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# From Kashmir to Kanyakumari, India's Youth Are Redefining Sports Excellence: LG Manoj Sinha

LG Inaugurates 2nd Khelo India Beach Games in Diu, Highlights Youth Empowerment, Coastal Sports Growth and India's Rising Global Sporting Ambition

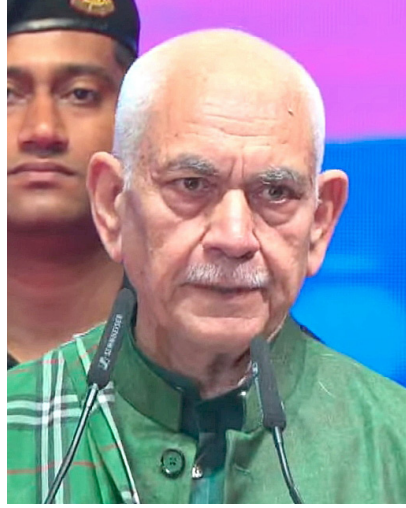
HT NEWS NETWORK

DIU, JAN 5: Lieutenant Governor of

Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Manoj Sinha, on Monday attended the grand opening ceremony of the 2nd edition of the Khelo India Beach Games at the Blue Flag-certified Ghoghla Beach in Diu, describing the event as a powerful symbol of India's youth-driven sports transformation.

The ceremony was attended by Shri Praful Patel, Administrator of the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. A special message from Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was read out on the occasion, extending his felicitations to the athletes and organizers for strengthening India's sporting ecosystem.

Addressing the gathering, the Lie-



the Khelo India Beach Games reflect the Government of India's resolve to nurture a strong sporting culture while promoting emerging coastal and beach sports. He said the event also highlights India's growing strength in non-traditional disciplines and the rising confidence of young athletes.

Expressing pride in Jammu and Kashmir's participation, Shri Sinha said the Union Territory stands firmly aligned with the national sports movement. He added that such platforms help build leadership qualities and self-belief, paving the way for the rise of Gen Z athletes in global competitions.

Calling upon athletes to act as

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## Mega Hydropower Projects Will Drive J&K's Development: Manohar Lal

Power Minister Sets Dec 2026 and March 2028 Deadlines After Two-day Review of Key Power Projects in J&K

HT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JAN 5: Union Power Minister Manohar Lal on Monday said that mega hydropower projects in Jammu and Kashmir would play a decisive role in the Union Territory's all-round development, as he concluded a two-day tour reviewing the progress of major power infrastructure works across the Chenab basin.

The minister began his visit with a review of the

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## Gulmarg records season's coldest night at minus 8.8°C in Valley

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 5: Gulmarg recorded the coldest night of the season so far at minus 8.8 degrees Celsius, according to data

In the Kashmir region, Srinagar registered a minimum temperature of minus 3.6 degrees Celsius, while the same was recorded at Srinagar airport.

Pahalgam recorded minus 4.8 degrees Celsius and Shopian minus 5.6 degrees Celsius. Pulwama recorded a low of minus 4.2 degrees Celsius, while Budgam registered minus 3.5 degrees Celsius.

Kupwara recorded a minimum temperature of minus 1.8 degrees Celsius, Kokernag minus 1.2

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## Teachers Are Society's True Architects: Sakeena Itoo

HT NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR, JAN 05: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today addressed the One Day Convention of Teachers here, underscoring the pivotal role of teachers in shaping a progressive and enlightened society.

Director School Education Jammu, Naseem Javaid Choudhary; ACR Udhampur, Joint Director School Education Udhampur/Reasi, DSWO Udhampur,

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## Operation Sindoor Showcased India's Iron Resolve, NCC Cadets Emerged as 'Warriors': Vice President

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 5: Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Monday said that Operation Sindoor sent a strong and unambiguous message to the world about India's determination to safeguard its sovereignty, while also highlighting the exemplary contribution of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) during the operation.

Addressing the inauguration of the NCC Republic Day Camp at Delhi Cantonment, the Vice Pres-

ident said the Indian armed forces made the nation proud by successfully executing Operation Sindoor, calling it a powerful symbol of India's unwavering commitment to national security.

"Operation Sindoor reflected the resolve of the Indian armed forces to protect the country's honour, sovereignty and citizens," he said, recalling that the operation was carried out in the early hours of May 7, 2025, in response to the Pahalgam terror attack that claimed 26 innocent lives and



resulted in the elimination of at least 100 terrorists.

Praising the NCC's role, Radhakrishnan said nearly 72,000 NCC cadets rose to the occasion as 'NCC warriors', voluntarily assisting civil defence efforts during the operation. The cadets actively participated in emergency preparedness drills, blood donation camps and other essential support activities.

The Vice President formally inaugurated the month-long Republic Day Camp, which will

conclude with the Prime Minister's Rally on January 28. A total of 2,406 NCC cadets, including 898 girls, from across the country are taking part in the camp.

Describing the cadets as "ambassadors of a new India," Radhakrishnan said they represent the foundation of a Viksit Bharat by 2047. He emphasised that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has embarked on a transformative journey centred on

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## Nutrition Security Is a Shared National Responsibility : Amit Shah

Stressed For CSR-Cooperative Synergy, To Amicably Eradicate Malnutrition

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 5: Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation Amit Shah on Monday said that ensuring nutrition security is a collective national responsibility and that strong collaboration between corporates and cooperatives can play a decisive role in eliminating malnutrition. Guided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Sahkar se Samridhi", Shah will inaugurate a national CSR



Conclave on "Role of Corporate Social Responsibility in Nutrition Security and Malnutrition Mitigation", organised by the NDDB Foundation for Nutrition, at Vigyan Bhawan on January 6.

The conclave will witness the participation of several Union Ministers, senior government officials, heads of public and private sector enterprises, cooperative leaders, scientists and representatives of beneficiary institutions. On the

## PRAGATI Accelerates Projects via Digital Governance: PIB Director

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, JAN 5: PIB Director Neha Jalali on Monday said that PRAGATI has emerged as a powerful instrument of digital governance, effectively translating intent into tangible outcomes by breaking bureaucratic inertia and strengthening Centre-state coordination.

"PRAGATI is a powerful illustration of how digital governance can effectively translate intent into tangible and visible outcomes. It is not merely a review platform, but a transformative governance mechanism aimed at breaking bureaucratic inertia, strengthening the Team

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## PRAGATI Speeds Up Mega Projects in J&K: CS

₹4.12 Lakh Cr Projects Monitored, Most Issues Resolved

MK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, JAN 05: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today highlighted the transformative impact of the PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation) platform in expediting major developmental projects across J&K, stating that it has emerged as a powerful instrument for resolving long-pending issues and ensuring timely execution of big-ticket initiatives.

Addressing a press briefing, the Chief Secretary underscored the significance of PRAGATI@50, noting that the technology-driven governance mechanism has successfully unlocked several projects that had remained stalled

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## Shopian Police Bust Conman in ₹5.4 Lakh Fraud

HT NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN, JAN 5: Shopian Police have registered an e-FIR and arrested a conman accused of cheating a local resident of ₹5.40 lakh by falsely claiming he could secure the release of the complainant's brother from police custody, officials said on Monday.

In a statement, Police in Shopian has arrested a conman for duping an individual by falsely promising to secure the release of his brother from police custody at Police Station Zainapora.

Police Station Shopian received a complaint on 04/01/2026

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**CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....**

**From Kashmir.....**

ambassadors of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, the Lieutenant Governor urged them to share the cultural richness and warm hospitality of Diu with their respective regions. He said the Beach Games are not just about competition, but also about projecting India's soft power and showcasing its coastal tourism potential to the world.

Highlighting environmental responsibility, Shri Sinha said the Beach Games also serve as a reminder of the collective duty to protect coastal ecosystems and promote sustainable development.

"Sports unite people beyond caste, religion and region. Through unity and collective effort, we can make India a world-class sporting power," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He congratulated Shri Praful Patel and the people of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu for successfully hosting India's first multi-sport Beach Games in 2024 and the inaugural Khelo India Beach Games in 2025, and extended his best wishes to all participating athletes.

The 2026 edition of the Khelo India Beach Games builds on the success of its inaugural event, with over 1,300 athletes from 31 States and Union Territories competing over five days. The games feature six competitive disciplines—Beach Soccer, Beach Volleyball, Beach Sepak Takraw, Beach Kabaddi, Beach Pencak Silat and Open Water Swimming—along with two demonstration sports, Beach Malakhamb and Beach Tug of War.

Eminent sports personalities, senior officials, prominent citizens, sports enthusiasts and a large number of youth attended the opening ceremony, reflecting the growing national enthusiasm for beach and coastal sports.

**Mega Hydropower.....**

690-MW Salal Hydroelectric Project in Reasi district, directing NHPC to expedite sediment removal operations in the reservoir to ensure optimal utilisation of water resources. The desilting works are being undertaken to maximise generation potential on the Chenab River.

He later conducted an aerial inspection of the 1,856-MW Sawalkot Hydroelectric Project and visited the Ratle Hydroelectric Project in Kishtwar district, where he laid the foundation stone for dam concreting works and urged project teams to adhere strictly to timelines.

In Kishtwar, Lal reviewed the progress of the 1,000-MW Pakal Dul and 390-MW Dul Hasti power stations, carrying out a detailed assessment of safety systems, operational preparedness, production capacity and technical activities. He described Pakal Dul as one of the most ambitious energy projects in the region, with long-term benefits for Jammu and Kashmir.

On the second day of his visit, the minister inspected all three Chenab Valley Power Projects Limited (CVPP) ventures—Pakal Dul (1,000 MW), Kiru (624 MW) and Kwar (540 MW)—and chaired a review meeting with project heads and contractors, accompanied by Secretary (Power) Pankaj Agarwal and senior officials of NHPC and CVPP.

Following the review, Lal directed that the Pakal Dul and Kiru projects be commissioned by December 2026, while the 540-MW Kwar project is to be completed by March 2028. He also visited the Dul Hasti Power Station, where he took part in a sapling plantation drive at the project premises.

During interactions with local residents and workers at various sites, the minister assured them that their concerns would be addressed and lauded officers and workers for executing complex projects under challenging terrain and climatic conditions, expressing confidence that the hydropower initiatives would significantly strengthen the region's energy security and economic growth.

**Operation Sindoor.....**

Atmanirbharta, driven by disciplined, skilled and value-oriented youth. "In today's rapidly changing global environment, India needs youth who are courageous yet compassionate, technologically skilled yet rooted in strong values," he said, adding that NCC cadets inspire confidence among citizens through their unity, discipline and spirit of service.

He lauded the NCC for ushering in a new era of youth development through sustained initiatives and campaigns, calling the Republic Day Camp a living example of India's faith in its youth and commitment to national unity.

Highlighting the NCC motto of 'Unity and Discipline', the Vice President said the organisation continues to nurture confident and responsible youth who embody constitutional values of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. He noted that cadets from diverse states and Union Territories living and training together symbolise India's unity in diversity.

Radhakrishnan also appreciated the cadets' contributions in adventure activities, international youth exchange programmes, environmental initiatives and disaster relief operations, including their service during the Wayanad floods in Kerala.

Welcoming the modernisation of NCC training, including cyber awareness, drone training and the establishment of a Remote Pilot Training Academy, he said such initiatives would prepare youth to meet emerging technological and security challenges.

Earlier, the Vice President was accorded a guard of honour by NCC cadets, visited the NCC Hall of Fame, and interacted with cadets after witnessing a cultural programme. NCC Director General Lt Gen Virendra Vats and senior officials were present on the occasion.

