce transaction time and align export promotion activities with measurable business outcomes.

FIEO also welcomed the introduction of proof-of-concept and product demonstration support for technology-driven sectors, stating that the MAS Intervention could play a key role in enhancing buyer engagement, market diversification and integration of Indian exporters into global value chains.UNI

Elior Group appoints Ashwani Vohra as Managing Director of Elior India

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JAN 1 : Elior Group, a global leader in contract catering and multiservices for business and industry, has appointed Ashwani Vohra as Managing Director of Elior India.

With more than 25 years of experience in food services, retail, hospitality, and large-scale operations management, Vohra will be responsible for driving Elior's growth strategy in India and strengthening operational excellence across the business.

A recognised business leader in the Indian market, Vohra has previously held senior leadership positions



across several organisations, driving strong year-on-year profitable growth.

He is known for his ability to transform and industrialise operations, build client- and consumer-centric teams, and drive transformative growth through innovative and bespoke offerings, with nutrition, wellness, and sustainability at the core.

"We are delighted to welcome Ashwani Vohra to Elior India as Managing Director. His deep knowledge of the Indian market, his strategic vision, and his proven ability to grow and transform complex operations are major assets to support Elior's ambition in the region. His arrival marks an important milestone in strengthening our presence in India," said Daniel Derichebourg, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Elior Group.UNI





Rashid Leads Afghanistan in T20 WC 2026



UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

KINGSTOWN: Rashid Khan will lead Afghanistan at the T20 World Cup next year, as they named their 15-member squad for the tournament in India and Sri Lanka. The same side will also play West Indies in a three-match T20I series in the UAE in the lead-up.

Afghanistan's squad includes left-arm quick Fazalhaq Farooqi, offspinner Mujeeb Ur Rahman, allrounder Gulbadin Naib and right-arm seamer Naveen-ul-Haq. Both Farooqi and Naib were left out of the white-ball tour of Bangladesh in October, but are back ahead of the T20 World Cup.

Mujeeb's inclusion, meanwhile, has pushed mystery spinner AM Ghazanfar to the reserves, which also includes Ijaz Ahmadzai and Zia Ur Rahman Sharifi. Naveen, though, returns after a shoulder injury had ruled him out of the Asia Cup in September. He last played for Afghanistan in a T20I against Zimbabwe in December 2024.

Afghanistan had made it to the semi-final of the last T20 World Cup, in 2024, which was the first time they went that far in an ICC tournament. On the way, they beat much higher-rated teams like New Zealand, West Indies, Australia and Bangladesh.

"Afghanistan had a terrific run in the previous edition of the T20 World Cup. We cherish excellent memories from the past, and hope for even better results this year, which will be played in Asian conditions," Naseeb Khan, the Afghanistan Cricket Board CEO, said. "Hosting the West Indies team provides us with an incredible opportunity to fine-tune our combination, and prepare adequately for the World Cup."

Afghanistan's T20I series against West Indies runs from January 19 to 22. At the T20 World Cup, they are placed in Group D, alongside New Zealand, South Africa, UAE and Canada. Afghanistan start their campaign against New Zealand on February 8 in Chennai.

Damien Martyn hospitalised with meningitis

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

QUEENSLAND: Former Australia batter Damien Martyn is in a Queensland hospital suffering from meningitis. Martyn, 54, was taken ill on Boxing Day with news emerging on Tuesday evening of his condition, with details confirmed to ESPNcricinfo. Martyn is currently in an induced coma.

Former players started to take to social media on Wednesday in support. "Lots of love and prayers sending @damienmartyn way. Keep strong and fighting legend. Love to the family xxx." Darren Lehmann posted on X, formally Twitter.

Speaking on behalf of Martyn's family, close friend Adam Gilchrist said: "He is getting the best of treatment and [Martyn's partner] Amanda and his family know that a lot of people are sending their prayers and best wishes."

Cricketer Australia CEO Todd Greenberg said: "I'm saddened to hear of Damien's illness. The best wishes of everyone at CA and in the wider cricket



community are with him at this time."

Martyn, known as one of the game's great stroke-makers, played 67 Tests for Australia from 1992 to 2006. He was recalled in 2000 after six-year gap and became a key figure in Steve Waugh's all-powerful side. He retired in 2006 midway through that year's Ashes series, finishing his Test career with 4406 runs at 46.37 including 13 centuries.

He was also part of the Australia side that won the 2003 ODI World Cup, hitting 88 not out in the final against India where he added 234 with Ricky Ponting, and overall scored 5346 runs at 40.80 in the format with five centuries.

After briefly working in commentary post his playing days, Martyn has largely kept a low profile. On Christmas Eve, he posted about the upcoming Boxing Day Test. "If the old brigade could play again then this would be it. Boxing Day test match. What a cauldron," he wrote on X.

Sports Minister Calls Youth Athletes J&K Ambassadors at Junior Roll Ball Nationals Finale

HT SPORTS DESK

JAMMU: The 17th Junior National Roll Ball Championship concluded successfully at the Maulana Azad Stadium, Jammu, on 1st January 2026, after four days of intense competition held from 29th December 2025 to 1st January 2026. The championship witnessed spirited participation from young Roll Ball players representing States and Union Territories from across the country.

In the boys category, Rajasthan clinched the champions' title, while Uttar Pradesh finished as runners-up and Maharashtra secured third place. In the girls category, Assam lifted the champions' trophy, with Tamil Nadu finishing second and Maharashtra claiming third position.

The closing ceremony was

held at M.A. Stadium, Jammu, where Ms. Nuzhat Gul, Secretary, J&K Sports Council, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and felicitated the winners and runners-up by distributing medals and trophies.

In his message on the occasion, Minister for Youth Services and Sports, J&K, Sh. Satish Sharma, congratulated all the winning teams and participants for their commendable performances. He urged the young athletes to act as ambassadors of Jammu & Kashmir, carrying forward the message of unity, peace, and sporting excellence, and to share their experiences of the region's diversity and hospitality with the rest of the country.

The ceremony was also attended by Sh. Goutam Daluja, President, Roll Ball Federation of India, along with other senior officials of the federation. The



Roll Ball Federation of India expressed its gratitude to the J&K Sports Council and Govt. of J&K for the top-class hospitality, excellent infrastructure, and smooth conduct of the championship, terming J&K a capable and welcoming host for national-level sporting events.

Outstanding individual performances were recognized during the championship, with Ms. Siya Sankholiya of Assam being adjudged the Best Player of the Tournament in the Girls' Section, while Mr. Jonathan Advard of Kerala was declared the Best Player in the Boys' Section.

The successful conclusion of the 17th Junior National Roll Ball Championship once again reinforced Jammu & Kashmir's growing stature on the national sports map and its ability to host major sporting events with professionalism and warmth.

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