**Gulmarg records.....**

degrees Celsius, Pampore minus 2.5 degrees Celsius, Awantipora minus 3.2 degrees Celsius, and Anantnag minus 3.2 degrees Celsius.

Baramulla recorded minus 0.7 degrees Celsius, Bandipora minus 1.3 degrees Celsius, and Zethan Rafiabab minus 3.5 degrees Celsius. Minimum temperature data was not available for Kulgam, Ganderbal and Sonamarg.

In the Jammu region, Banihal recorded a minimum temperature of minus 1.3 degrees Celsius, while Bhandarwah recorded minus 2.1 degrees Celsius. Batote recorded 2.1 degrees Celsius, Ramban and Doda recorded 2.7 degrees Celsius each, and Kishtwar recorded 2.3 degrees Celsius.

Jammu city recorded a minimum temperature of 8.7 degrees Celsius, while Jammu airport recorded 11.1 degrees Celsius. Kathua recorded 8.4 degrees Celsius, Reasi 8.3 degrees Celsius, Katra 5.6 degrees Celsius, Udhampur 6.0 degrees Celsius, and Rajouri 1.6 degrees Celsius. Temperature data was not available for Samba and Poonch.

In Ladakh, Leh recorded a minimum temperature of minus 9.6 degrees Celsius, Kargil minus 8.4 degrees Celsius, and Nubra Valley minus 7.5 degrees Celsius, the data showed. (KNS).

**Nutrition Security.....**

occasion, Amit Shah will launch the third phase of the Giftmilk Programme under SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant's CSR initiative, benefiting around 4,000 government schoolchildren in Chhattisgarh, and the Shishu Sanjeevani Programme under IDBI Bank's CSR initiative, aimed at providing fortified nutrition to nearly 3,000 anganwadi children in rural Maharashtra.

The day-long national conclave will deliberate on innovative, collaborative and sustainable strategies to address child malnutrition, with technical sessions focusing on public nutrition interventions and corporate-cooperative partnerships for nutrition security. Around 1,200 participants from across the country are expected to attend the event.

**Teachers Are.....**

CMO Udhampur, CEO Udhampur, other senior officers of Education department and large number of teachers were also present on the occasion.

Speaking to a large gathering of educators, the Minister lauded teachers as the true architects of building progressive society, stating that their contribution goes far beyond classrooms and textbooks. "Teachers play a decisive role in nurturing responsible citizens and strengthening moral and intellectual fabric of society", she stated. The Education Minister called upon teachers to adapt to evolving educational challenges and adopt innovative teaching methods to meet the aspirations of the younger generation. She stressed that continuous professional development and value-based education are essential to keep pace with changing times.

Lauding teachers for their contribution to education sector, Minister Sakeena said that under the visionary leadership of then Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, the revolutionary step of introducing Rehbar-e-Taleem (ReT) scheme was initiated which changed the dynamics of school education sector in J&K. She added that due to ReT scheme, students of far-flung areas, who couldn't afford to move to cities for educational purposes, received education in their respective areas.

She highlighted that the teachers need to be acknowledged for their contribution to the society, adding that the large number of IAS, IPS and JKAS officers have studied from government schools for which their teachers need to be acknowledged.

Emphasising the need to reform and strengthen the teacher-student relationship, Sakeena Itoo said that mutual respect, trust and understanding must form the foundation of all educational institutions. She highlighted that some positive reforms need to be initiated for improving student-teacher relationship in educational institutions.

Reiterating the government's commitment to improving the education sector, Sakeena Itoo assured that sustained efforts are being made by the Government under the leadership of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah to upgrade infrastructure, enhance teaching standards and promote holistic learning across educational institutions of J&K.

Addressing the gathering, Director School Education Jammu said the Government has worked tirelessly from last one year for the development of education sector, particularly the change of Academic session, timely updation of seniority lists, conduct of DPCs and other related issues have been solved and some are under active consideration of the Government.

He highlighted that various reformative steps for the betterment of education sector are under process of the government, which will significantly improve the educational standards across Jammu and Kashmir.

On the occasion, various teachers spoke and lauded the efforts of Government, especially Education Minister for various pathbreaking initiatives in education sector. They expressed gratitude to Minister for various decisions like change in academic session, regularisation of CPWs, posting of Principals and other teachers in various schools which was long pending issue, availability of textbooks in schools, timely updation of seniority lists as well as regular conduct of DPCs at all levels.

The Teachers, on the occasion, also put forth some demands before the Minister like provision of leave salary to teachers at the time of retirement, restoration of Old Pension Scheme (OPS), withdrawal of teachers from non teaching assignments in other departments like Census, Surveys and others as well as timely disbursement of dues for Mid Day Meal scheme.

On the sidelines of the Convention, the Minister distributed sewing machines among women beneficiaries of Social Welfare department. She also distributed bicycles among school children for their outstanding performance in various National sports championships and academic activities.

**PRAGATI.....**

India approach through enhanced coordination between the Centre and states, and fostering a culture of time-bound decision-making, accountability and outcome-based monitoring," Jalali told reporters here.

Citing the Jammu-Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla (JUSBRL) rail link as an example, she said work on the project began in 1995 but saw limited progress for nearly 25 years due to difficult terrain, land acquisition issues, forest clearances and security-related constraints.

She said that after the project was taken up under the Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation (PRAGATI), critical approvals and statutory clearances were expedited and long-pending bottlenecks were resolved through sustained coordination among various ministries and agencies.

"This coordinated and proactive approach ultimately led to the completion of the project, enabling operational rail connectivity in the Kashmir valley and marking a major milestone in the region's infrastructure development," Jalali said.

The Jammu-Baramulla railway line is part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, a 324-km strategic broad-gauge railway connecting the Kashmir valley with the national rail network.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in June last year, inaugurated key railway projects, including the USBRL, featuring the Chenab Rail Bridge and the Anji cable-stayed bridge, connecting the Kashmir valley with the rail network for all-weather travel. He also flagged off a Vande Bharat Express train from Katra to Srinagar.

The event was held against the backdrop of the 50th PRAGATI meeting chaired by Prime Minister Modi on December 31, 2025, in New Delhi.

**PRAGATI Speeds.....**

for decades due to inter-departmental bottlenecks and procedural delays.

The press conference was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Information, M. Raju; Director Information, Nitish Rajora; Director, PIB Jammu, Neha Jalali; Joint Director Information Headquarters, Zahoor Ahmad Raina; Joint Director Information Jammu, Deepak Dubey, and other senior officers of the Directorate of Information & Public Relations (DIPR).

Citing the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project as a prime example, the Chief Secretary said that despite being initiated in 1995, the project witnessed minimal progress for nearly 25 years. However, after being taken up under PRAGATI for close monitoring, the project gained substantial momentum due to enhanced inter-departmental coordination and direct intervention at the highest level

by the Prime Minister himself.

He informed that all projects with an outlay of more than ₹500 Cr are monitored by the Prime Minister's Group (PMG) headed by the Cabinet Secretary, while the most critical among them are directly reviewed by the Prime Minister through PRAGATI meetings.

Elaborating further, the Chief Secretary stated that the PMG is currently monitoring 61 projects in Jammu & Kashmir, with a cumulative investment of over ₹4.12 lakh crore, spanning key sectors such as connectivity, energy, and social infrastructure.

Out of these, 15 projects with an outlay of ₹69,000 Cr have already been completed, while the remaining projects are at various stages of execution.

He specifically pointed out that 15 major projects in J&K are under direct monitoring of the Prime Minister through the PRAGATI platform, enabling swift resolution of issues related to land acquisition, financial and physical constraints, and ensuring timely and fair compensation to affected families.

Highlighting the high effectiveness of the mechanism, the Chief Secretary revealed that out of 59 issues pertaining to J&K taken up in earlier PRAGATI meetings, 57 have already been resolved on merit, placing the Union Territory among the top performers nationally, supplemented by robust district-level follow-up by the administration.

On the tangible outcomes achieved, he said that six high-impact projects worth approximately ₹53,000 Cr have been completed in Jammu & Kashmir under PRAGATI monitoring. These include the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link, Kishanganga Hydroelectric Project along with its transmission line, AIIMS Jammu, the challenging Banihal stretch of NH-44, and the Alsteng-Kargil-Khalte-Leh transmission line.

He further informed that nine additional projects being monitored under PRAGATI are progressing at a satisfactory pace. These include the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway Corridor, AIIMS Awantipora, Pakul Dul Hydroelectric Project, 4G mobile connectivity under USOF, and several

other energy and connectivity projects across different parts of the UT.

Concluding the briefing, the Chief Secretary reaffirmed the government's commitment to fully implement the directions issued through the PRAGATI mechanism at the Union Territory level. He emphasized that by leveraging this platform, J&K is poised to sustain the current momentum, ensuring that all developmental initiatives are outcome-oriented and completed within approved deadlines for each of them.

**Shopian Police.....**

through WhatsApp from Asif Ahmad Parrah son of Mohd Maqbool Parrah resident of Humhuna, Zainapora. The complainant alleged that a conman, identified as Sajad Ahmad Bhat son of Gh Hassan Bhat resident of Mundoor, Tral, fraudulently took ₹5,40,000/- from him by falsely assuring the release of his brother from police custody. Pertinently, the complainant's brother Umer Maqbool had been lawfully arrested in connection with FIR No. 108/2025 under Sections 8/20 of the NDPS Act, registered at Police Station Zainapora.

Taking advantage of the situation, the accused falsely claimed to be a government employee and asserted that he had sufficient influence to arrange the release of the complainant's brother. On this false pretext, he cheated the complainant and fraudulently obtained the said amount, it reads.

Taking cognizance of the complaint, Police Station Shopian registered E.FIR No. 03/2026 under Sections 318(4) and 319(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), it reads.

During the course of investigation, ₹1.50 lakh has been recovered so far from the accused. The accused has been taken into custody, and efforts are underway to recover the remaining amount. Further investigation into the case is in progress, it reads.

People are advised to remain vigilant and stay away from individuals who make false claims of influence or promise illegal favours. Any such attempts should be promptly reported to the nearest police station, reads the statement. (KNC)

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# Spiritual Mehfil Marks Jashn-e-Moulood-e-Kaaba

■ GULFAM BARJI

**SRINAGAR, JAN 5:** On the auspicious occasion of the birth anniversary of Moulood-e-Kaaba, Ameer-ul-Momineen Hazrat Ali Ibn Abi Talib (AS), the Auqaf Committee Wadi Mohalla Harwan Srinagar organized a spiritually enriching Mehfil at Imam Bargah Harwan sgr. A large number of devotees of Imam Ali (AS) participated and expressed their deep reverence and devotion.

The Mehfil commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran followed by Naat in praise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This was followed by Naat and Manqabat presented in honour of Imam Ali (AS). Students from the religious and educational institution Maarif Uloom Islami, affiliated with the All J&K Shia Association, actively participated by presenting Naat, Manqabat, and speeches, thereby



paying rich tributes to Moulood-e-Kaaba.

The chief guest of the programme was the eminent religious scholar Aga Syed Mudasar Rizvi. In his address, Aga Sahib

shed detailed the illustrious life and character of Imam Ali (AS), stating that Imam Ali (AS) represents a comprehensive and multidimensional personality embodying justice, knowledge,

piety, and humanity. He emphasized that the teachings of Imam Ali (AS) are highly relevant in the present era for promoting social unity, mutual respect, and an awakened social consciousness.

He further added that the life of Imam Ali (AS) offers a practical message for establishing a just, enlightened, and peaceful society based on justice and high moral values.

On the occasion, Moulana Imdad Hussain, teacher at Jamia Imam Jafar Sadiq (AS), Shadipora, also addressed the gathering and said that the life of Imam Ali (AS) is a living example of truthfulness, courage, and social justice. He emphasized that by following the teachings of Imam Ali (AS), peace, brotherhood, and harmony can be promoted in society.

At the conclusion of the Mehfil, Mohammad Ilyas Kutho, President of the Auqaf Committee Wadi Mohalla Harwan, extended heartfelt congratulations to all the faithful on the occasion of Jashn-e-Moulood-e-Kaaba and expressed sincere gratitude to everyone who participated in making the Mehfil a success.

## Kashmir Fruit Growers Seek 100% Duty on NZ Apples

■ FAROOQ RATHER

**SRINAGAR, JAN 5:** The Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers Cum Dealers Union — the apex elected body representing all fruit growers' associations across the Valley — has expressed serious concern over the recent decision to reduce import duty on apples imported from New Zealand under the Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The duty, earlier fixed at 50 percent, has reportedly been brought down to 25 percent, triggering widespread anxiety among fruit growers across Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh.

In a representation submitted to the authorities, Union President Bashir Ahmad Bashir said the move is expected not only to increase apple imports from New Zealand but may also encourage other countries to seek similar concessions under future trade agreements. He said that while fruit growers had been demanding an increase in import duty to protect domestic produce, the government has instead reduced the existing duty — a step that may severely impact local apple prices and threaten the livelihoods of thousands of growers.

He added that cheaper imported apples will naturally be preferred by traders, leading to a decline in demand for locally grown apples. This development is particularly concerning at a time when a significant portion of Kashmir's apple produce is stored in cold storage facilities, with growers depending on fair market returns to recover production and storage costs.

Bashir Ahmad Bashir further highlighted that Kashmir's apple industry is already battling multiple challenges — including rising input costs, erratic weather conditions, pest infestations, and transportation difficulties. Repeated waves of apple imports from countries such as Iran, the United States, and now New Zealand have intensified pressure on small and marginal growers who form the backbone of the sector.

He clarified that the Union is not opposed to international trade but stressed that the government must safeguard domestic industry before finalizing such policies. Horticulture, he said, is widely regarded as the backbone of Jammu & Kashmir's economy, supporting more than seven lakh families directly or indirectly. The Kashmir Valley is rightly known as the "Land of Fruits" and the "Fruit Bowl of Northern India."

Given the prevailing circumstances, the Union has urged the Central Government to reconsider the decision and roll back the duty reduction. Instead, it has demanded the imposition of 100 percent import duty on New Zealand apples under the FTA, in order to protect the interests of fruit growers in Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand.

Copies of the representation have also been forwarded to the Union Commerce Minister, Union Agriculture Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh (MoS PMO), Lt. Governor J&K, Chief Minister J&K, Chief Secretary J&K, and several Members of Parliament including Mian Altaf Sahib, Chowdhary Mohammad Ramzan Sahib, Aga Syed Ruhullah, Shri Sat Paul Sharma (Rajya Sabha), and Sajjad Ahmad Kichloo (MP).

The Union appealed for urgent intervention to safeguard the region's fruit economy, warning that failure to respond may trigger a serious crisis for the horticulture sector. The concern has been echoed by fruit growers' associations across Srinagar, Kulgam, Anantnag, Pulwama, Shopian, Baramulla, Bandipora, Budgam, Ganderbal, Kupwara, and other parts of the Valley.

## LPG Cylinder Fire in Soibug Controlled Swiftly, No Damage Reported

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, JAN 05:** A minor fire incident was reported on Monday evening at around 8:47 PM in Shah Mohalla, Soibug, Budgam.

Immediately after receiving the distress call, the District Fire Control Room Budgam responded swiftly, dispatching a fire tender from Fire Station Budgam within a minute.

Upon reaching the spot, fire personnel found that an LPG gas cylinder had caught fire inside the kitchen of a residential house. Showing presence of mind, the residents managed to drag the burning cylinder to an open area, which helped prevent the flames from spreading to the rest of the house.

Firefighters promptly initiated firefighting operations and successfully brought the fire under control using Dry Chemical Powder (DCP) extinguishers, which are suitable for LPG-related fires.

Due to the timely and coordinated response, no loss of life or major property damage was reported.

The operation was carried out under the leadership of Fire Service In-Charge Budgam, LFM Nazir Ahmad, under the direct supervision of Assistant Director, Fire & Emergency Services Budgam, Dr. Mir Aqib Hussain.

Local residents lauded the swift and professional response of the Fire and Emergency Services Department, terming it crucial in averting a potential disaster.

Meanwhile, the ADGP, Fire & Emergency Services J&K, urged the general public to exercise utmost caution while using electrical and gas appliances. He advised people to store LPG cylinders in safe, well-ventilated places, preferably outside living areas, and strictly adhere to fire safety norms. He further emphasized adopting safe fire practices to protect lives and property.

## Ehsaas Foundation Holds Mehfil-e-Moulood-e-Kaaba

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JAN 05:** Ehsaas Foundation organised a spiritually enriching Mehfil-e-Moulood-e-Kaaba at 21 Miles Cafe, Iqbal Park, on the auspicious occasion of the Wiladat of Maula-e-Qayinaat, Ameer-ul-Momineen Hazrat Ali Ibn Abi Talib. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from religious scholars, social activists, journalists, poets, and devotees.

The event was gracefully hosted by Musadiq Alam, who conducted the proceedings with warmth and decorum, ensuring a smooth and engaging flow throughout the Mehfil.

The Mehfil was graced by renowned personality Bashir Dada as the Chief Guest, while Riyaz Masroor, senior journalist associated with BBC, and Molana Hameed-ul-Nayeemi attended as Guests of Honour.

The programme commenced with a soulful Tilawat-e-Qur'an by Mohammad Hafiz Qur'an Shareef, followed by Naat Shareef recited by Sahil Fayaz. Manqabat in praise of Maula Ali were beautifully presented by Mohammad Abbas, Mohsin Ali, and Ahmad Raza, deeply moving the audience and creating a spiritually charged atmosphere.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Guest Bashir Dada highlighted the timeless teachings of Hazrat Ali (A.S.), emphasizing justice, courage, knowledge, and compassion as guiding principles for humanity. He appreciated the efforts of Ehsaas Foundation in promoting spiritual and social awareness



through such meaningful programmes.

Guest of Honour Riyaz Masroor spoke about the relevance of Hazrat Ali's life in today's world, stressing truthfulness, integrity, and standing firm against injustice. Molana Hameed-ul-Nayeemi elaborated on the spiritual stature of Maula Ali (A.S.) and urged the youth to follow his path of wisdom, patience, and service to mankind.

Renowned poets Syed Abbas Jowhar, Suhail Ahmad (popularly known as Raja Sahib), Syed Ali Masroor, and Syed Mehdi Riza presented poetic tributes highlighting the virtues, bravery, and spiritual greatness of Maula-e-Qayinaat, adding literary depth and emotional resonance to the Mehfil.

In his inspiring address, Vice Chairman of Ehsaas Foundation, Burhan Nazir, stated that Hazrat Ali is not only a symbol of bravery but also an embodiment of knowledge, humility, and social justice. He reiterated that Ehsaas Foundation remains committed to spreading the message of humanity, unity, and compassion, inspired by the teach-

ings of Ahl-e-Bait.

On the occasion, the Vice Chairman extended heartfelt thanks to Media Line Advertising Agency for their support as the printing partner, and acknowledged Lieu D'Amour, ARSH Coaching Institute, Blueberry Holidays, and Kashmir Bulletin for their cooperation as supporting partners. Special appreciation was also extended to 21 Miles Cafe for providing the venue and extending full cooperation in making the event a success. The Foundation also expressed sincere gratitude to Faizan Mohammad, Director of Samzan Pvt Ltd, for his continued support and encouragement towards Ehsaas Foundation's social, cultural, and religious initiatives. The Mehfil concluded with collective prayers for peace, harmony, and prosperity, leaving the audience spiritually uplifted. Participants lauded Ehsaas Foundation for organising such a dignified and purposeful event at 21 Miles Cafe, Iqbal Park, to commemorate the blessed Wiladat of Maula-e-Qayinaat Hazrat Ali.

## Dr Darakhshan inaugurates ornamental Panel Dome, administrative Block in Aanntnag

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG, JAN 5:** Chairperson, J&K Waqf Board, Syed Dr. Syed Darakhshan Andrabi (Minister of State), today visited Aasar-e-Shareef Kabamarg in Anantnag and paid obeisance at the famous shrine.

Dr Andrabi participated in a significant inauguration event and was accompanied by Waqf Board officers and engineers in the presence of local people. She inaugurated the newly constructed Administrative Block and the Ornamental Aluminum Composite Panel (OACP) Dome of the Ziyarat. The Waqf Chairperson also inaugurated the upgradation works of the Grand Masjid at the shrine.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Darakhshan said that the Waqf Board is committed to the continuous development of the Kabamarg shrine and all shrines under the Board across Jammu and Kashmir.

Later, Dr Andrabi paid obeisance at the shrine of Syed Ahmad Kir-



mani (RA) at Movera, Pahalgam, and prayed for the welfare and peace of all.

Sharing her views with the media, Andrabi said that dedicated service coupled with a clear vision leads to the desired outcomes. "Innovative and sustainable technologies are being used in our

projects. We ensure quality infrastructural development, completed through a strict work calendar in both divisions of J&K. Transparency and accountability guide our infrastructure initiatives," she said.

Dr Andrabi further stated that over the past three years, the Waqf Board has facilitated the shrine and

upgraded facilities for devotees through the construction of sanitary facilities, pathways, Masjid upgradation, food distribution beats, and other allied works.

Executive Magistrate of the Board, Ishtiyak Mohiuddin, accompanied the Waqf Chairperson during the tour.

## MGNREGA by UPA Govt rights based law for every rural household: Karra

■ HT NEWS NETWORK / KNS

**JAMMU, JAN 05:** President JKPC Tarique Hameed Karra today chaired a meeting of newly appointed District Presidents of Jammu and Kashmir, held here at PCC HQ Jammu in which the current political situation was discussed. The meeting was attended by Working President PCC Raman Balla, I/c Hq Ved Mahajan, Former Minister DCC President Jammu Urban Yogesh Sawhney, Neeraj Kundan (Jammu Rural), Mir Iqbal Ahmed (Baramulla), Pankaj Dogra (Kathua) Sumeet Magotra (Udhampur), Pyare Lal Shan (Kishtwar), Ashok Sharma (Rajouri), Farooq Ahmed Bat (Anantnag), Shabnam Jan (Shopian), Umer Jaan (Pulwama), Javed Iqbal Lone (Doda), Haji Farooq Mir (Kupwara), Mohd Ishar Naik (Ramban), Dr. Adil Farooq Mir (Srinagar), Ajay Salalia (Reasi), Ajaz Ahmed Sheikh (Ganderbal), Sanjeev Sharma (Samba), Adv. Sheikh Farooq Bandipur, Abdul Rashid Lone (Kulggam).

PCC Chief Tarique Hameed Karra congratulated to the newly appointed District Presidents and wished them great success in their new role and expressed confident that their experience and dedication will further strengthen the organization in Jammu & Kashmir.

He disclosed that All India Congress Committee (AICC) has announced 45-day nation-

al agitation from January 08 to Feb. 25 titled MGNREGA Bachao Sangram — demanding the withdrawal of the Modi Government's VB-G RAMG Scheme and the restoration of the UPA era MGNREGA as a rights based programme. The party has also objected to the removal of Mahatma Gandhi's name from the rural employment scheme. The agitation will include gheraos of state assemblies, four zonal rallies, district-level fasts and dharnas, panchayat-level chaupals etc. Working President Raman Bhalla strongly emphasis over rejuvenating the organization at booth level and urged district presidents to get connected with the people at grassroot level ensuring that people's problems are highlighted for resolution. He also stressed for involving frontal organizations including Mahila Congress, Youth Congress, NSUI and all Cells which are an important part of congress party who always remained at the forefront to contribute towards serving people and strengthening the party.

All the district Presidents confidently ensured that they under the leadership of PCC President Shri Tarique Hameed Karra will work vigorously to strengthen the organization and will reach every nook and corner of J&K with the party's programmes and pro-people policies and further strengthening the party in their respective districts.

# Satish Sharma attends Prakash Purab celebrations of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**JAMMU, JANUARY 05:** Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Information Technology, Youth Services and Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma today took part in the celebrations commemorating the Prakash Purab of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji by attending the main function at Chand Buvi Kour Gurdwara, besides paying obeisance at several other Gurdwaras in the city. On the sacred occasion, the Minister offered his prayers and paid glowing tributes to the tenth Sikh Guru, remembering his extraordinary life devoted to the ideals of truth, justice, courage and service to humanity. He highlighted that Guru Gobind Singh Ji's message of fearlessness, equality and unwavering commitment to righteousness continues to illuminate the path for millions across the world.



Satish Sharma highlighted that Guru Gobind Singh Ji not only shaped a strong spiritual and moral foundation for society but also empowered people to stand against injustice and tyranny. He called upon people from all sections of society, particularly the youth, to draw inspiration from the Guru's teachings and incorporate the values of discipline, integrity, compassion and selfless service into their daily lives.

The Minister also acknowledged the immense contribution of the Sikh community to the nation, stating that their legacy of sacrifice, patriotism and service is deeply woven into the fabric of India. He appreciated the role of Sikh institutions and Gurdwaras in promoting harmony, social welfare and community service through initiatives like Langar and humanitarian outreach. During his visits to Chand Buvi Kour Gurdwara and other Gurdwaras, Satish Sharma interacted with members of the Sikh community and religious leaders, conveying his warm greetings of Prakash Purab. He reiterated the commitment of the Government to uphold the principles of inclusiveness, mutual respect and communal harmony, inspired by the teachings of great spiritual leaders like Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

## EPFO Srinagar holds PPO Distribution Ceremony

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**SRINAGAR, JANUARY 05:** Employee's Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), Regional Office Srinagar organised a Pension Payment Order (PPO) distribution ceremony today at the Conference Hall of RO Srinagar, Batamaloo.



During the programme, Pension Payment Orders were distributed to already retired employees of EPFO Regional Office Kashmir by Vinay Kumar, Regional Provident Fund Commissioner, Srinagar.

Speaking on the occasion, Vinay Kumar appreciated the efforts of Regional Office Srinagar for successfully initiating the Centralised Pension Processing Cell system for staff pensioners.

He highlighted that the CPPC system will ensure timely and hassle free disbursement of pensions, while also enhancing transparency and convenience for pensioners.

During the occasion, Social Security Assistant, Yasir Gowhar Mir, was presented the Best Employee of the Month award for December 2025 in recognition of his outstanding contribution towards generation of PPOs and successful operationalisation of the CPPC system in respect of staff pensioners of EPFO Regional Office Srinagar.

The ceremony was attended by officers and staff of EPFO Regional Office Srinagar along with retired employees, who expressed satisfaction over the improved pension processing system.

## ADC Shopian visits Gurudwara Sahib Bongam on Guru Purub

HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**SHOPIAN, JANUARY, 5:** On the occasion of Guru Purub, the birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, today visited Gurudwara Sahib, Bongam, Shopian on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Shopian.



During the visit, The ADC inspected the arrangements made for the observance of the holy occasion and reviewed facilities including cleanliness, drinking water, power supply, security and overall management.

He interacted with the Gurudwara management and concerned and stressed the need for ensuring proper facilities and a smooth experience for the devotees.

The district administration has put in place necessary arrangements to ensure the peaceful and smooth observance of Guru Gobind Singh Ji's birth anniversary, maintaining harmony and public convenience.

The ADC extended greetings to the people of the district on the occasion and prayed for peace and harmony of the people.

## Army Concluded Beautician Training Course For Women In Darhal, Rajouri

HT NEWS NETWORK

**RAJOURI, JANUARY 5:** The Indian Army successfully concluded the Beautician Training Course for young women in Darhal, conducted under Operation Sadbhavana.

The course was designed to empower local women by providing them with valuable skills for self-employment and economic independence. The opening ceremony, held earlier in Darhal, was attended by Army officials, the Sarpanch, Ex-Servicemen (ESM) leaders, village elders, and 25 enthusiastic young women. During the event, Army officials



highlighted that the initiative was part of a larger outreach program aimed at fostering goodwill, improving

livelihood opportunities and promoting women's economic empowerment. Throughout the course, participants received structured, hands-on training in modern beauty and grooming techniques, along with basic entrepreneurship skills. Upon successful completion of the program, participants were awarded certification, which will enable them to start their own beauty services or pursue employment within the beauty and wellness industry. This initiative marked another successful step in the Indian Army's ongoing commitment to skill development and community empowerment in the region.

## FCS&CA enforcement wing 'missing' as market checks stall

HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

**SRINAGAR, JAN 05:** The Enforcement Wing of the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Department, once instrumental in conducting market inspections, controlling prices and preventing black-marketing, appears largely dormant, with no major enforcement activity reported in recent years, even as the government completes a year in office.

In March last year, following directives from Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, the department announced the "reactivation" of its Enforcement Wing and the formation of market-check teams across the Valley to ensure the display of official price lists and curb overpricing of essential commodities.

The then Director FCS&CA had said, "Nobody will be spared. We will take legal action against those involved in overpricing and violating the norms." The reactivation came in response

to rising consumer complaints about erratic pricing and lack of market discipline. A public notice issued by the FCS&CA Department had urged all retail shop owners to clearly display prices and warned that failure to do so would be treated as an unfair trade practice, inviting legal action.

However, according to details obtained by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), on-ground activity has been sparse, with few market checks conducted beyond sporadic operations.

During Ramadan, Diwali and other festive periods, a few inspections were reported in select districts, but residents say these were neither sustained nor comprehensive across the Valley.

The government has repeatedly assured consumers of continued enforcement efforts. In a statement issued over three months ago, Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Satish Sharma reiterated the administration's "zero-tolerance policy



towards food adulteration" and assured that the enforcement campaign would continue.

Yet, residents and consumer activists argue that these assurances have not translated into consistent action.

A recent report also highlighted adulterated food and lax checks underscored public anxiety over weak enforcement, with local civil society groups decrying the lapse.

Repeated attempts by KNO to obtain an updated official comment on the current status of the Enforcement Wing, ongoing market checks, or steps being taken to

strengthen enforcement went unanswered. Officials from the FCS&CA Department remained unresponsive to multiple calls and messages.

Residents said the Enforcement Wing's limited activity and lack of strong punitive powers have allowed price manipulation and quality compromises to persist. "Earlier, we used to see officials visiting markets, checking weights and prices, but now nobody comes. Shopkeepers fix rates as they please, and common people have nowhere to complain," said Bilal Ahmad, a resident of Nowhatta, Srinagar.

Another resident, Mubashir, said they only hear about fines or inspections in the news, but see no difference on the ground. "Vegetables, chicken and mutton rates change from shop to shop without any control," he said.

With government statements stressing intent but little visible enforcement on the ground, consumers say they are left waiting for meaningful action—(KNO)

## Pattan gridlock deepens as bypass drags on, commuters bear the brunt

HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

**BARAMULLA, JAN 05:** The vital Pattan stretch on Srinagar-Baramulla highway has become synonymous with daily traffic chaos, with commuters, traders and residents enduring long tailbacks amid slow progress on the key 11-kilometre bypass project.

Commuters told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that they often get stuck for 30 to 45 minutes in the gridlock. They said patients, students and office-goers travelling on the vital Srinagar-Baramulla corridor are the most affected.

They said a town-to-town journey that should take minutes often stretches close to an hour. Authorities said the Rs 432 crore 11-km Pattan bypass project from Pattan to Tapper is under execution and will eventually decongest the township. They said earth-filling and formation work on major portions of the alignment are almost complete, while bottlenecks have already been cleared to keep the project on track.

Officials indicated that if the current pace is maintained, the bypass is expected to be completed around July, giving commuters an alternative corridor and easing pressure on the town centre. Earlier,

the project was scheduled to be completed in 2025. Amid mounting public anger, Baramulla MP Engineer Abdul Rashid has formally taken up the issue of delayed Pattan bypass works with Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari.

In his representation, the MP flagged "slow execution" and its impact on commuters, traders, patients and students, terming the bypass and associated works lifelines for North Kashmir. However, in a written reply, the minister has acknowledged the concerns and assured that the matter is being "looked into for action", raising hopes that the work speed will now be increased. It is noteworthy that the traffic snarls peak during morning office rush and evenings, stranding ambulances and office-goers for 30-45 minutes in what locals call a routine nightmare, even as police remain stretched, manually clearing gridlocks.

Social media overflows with videos of massive jams, calling Pattan town a "Jamnagar", amplifying calls for a dedicated traffic plan, more personnel and coordination with local bodies until the bypass opens. "Police try hard, but without road space and bypass, jams are inevitable—speed up the real solutions," a commuter said—(KNO)

## Fare hike confusion continues: Commuters slam govt 'silence', demand clear order

HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

**SRINAGAR, JAN 05:** Confusion over passenger fare revisions in Jammu and Kashmir continues, with commuters reporting higher fares even as the government maintains that "no official order" has been issued.

Last week, it was stated that an 18 per cent hike in passenger fares had been "approved" following deliberations by the Fare Revision Committee (FRC), chaired by Principal Secretary Finance Santosh D. Vaidya, with rates reportedly set to take effect from January 1, 2026.

However, no formal notification has been issued so far, leaving both transporters and passengers in a state of uncertainty.

While some commuters report paying more on Srinagar and south Kashmir routes, transporters from the Kashmir valley say they have not yet implemented the hike officially.

"Meetings with the Jammu wing



are scheduled for the next two days to decide the next steps, as we are approaching the government and Transport Minister," a senior transporter told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

The transporters said they had planned to implement the hike earlier, but due to holidays last week, meetings could not take place. They added that discussions are now expected in the coming days.

"I used to pay Rs 25 from Brein Nishat to Lal Chowk; now they're charging Rs 30. Only issuing statements won't help. If the government is serious, it should issue a clear order," said Firdous Nazir, a commuter previously quoted by KNO.

Today, during a follow-up conversation, Firdous maintained his stance and confirmed paying the increased fare.

Meanwhile, speaking to a TV channel, MLA Zaidal and National Conference (NC) Chief Spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq said, "We have a proposal, but no order has come. If someone is charging money without an official order, they are in the wrong. There are genuine demands from transporters, but the proposal with the Finance Department is still under consideration."

He added, "Any decision will balance the interests of the general public and transporters. As of today, no hike has taken place, nor has any order been issued. I hope RTOs of Kashmir and Jammu will clarify this further to remove confusion."

With contradictory statements and on-ground fare increases by some operators, commuters remain unsure of the actual rates, while transporters await official direction.

A senior transport official summed up the frustration: "Until a clear order is issued, both consumers and operators are left in the dark."—(KNO)

# IIM Jammu Inaugurates Fifteenth Batch of Nurturing Future Leadership Program under the aegis of the

Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India

## HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, JANUARY 5 :** The Indian Institute of Management Jammu inaugurated the Fifteenth batch of the Nurturing Future Leadership Program on 5th Jan 2026 at Vedanta, MDP Centre, Jagti. Organized under the aegis of the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme, Ministry of Education, Government of India, this initiative reflects IIM Jammu's commitment to academic excellence and leadership development. The training program consisted of 18 participants from different parts of the country and is fully funded by the Ministry of Education, Government of India.

Prof. Jabir Ali, Dean Faculty and Research, IIM Jammu, highlighted the diversity of participants from across domains and regions of India, noting that the programme goes beyond best practices to reflect on the institute's academic journey since 2016. He said the programme is uniquely designed by drawing insights from leading universities, making it a rare and enriching opportunity for participants. Emphasizing co-creation, dialogue, and discussion, he stated that the programme enables participants to collectively explore ways to strengthen their Institutes and scale its impact. He further underscored that education extends beyond classrooms,



Prof. Sanjeev Pathak, Chairperson, Executive Education and Consultancy (EE & C), IIM Jammu; Prof. Nitin Upadhyay, Dean Academics and Program Director and Dr. Ramswarup Bhaskar.

fostering knowledge creation, evolving thought processes, and meaningful takeaways that influence life well beyond the Institute.

Ministry of Education, Government of India, the programme promotes bi-directional learning, joint pedagogy, and rich peer interactions. He encouraged participants to engage fully, noting that such opportunities for learning and co-creation are rare and valuable.

Prof. Sanjeev Pathak, Chairperson, Executive Education and Consultancy, IIM Jammu, welcomed the participants and wished them a very happy New Year. He highlighted that the NFLP, now in its 15th batch, is among the longest-running programmes of its kind in India, driven by IIM Jammu's strong focus on quality and sustained referrals. Emphasizing that the programme is not conventional, he said it is designed to strengthen individual leadership and enhance thinking, leading to meaningful transformation. Conducted under the aegis of the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme,

Ministry of Education, Government of India, the programme promotes bi-directional learning, joint pedagogy, and rich peer interactions. He encouraged participants to engage fully, noting that such opportunities for learning and co-creation are rare and valuable.

Prof. Nitin Upadhyay, Dean Academics and Program Director, IIM Jammu, highlighted that the 15th batch of the programme is being conducted under the aegis of the Malaviya Mission Training Program. He emphasized that the changing dynamics of education and the implementation of NEP 2020 require faculty to assume larger leadership roles and engage with all facets of academic and administrative responsibilities. The programme

will cover key themes such as leadership definition, generational and team dynamics, institutional culture, and the evolving financial landscape of higher education. Marking IIM Jammu's 10th year of excellence, he noted that the programme, supported by state-of-the-art infrastructure, will offer participants a distinct competitive edge. He extended New Year greetings and expressed his enthusiasm for meaningful interactions during the programme.

Participants introduced themselves and shared their reflections on the program, discussing their experiences and expectations. The vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. Ramswarup Bhaskar, Program Director, IIM Jammu, followed by the national anthem.

## Vibodh Gupta Felicitates New BJP Cell Conveners in Rajouri

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**RAJOURI, JANUARY 5 :** Senior BJP leader and former MLC Vibodh Gupta today felicitated the newly appointed conveners of various cells of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Rajouri, at a function held at Dak Bungalow, Rajouri. Congratulating them Vibodh expressed confidence that they would work with dedication to strengthen the party's organisational structure and public outreach at the grassroots level.

Interacting with media persons after the event, Vibodh elaborated on the vision of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for the all-round development of Jammu and Kashmir, stating that the Union Territory has witnessed unprecedented progress in infrastructure, rural development and connectivity over the past few years. Referring to recent political developments, Vibodh cited remarks made by Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, where he acknowledged



and praised the Central Government's role in allocating generous funds for development in the Union Territory. He said that such statements reflect the fact that even leaders from other political parties have also recognised the commitment and sincerity of the Modi Government towards the development of J&K.

Vibodh said that significant financial support has been extended by the Centre for rebuilding and upgrading public infrastructure, particularly in areas affected by natural calamities. He mentioned that recently approved Special Central Assistance amounting to 1,430 reflects the Centre's responsiveness towards the challenges faced by the UT and its commitment to restoring essential services and public assets in a time-bound manner.

Vibodh highlighted major road projects under schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) and several National Highway expansions, including strategic tunnels and bridges, have significantly improved access to remote areas and boosted economic activity. He added that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Jammu and Kashmir has moved decisively on the path of peace, stability and development, and the BJP remains committed to ensuring that the benefits of growth reach every section of society.

## Dhruva Motorcycle Rally Flagged Off from Udhampur, Igniting a Powerful Tribute to Veterans and National Service

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**UDHAMPUR, JANUARY 5 :** Marking the 10th Veterans Day, solemn wreath-laying ceremony was conducted at Dhruva War Memorial, Udhampur, to honour the bravehearts who made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the nation. Wreaths were laid by Lt Gen Pratik Sharma, SYSM, PVSM, AVSM, SM, GOC-in-C Northern Command, Lt Gen PK Mishra, UYSM, AVSM, YSM, SM, GOC White Knight Corps, Sh Ranbir Singh Pathania, MLA Udhampur (East), Sh Pawan Kumar Gupta, MLA Udhampur (West), Honorary Captain Bana Singh (Retd), PVC and Smt Chinta Devi (W/O Late Nb Sub Chinni Lal, AC, VrC, SM). To commemorate the selfless service and sacrifices, Army Commander Northern Command felicitated Honorary Captain Bana Singh (Retd) and Smt Chinta Devi.

The ceremony stood as a poignant reminder of the Nation's enduring gratitude and respect for its soldiers.

Lighting of the Torch symbolising eternal glory of the fallen soldiers was undertaken during the ceremony. Dhruva Motorcycle Rally was ceremonially flagged off from the historic Dhruva War Memorial, Udhampur by Honorary Captain Bana Singh (Retd), PVC, and Smt Chinta Devi, wife of Late Nb Sub Chinni Lal, AC, VrC, SM. As an expression of solidarity and tribute to the veterans, Army Commander Northern Command, GOC White Knight Corps and senior army officers rode along with the bikers from Udhampur to Nagrota, covering the first phase of the rally.

Spanning approximately 740 kilometres, the Dhruva Motorcycle Rally is a deliberate outreach initiative designed to celebrate



the unmatched contribution and supreme sacrifices of India's bravehearts, while strengthening the Indian Army's commitment to Veteran's outreach and military-

civil fusion. The rally will traverse the scenic landscape of Pirpanjal region in White Knight Corps Zone, before culminating at the Mega Ex-Servicemen Rally on 13 January

2026 at Rajouri.

Along its route, the motorcycle rally will conduct wreath-laying ceremonies at various war memorials. It is accompanied by 'Aarogya Rakshak' medical teams which will establish medical outreach camps to provide health screening, preventive care and essential medicines to Ex-Servicemen. Blood pressure monitoring machines will be distributed to senior veterans, reinforcing the Army's sustained focus on medical care.

The Dhruva Motorcycle Rally stands as a testimony of the Indian Army's ethos of 'Service Beyond Uniform', honouring the past, engaging the present, and reaffirming an unbreakable bond with the veteran community. The initiative not only commemorates sacrifice but also celebrates the indomitable spirit, resilience, and lifelong service of the soldiers.

## Army Conducted Lecture on Winter Diseases and Prevention at Hasplot, Rajouri

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**RAJOURI, JANUARY 5 :** The Indian Army organized an informative lecture on Winter Diseases and Prevention at Hasplot, Rajouri District.

The lecture aimed at educating local children and residents about the heightened risks of respiratory illnesses such as pneumonia, bronchitis, cold, flu and asthma during the winter season.

The session emphasized the importance of preventive measures, including vaccination against influenza and pneumococcal diseases, as well as maintaining a healthy lifestyle with a balanced diet and regular physical activity to reduce the likelihood of contracting winter diseases.

The event was met with great appreciation from the local community, who found the information both practical and beneficial in safeguarding their health



during the colder months. This initiative was part of the Indian Army's ongoing efforts to contribute to the health and well-being of the region's

population, furthering their commitment to capability development, peace, harmony and growth.

## DHJ takes stock of Horticulture activities in Poonch district

### HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**POONCH, JANUARY 05:** Director Horticulture Jammu (DHJ), Gul Syed conducted an extensive two-day tour programme of Poonch District to take stock of departmental activities in the region.

During the visit, the Director attended an awareness camp organized at Tehsil Mendhar under the MIDH Scheme 2025-26. About 200 individuals participated reflecting keen interest of local farmers in horticultural development initiatives in the district.



The programme was conducted in the presence of Chief Horticulture Officer Uttam Lal; District Horticulture Officer Ajay Gupta; DL-SMS, Abdul Hamid Kohli; Assistant Director (Jammu), Sunil Gupta; DL-SMS, Sayed Mudsir Shah; MCC Niaz Ahmed along with other officers and officials.

The Director interacted with farmers, reviewed the implementation of ongoing schemes and emphasized the adoption of modern horticultural practices to enhance productivity and farmers' income.

Later, the Director inspected Government Fruit Plants Nursery Mendhar. He also inspected a high-density apple orchard at Gursai. He assessed the progress of high-density plantations and advised field staff and farmers to follow best management practices to ensure better yields.

The tour reinforced the department's commitment towards strengthening horticulture development and promoting farmer-centric initiatives in Poonch District.

## Prabhari Officer reviews Developmental Milestones achieved in the Aspirational Block Khawas

Lauds focused approach of district administration Rajouri

### HT NEWS DESK / DIPR

**RAJOURI, JANUARY 05:** Prabhari Officer for the Aspirational Block Khawas, (Director MoRTH, Government of India) Harleen Kaur today chaired a comprehensive review meeting here at Dak Bungalow Rajouri to assess the progress achieved in the saturation of developmental indicators in the Aspirational Block Khawas.

District Development Commissioner, Abhishek Sharma welcomed the Prabhari Officer and presented a detailed Power Point

presentation highlighting sector-wise progress, achievements, challenges and gap analysis of the Aspirational Block.

The meeting included a detailed review of the saturation of indicators pertaining to health, nutrition, education, agriculture and allied sectors, basic infrastructure and overall socio-economic development in the Block.

The Prabhari Officer emphasized the need for effective quarantine of TB patients, quality engagement with anganwadi workers and

focused motivation of students through exposure visits to reduce dropout rates. Stress was also laid on introducing audio-visual smart classes, screening of motivational educational films in schools and branding of local products to enhance livelihoods.

She also underscored the importance of assessing and improving per capita income as a critical indicator of holistic development. The meeting also reviewed the progress of ongoing works being executed by the BRO on the Rajouri-Poonch National

Highway.

Several short videos showcasing on-ground impact of the government schemes in Block Khawas were screened during the meeting, reflecting tangible improvements in service delivery and beneficiary outreach.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Prabhari Officer inspected stalls set up by different departments which showcased schemes, services and benefits being extended to the people of Block Khawas.

She appreciated the efforts of

the district administration Rajouri, particularly in conducting effective gap analysis and adopting a focused, outcome-oriented approach for the development of the Aspirational Block.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Rajouri Malikzada; ADC Kotranka Dilmir, Sheraz ul Haq; POICDS, Harpal Singh; ACD, Auqil Naveed; Executive Engineer PDD, Abdul Rasheed; Executive Engineer PHE Sudesh Kumar; CEO Mohammadd Hafeez; CAO, BDO, CDPO and other district and sectoral officers.

HT EDITORIAL

Sports progresses by leaps and bounds in J&K

The Jammu & Kashmir dragon boat team has performed exceptionally well at the 12th National Dragon Boat Championship and brought laurels to the union territory. The Jammu & Kashmir team finished as the runners-up. A contingent of 30 athletes, including 22 girls and eight boys, brought laurels to the region by winning two gold medals, 10 silver medals and 18 bronze medals. The union territory has received accolades for its tremendous show in the tourney.

Over the years Jammu & Kashmir has earned distinction in different sports and games. The sportspersons of the union territory have achieved name and fame in the different disciplines. The present popular government headed by chief minister Omar Abdullah and the administration headed by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha have given a great impetus to sports and games. The sports infrastructure has been developed across the length and breadth of the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

Since all the necessary facilities have been provided to the sportspersons, they too have not disappointed and have proved their mettle in the games and sports they play. In the recent past cricketer Auqib Nabi created a record of sorts after he was fetched by Delhi Capitals franchise for IPL 2026 for a record amount of 8.50 crores. Nobody had expected that Auqib would receive such a huge amount for his maiden stint at the IPL. His back-to-back tremendous performance in the Ranji Trophy won him laurels and as such he was bought by Delhi Capitals for this year's IPL championship.

One can hope that Auqib would continue his stellar performance in the IPL as well and help his franchise team to perform well in the premier T-20 league of the cricketing world. In the field of cricket Jammu & Kashmir achieved yet another distinction as a local lad has been entrusted to lead the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). Jammu lad Mithun Manhas also created a record of sorts as he became the first cricketer from Jammu & Kashmir to head the BCCI.

It is imperative that the good work done in the field of sports is carried out and there should not be any going back in this regard. More and more incentives need to be given to the sportspersons so that they excel in their respective disciplines. Once encouragement is given to the sportspersons they would be enthused to deliver better in the days to come.

New Year, New Hopes for Education in J&K



JAVAID BHAT

As the New Year dawns, renewed optimism surrounds the education sector in Jammu and Kashmir. Educators, parents, and students alike look toward 2026 with the hope that long-pending reforms will finally translate into visible change on the ground. With the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as a guiding framework, expectations are high for a more inclusive, modern, and learner-centric education system in the Union Territory.

One of the foremost demands across districts is the provision of adequate staff in schools. Many institutions, particularly in rural and far-flung areas, continue to function with acute shortages of teachers and lecturers, adversely affecting academic outcomes. Stakeholders stress that fresh appointments of teachers and lecturers must be prioritized to strengthen classroom teaching and reduce the burden on existing staff.

Another pressing issue is the transfer of employees with long stays at a single station. Rational transfer policies are being sought to ensure equitable distribution of human resources and to infuse fresh energy into institutions that have remained stagnant for years.

In tune with changing times, there is also a strong



call for introducing new subjects, including vocational and professional courses, at the school level. Such initiatives are expected to equip students with practical skills, improve employability, and align education with local and global market needs. Vocational education, in particular, is seen as a bridge between schooling and livelihood opportunities.

Early childhood education has emerged as another key focus area. Educationists advocate for separate, age-appropriate textbooks for KG classes, emphasizing joyful learning, activity-based pedagogy, and a strong foundational base, as envisaged

under NEP 2020.

The successful implementation of NEP 2020 remains central to all these aspirations. From curriculum reforms and competency-based learning to teacher empowerment and holistic development of learners, the policy promises a transformative shift, provided it is implemented in letter and spirit.

As the year unfolds, all eyes are on the education administration to convert these hopes into action. The New Year has brought with it a collective resolve: that education in Jammu and Kashmir should not merely function, but flourish, ensuring quality, equity, and opportunity for every child.

When Life Breaks Us, Faith Holds Us Together



ABID HUSSAIN RATHER

Most of us have, at some point, observed that life does not always move the way we expect. Many people grow up believing that if they work hard and remain honest, everything will go smoothly. But reality often tells a different story. Sudden loss, failure, illness, betrayal and disappointment can shake even the strongest hearts. In such moments, people search for comfort, meaning and hope. For many, faith becomes that quiet strength which keeps them standing when everything else feels broken.

Every human heart carries dreams—some small, some big and some life changing. When these dreams remain unfulfilled, they leave behind silence and questions. Why did this happen to me? Why did my prayers seem unanswered? Everyone among us carries a soul struggling with such questions. But we should always refuse to give up hope. We should remind ourselves that faith is not the absence of pain; rather, it is the courage to move forward despite pain.

Islam teaches that life is a test. Hardship is not a sign of Allah's anger, but often a means of growth and purification. The Quran reminds believers: "Indeed, Allah is with the patient (Al Qur'an 2:153)." These words are not meant only for scholars or saints, but for ordinary people facing ordinary struggles—farmers, students, workers, parents and the elderly alike. Patience or sabr is often misunderstood. Many think patience means silence or helplessness. In reality, patience is an active state of the heart. It means trusting Allah while continuing to do what is right. It means holding on to prayer even when tears fall. It means saying In sha Allah not as empty words, but as a declaration of hope.



History offers powerful examples of this kind of patience. Our Prophet (SAW) faced rejection, insults, and physical harm. People threw stones at him until his feet bled. Yet he did not curse his enemies. Instead, he prayed for their guidance. His strength came from complete trust in Allah's wisdom. Similarly, Bilal ibn Rabah (RA), a former slave, endured severe torture for his belief in one God. Chained under the burning sun, he continued to repeat "Ahad, Ahad"—Allah is One. His body was imprisoned, but his soul was free. His story reminds us that faith can lift a person higher than fear or pain ever could. The Quran also tells us about Hazrat Maryam (AS), the beloved mother of Hazrat Isa (AS) who endured loneliness, accusations, and deep emotional pain. Alone and afraid, she turned to Allah, and her patience was rewarded with honour. Hazrat Yusuf (AS) was betrayed by his own brothers and spent years in prison for a

crime he did not commit. Yet his patience led him from darkness to dignity.

These stories are not distant history. They are lessons for today's world, where people struggle with job insecurity, mental stress, broken relationships, and loss of purpose. The message is clear: hardship does not mean the end. It may be the beginning of something greater. Many people today feel surrounded by silence—unheard, unseen, and misunderstood. Social media shows perfect lives, while real lives remain full of cracks. In such a world, faith teaches balance. It teaches acceptance without giving up effort. It teaches hope without denial of pain.

Saying In Sha Allah does not mean waiting without action. It means doing your best and leaving the result to Allah. It brings peace because it removes the heavy burden of control from human shoulders. When a person accepts that Allah knows best,

the heart becomes lighter. Not every dream comes true, and not every prayer is answered in the way we expect. But faith assures us that nothing is wasted. Even delayed hopes shape character. Even unanswered prayers protect us from harm we can't see. In the end, patience becomes a legacy—a quiet strength passed from heart to heart. Life may break many things, but faith repairs what despair destroys. When darkness grows, believers remember that stars shine brightest at night. For the common person, this message is simple yet powerful: keep walking, keep praying, and keep trusting. The road may be rough, but Allah's light never fades. And sometimes, just whispering In Sha Allah is enough to begin again.

The author teaches Geography at GDC Anantnag and can be reached at: rather1294@gmail.com

# Farooq Faizan A Sterling Professor



QYSAR UL ISLAM SHAH

His legacy of teaching methodology was solely based on thought-provoking and life changing at college level. Nestled in picturesque, valley of Lolab the ambiance of Lalpora—long admired for being the place of intellect, religion, love, brotherhood, civilization, culture, shrines and saints: Sonannar, often referred as "Chohta London" the village is distinguished itself to hold the legacy of having produced legendary teachers, scholars, doctors, engineers, saints, administrative officers who continue to be remembered and respected across the Lolab valley. Their contributions not only local but at higher level are cherished forming an invaluable part at local level. The village is blessed with multi faceted intellectuals since decades. The soil is such a fertile that produced distinguished preachers whose familiarity is widely recognised. Among them is very revered professor Farooq Ahmad Shah aka (Faizan sab) who was born on December 1966 and embarking his superannuation on Dec.2025 as Associate Professor in the discipline of Education. "Faizan" became his household name—that stands as a

symbol of knowledge, dedication, faith, humility and service. His life and career is a rare blend of scholarship, spirituality, and sincerity. For three and half decades you have walked the razor-bridge between policy and posterity, bearing the promethean fire of knowledge in palms unscarred by self interest. Under your ages the black board became a black galaxy each chalk dust constellation a nebula of awakened minds. You minted hope from the base ore of adversity striking upon the anvil of integrity coinage that will circulate along after the mint itself has fallen silent. As a student his teaching at secondary level upto college level was an amalgam of compassion, love, humour, thought-provoking, problem solving powered by intellectual fire and impregnable arguments delivered with inefable clarity. As I recall his lectures at secondary and college level his teaching methodology was loved by the students yet he transformed those modest classrooms into sanctuaries of imagination. Students under him didn't remain book-worms they became thinkers with gumption and grace. His altruism is widely recognised him as great scholar, possessing deep knowledge of education, psychology, philosophy and religion. He is an exceptional motivational speaker capable of delivering exemplary lectures on wide range of topics with extraordinary clarity, simplicity and depth. If truth be told he is believed to have taught nearly everyone in Sonnar and adjacent areas. While his teaching is filled with motivational



dimensions and his students are impatiently waiting for his comprehensive lecture at college and B.ed level. Above all his teaching is marked by clear communication, logical explanation, and an engaging approach that leaving a last impact on learners. Those who have attended his lectures after recall them as intellectually enriching and emotionally touching. Through out his long and dedicated career Prof Farooq Faizan remained highly active, disciplined and committed. He played pivotal role in every institution he served, always contributing positively to aca-

ademic growth and institutional development. The famous sayings of John Keats goes, Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter...Faizan sab's inspiring story is indeed sweeter as he presented various academic articles and intellectual contribution at Higher Education and enriching academic and educational landscape. Going into his intellectual contribution he compiled and authored a significant number of books in the field of Higher Education, statistics, English and religion. His writings are admired for their clarity, creativity, simplicity and depth combined with effective presentation and practical insight. While his expertise in nurturing and mentoring at B.ed classes is unquestionable. I am sure his greatest gift was showing us not just what to learn, but how to become lifelong learners ourselves. Through his guidance countless students have discovered talents and abilities, they didn't know they possessed, transforming their self-perception and future aspirations. A teacher like him really makes the difference. His humbleness is to be cherished. A beacon of love, wisdom and exalted view. He had a way of making every student feel seen and heard, regardless of their background or academic performance. As a taught his classroom was a safe space where students felt comfortable expressing their opinions and ask questions without fear of judgement or ridicule. He believed that every student had the

potential to succeed he worked tirelessly to help them achieve their goals. His unwavering passion for teaching and his dedication to social justice made him a role model for many of us. He was not just a teacher but a mentor a friend and guide who had a profound impact on his students lives. I am grateful for the time when I used to visit his home for understanding the statistics in education I will also cherish the memories and hope his legacy will continue to inspire future generation of students and his impact will be felt for years to come. Nevertheless, I wish him all the best in his future endeavours. He served in education department for more than two decades as Professor in multiple colleges. His humility and helping nature can never be overlooked. His thought-provoking lectures, moral lessons remains intact into long lasting memories of everyone who met him. The influence of a good teacher can never be erased. His guidance support and encouragement will stay with me forever. Your legacy lives on not just in academic achievements of your students but in the values we carry forward and the lives we touch because of your influence. The debt of gratitude we owe can never be fully repaid. Thank you for being such an exceptional professor of Education at Women's Degree College Kupwara where your service as an academician finally comes to end.

The author is a teacher and Researcher hails from Sonnar Lolab

## BOOK REVIEW

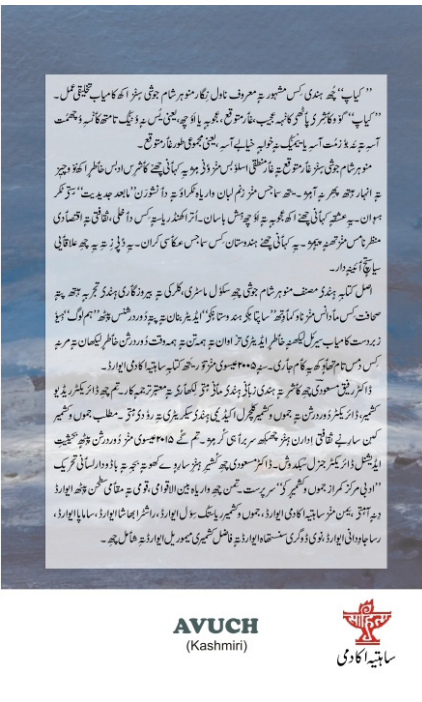
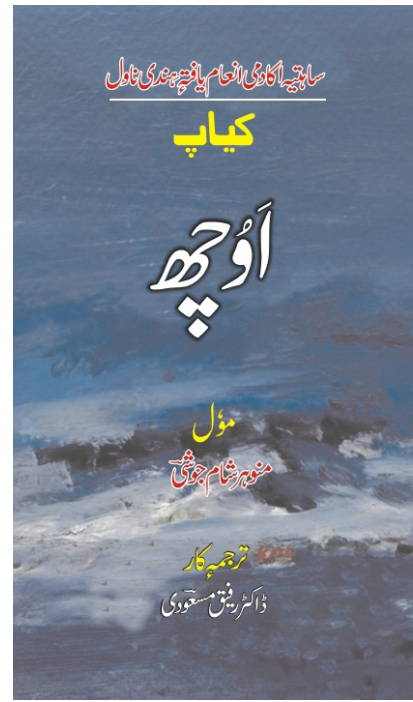
# Avuch - Dr. Rafiq Masoodi's Kashmiri Translation of Manohar Shyam Joshi's Kyap



RAYEES AHMAD KUMAR

Manohar Shyam Joshi, a noted Hindi writer from Almora region of UP now Utrakhnad was the son of a renowned educationist and musician. He died in 2006, upon his death Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh called him as "one of the most influential writers and commentators in Hindi in recent times". Hum Log, Buniyaad and Kakaji Kahin are some of his masterpiece script writings for television. His best selling novels include Kasap and Kyap. For Kyap he was awarded the prestigious Sahatya Academy Award in 2005. Dr Rafiq Masoodi, a prominent literary figure of valley and chief patron of Adbi Markaz Kamraz - one of the oldest and vibrant literary organizations of Jammu Kashmir has translated this masterpiece Kyap / Avuch into native Kashmiri language. The Kashmiri translation of Kyap - Avuch, rendered by Dr Rafiq Masoodi has added a valuable regional dimension to this important work. This translation is an important contribution to Kashmiri literature, as it makes a complex and thought provoking text accessible to Kashmiri readers in their mother tongue. Kyap is not an ordinary story, rather it is an unbearable disturbance. While going through this meticulously crafted work, the reader is disorganized not through an overt drama or rhetorical excess, but through a silent and playful narration that gradually results in unveiling an unsettling tragedy. A reader finds this work as an artfully gentle literary work which reveals its depth slowly, almost in a clandestine manner. On one

hand, this work has been presented lightly as a casual tale narrated with ease, humor and irony, yet it's simplicity has been so nicely portrayed that it appears to be so unsettling. The prose lines of this work flow effortlessly, often provoking a smile and amusement. The story unfolds in a playful and disarming conversational tune. Author has weaved it naturally, evoking familiarity and comfort. The language of the work is so conversational that it seems almost gossiping which lulls the reader and gives him a long lasting comfort. It seems the author has made a deliberate attempt to make it so interesting by composing it stylistically. The story is a powerful exploration of life in a society caught between different worlds. While going through the pages of the book, a reader comes to know that, cultural and emotional landscape has been shaped by half realized modernity and an uncritical post modern mindset. Traditional customs, values and rituals have no place while modern ideals have not been fully accommodated. As a result of this, there is no room for morality and human emotions but sincerity, selflessness and pure intentions are viewed as suspicion and emotional vulnerability is treated as weakness. The story of Kyap is a love story, not a romantic one in the conventional sense or in idealized form but the love in this story is fragile, vulnerable and unprotected constantly threatened by societal expectations and frequently colliding head-on with social hypocrisy, intellectual vanity and moral confusion. The characters of this story do not suffer because they lack feeling while as they suffer because feelings have no legitimate space in a society obsessed with appearances, progress and borrowed ideas. In other words we can say that it isn't destroyed by overt cruelty or dramatic betrayal but by neglect, hesitation and the inability of society to grant it legitimacy. In this world dominated by mere appearances, progress and bor-



rowed intellectual framework, love becomes expendable, something to be set aside or we can say neglected rather than to be defended. In these situations, love becomes an inconvenience, a liability rather than a strength. The pseudo-intellectualism or intellectual pretension has been strongly criticized in Kyap which is its striking feature. By the devastating critique of intellectuals, the narrative has been so built that it exposes how intellectual posturing - detached, ironic and emotionally evasive can become morally irresponsible. Characters engage in ideas, debates and postures of sophistication, yet fail to acknowledge the human consequences of their choices. The narrative suggests that when intellect separates itself from empathy and responsibility, it ceases to be enlightening and instead becomes complicit in emotional harm. Tragedy in Kyap doesn't appear loudly, instead it arrives noise-

lessly, almost in invisible form, mirroring real life where dreams often fade without dramatic collapse. This subtlety of the book is its greatest strengths. The reader is not confronted with overt sorrow but with a creeping realization that something precious has been lost. The emotional climax of the book is not marked by a dramatic event but by a sudden inner response in the reader. A staunch and enthusiastic reader of this book makes this announcement that the most powerful achievement of Kyap is its ending, not in terms of plot but in emotional effect. The reader who has been smiling throughout, suddenly halts, startled by an unexpected heaviness - an unanticipated emotional blow. The moment of realization, encapsulated in the noiseless question, "Why tears are rolling down my face, why have my eyelids grown moist? Truly it reveals the real impact of story. This moment is the

true climax of the book. It marks the point where irony collapses and truth is revealed. The reader of Kyap realizes that what earlier seemed casual was in fact deeply personal, what previously appeared humorous was quietly tragic. A reader realizes that in contemporary times Kyap remains deeply relevant, when societies continue to negotiate identity, progress and tradition without fully understanding any of them. In its broader significance, Kyap speaks powerfully to contemporary readers living in times of transition. It captures the emotional displacement of individuals navigating societies that are intellectually ambitious but emotionally undernourished. This book doesn't offer solutions, instead presents an honest portrayal of what happens when societies become clever without becoming wise and educated without becoming humane. Ultimately Kyap is a work of quiet intensity, it is small work with a long echo. Its power doesn't lie in dramatic story telling but demands introspection. It is a book that doesn't demand attention through a loud noise or spectacle but through subtlety and truth. At last It gives an inspiring message to the reader that literature need not to shout a deep wound, instead sometimes a whisper is enough. Dr Rafiq Masoodi's rendering preserves the spirit, cultural nuances and stylistic texture of the original while giving it a natural Kashmiri expression. This translation, a 159 page work, boasting an alluring cover, published by Sahatya Academy New Delhi thus serves as a meaningful bridge between languages and literary traditions, enriching the contemporary Kashmiri landscape. I hope this translation will be well received by the readers with accolades and commendation like his earlier works Bey Pie Talash and Panun Doud Panin Dag. It is a massive addition to Kashmiri language and literature.

Writer is a columnist based in Qazigund Kashmir

# Health Benefits of Apple



**SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI**

It is well said that "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." This popular proverb highlights the importance of apples in maintaining good health. Health is more important than anything else in our life. It decides our lifestyle, efficiency, happiness, and overall well-being. A healthy person can work better, think clearly, and enjoy life fully. In today's fast-paced world, health has become one of the most serious concerns across the globe.

The status of our health mainly depends on our lifestyle. Our daily habits such as food intake, physical activity, sleep pattern, and mental peace play a vital role in determining our health condition. Some people are educated, smart, and well-known, and they are very conscious about their health. They carefully choose what they eat and follow a disciplined routine to remain fit. In simple words, health can be improved by consuming healthy and nutritious food items. These include fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and adequate water intake.

Fresh fruits and vegetables play a very important role in maintaining good health and keeping us fit and active throughout the day. Nature has blessed us with numerous fruits, and humans have been enjoying them for centuries. Each fruit has its own nutritional value and health benefits. However, one important thing that everyone must understand is that we should have proper knowledge about edible food items before consuming them. We should eat food according to our body requirements, age, and the amount of physical activity we perform daily.

Balanced eating is essential for a healthy life. Overeating or consuming unhealthy food can lead to many health problems. Therefore, everyone should be aware of their health status and should regularly monitor it through medical checkups, fitness routines, and healthy dietary practices.

In this article, I am going to explore the health benefits of apples, one of the most commonly consumed and nutritious fruits in the world. Apples are delicious, affordable, and easily available. They are liked by people of all age groups. Apples are packed with vitamin C and contain a good amount of essential vitamins and minerals. They are rich in antioxidants, which help prevent many deadly diseases, including cancer. Apples are also high in fiber, which is beneficial for digestion and improves bowel movements.

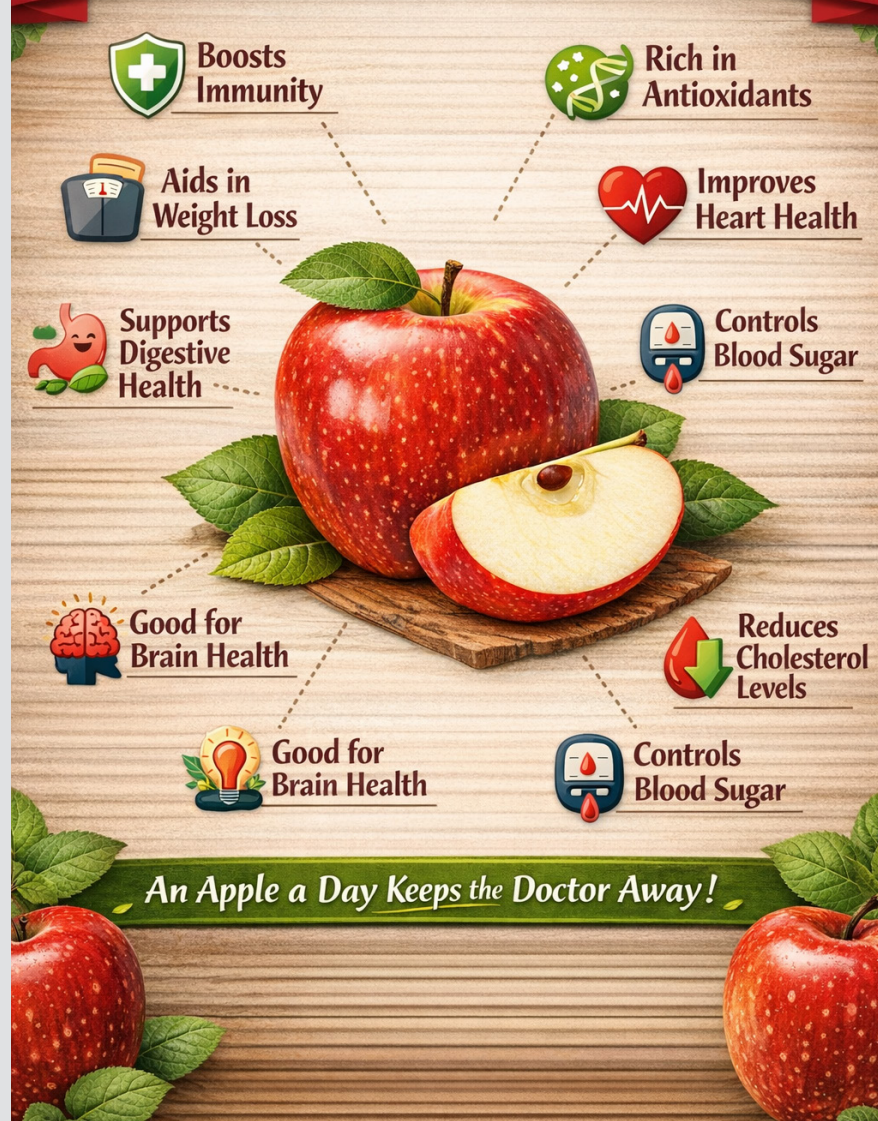
## Let us explore some amazing health benefits of apples in detail. Health Benefits of Apple

**Rich Source of Nutrients**  
Apples contain several essential nutrients such as vitamin C, potassium, and small amounts of vitamin A, vitamin E, and B-complex vitamins. Vitamin C helps in boosting immunity and protects the body from infections. Potassium helps in maintaining proper heart function and blood pressure levels.

**Improves Digestion**  
Apples are rich in dietary fiber, especially soluble fiber known as pectin. Fiber helps in improving digestion and prevents constipation. Regular consumption of apples promotes healthy bowel movements and keeps the digestive system active. Eating two to three apples daily can help maintain a clean and healthy gut.

**Helps in Weight Loss**  
Eating apples may help in healthy weight loss. Apples are low in calories and high in fiber, which makes you feel full for a longer time. Fiber slows down digestion and prevents sudden spikes in blood sugar levels. This helps reduce hunger and prevents overeating. Apples are an excellent snack option for people trying to lose weight naturally.

**Diabetes-Friendly Fruit**  
Apples are considered a diabetes-friendly fruit when consumed in moderation. The soluble fiber in apples helps slow the absorption of sugar into the bloodstream. This helps in maintaining stable blood sugar levels. A healthy diet that includes fiber-rich foods like apples may also reduce the risk of developing



type 2 diabetes.

**Boosts Immunity**  
Apples help in strengthening the immune system. The antioxidants present in apples protect the body from harmful free radicals. A strong immune system helps the body fight infections and diseases more effectively. Regular consumption of apples keeps the body energized and disease-resistant.

**Reduces the Risk of Cancer**  
Due to the presence of antioxidants and phytochemicals, apples may play a vital role in cancer prevention. Studies suggest that people who regularly consume apples have a lower risk of devel-

oping certain types of cancer, including lung, breast, and colon cancer. These compounds help in neutralizing harmful substances in the body.

**Improves Heart Health**  
Apples are very beneficial for heart health. The fiber and antioxidants present in apples help reduce bad cholesterol levels (LDL) in the blood. This lowers the risk of heart diseases, strokes, and high blood pressure. Regular apple consumption supports a healthy heart.

**Keeps the Body Hydrated**  
Apples contain a high percentage of water, which helps keep the body hydrated. Proper hydration is essential for

maintaining body temperature, digestion, and overall health. Apples are especially beneficial during summers to keep the body refreshed.

**Improves Brain Health**  
Some studies suggest that apples may help protect brain cells from damage. The antioxidants in apples may reduce the risk of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease. Apples help improve memory and mental clarity.

**Improves Oral Health**  
Chewing apples stimulates saliva production, which helps reduce bacteria in the mouth. This improves oral hygiene and reduces the risk of cavities and gum diseases.

**Apple Production in Kashmir**  
The Kashmir Valley is well known for its high-quality apple production. Apples are one of the main horticultural products of the region and contribute significantly to the economy. Kashmiri apples are famous across India and abroad for their taste, color, and quality. Apple growers in Kashmir work tirelessly throughout the year to maintain the quality of their produce. The apples are exported to various states of the country and even to international markets.

We should consume seasonal fruits and vegetables to get maximum health benefits. Seasonal produce is fresh, nutritious, and affordable. We must also encourage our family members, friends, and relatives to include fresh fruits and vegetables in their daily diet to stay healthy and disease-free.

**Conclusion**  
Apples are truly a gift of nature. They are simple, tasty, and full of health benefits. Regular consumption of apples can improve digestion, boost immunity, support heart health, help in weight management, and reduce the risk of many chronic diseases. Including apples in our daily diet is a small habit that can bring big changes to our overall health. A healthy lifestyle combined with a balanced diet is the key to a long and disease-free life. Therefore, let us adopt healthy eating habits and make fruits like apples an essential part of our daily routine.

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# The Necessity Of Basic Medical Education In Primary Schools

(A Global Health Priority)



**DR. SURINDERPAL SINGH**

In an era marked by rapid scientific advancement, technological growth and an ever-expanding burden of disease, the role of education has extended far beyond literacy and numeracy. Today, education is increasingly recognized as a powerful determinant of health. Within this context, the integration of basic medical education into primary school curricula emerges not merely as an academic enhancement but as a public health necessity. Basic medical education, encompassing foundational knowledge of human health, hygiene, disease prevention and first aid, equips young learners with essential life skills that enable them to navigate health-related challenges safely, responsibly and confidently. Introducing these concepts early lays the groundwork for healthier individuals and, ultimately, healthier societies.

The primary school years represent a critical window in human development. During this period, children exhibit heightened neuroplasticity, allowing them to absorb, process and retain information with remarkable efficiency. Developmental psychology and educational research consistently demon-

strate that habits, attitudes and cognitive frameworks formed during early childhood tend to persist into adulthood. Embedding basic medical education during this formative stage aligns seamlessly with these principles. When children learn about nutrition, personal hygiene, sanitation and disease transmission early in life, they are more likely to internalize health-conscious behaviors as norms rather than exceptions. Simple lessons on handwashing, balanced diets and cleanliness can translate into lifelong practices that significantly reduce disease risk.

From a scientific standpoint, health literacy is closely linked to improved health outcomes across the lifespan. Numerous global studies have shown that individuals with higher levels of health literacy are more likely to engage in preventive health behaviors, seek timely medical care and adhere to treatment recommendations. By introducing medical concepts at the primary school level, educators can help build strong cognitive frameworks that demystify the human body, normalize discussions about health and illness, and empower children with practical, actionable knowledge. This early familiarity reduces fear, stigma and misinformation surrounding health issues later in life.

Preventive health education is widely regarded by health educationists as one of the most effective strategies for controlling both communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Basic medical education in schools fosters understanding of germ theory, vaccination, personal hygiene and nutritional balance, all of which are fundamental to preventing common childhood illnesses such as diarrheal diseases, respiratory infections and parasitic infestations. In regions where access to healthcare facilities is limited or delayed, this knowledge can serve as a first line of defense against disease. Children who understand why clean water matters or how infections spread are better equipped to protect themselves and influence healthier practices within their families.

Another compelling justification for integrating basic medical education into primary schooling lies in its potential to bridge health knowledge gaps in underserved and marginalized populations. Health disparities are often deeply rooted in socioeconomic and educational inequalities. Communities facing poverty, conflict or geographic isolation frequently experience lower levels of health literacy, which in turn leads to delayed healthcare-seeking behavior, poor adherence to medical advice and heightened vulnerability to misinformation. Schools offer a universal and equitable platform for disseminating essential health knowledge. By embedding basic medical education within the formal curriculum, societies can ensure that all children, regardless of background, receive foundational health information that may

otherwise be inaccessible to them.

The global implications of widespread health awareness are profound. In an interconnected world grappling with pandemics, aging populations, climate-related health threats and persistent maternal and child health challenges, the ripple effects of early health education extend far beyond individual well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic starkly illustrated the importance of health literacy. Populations with a stronger understanding of basic health principles were better able to comprehend public health advisories, adopt infection control measures and adapt to evolving scientific guidance. Early exposure to medical education fosters a population that is more receptive to scientific information and more resilient in the face of health emergencies.

Beyond pandemic preparedness, basic medical education plays a crucial role in addressing the growing burden of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disorders and obesity. These conditions are increasingly driven by lifestyle factors that take root in childhood. Knowledge about balanced nutrition, physical activity and the risks associated with tobacco and alcohol use, when introduced early, can shape healthier lifestyle choices that persist into adulthood. In this way, primary school health education becomes a long-term investment in disease prevention and sustainable

healthcare systems.

The benefits of basic medical education are multifaceted. Children equipped with foundational medical knowledge are better prepared to interpret health information and distinguish credible sources from misinformation, a skill of increasing importance in the digital age. This early health literacy fosters confidence and autonomy in personal and family health decisions. Moreover, widespread understanding of hygiene practices such as hand-

washing, safe food handling and clean water use can significantly reduce the transmission of infectious diseases. Evidence from school-based hygiene programs around the world has demonstrated measurable reductions in illness-related absenteeism and improvements in overall community health.

Basic medical education can also indirectly support maternal and child health. In many societies, older children often play caregiving roles within families. When these children under-

stand the basics of maternal health, infant nutrition and early childhood care, their knowledge can positively influence household practices. Awareness of breastfeeding benefits, immunization schedules and early warning signs of illness can enhance care for younger siblings and contribute to better health outcomes across generations.

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# GMC Jammu issues comprehensive advisory on cold-weather risks

## Urges public to take preventive measures

HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

**JAMMU, JAN 05:** In view of the intensifying winter conditions across Jammu and Kashmir, Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu has issued a detailed public advisory warning about the serious health and safety risks associated with extreme cold and outlining preparedness and preventive measures for individuals, families and communities.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the advisory highlights that prolonged exposure to low temperatures can lead to life-threatening conditions such as hypothermia, frostbite, and carbon monoxide poisoning. It added that cold-related disruptions like power outages, frozen water pipes, and dead vehicle batteries can further endanger lives.

**Major Health Risks Identified**  
According to GMC Jammu, hypothermia—a condition in which the body temperature drops below 95°F (35°C)—is among the most dangerous consequences of extreme cold and can prove fatal if not addressed promptly. The advisory notes that frostbite, which causes damage to body tissues due to freezing, can occur rapidly, especially in exposed body parts like fingers, toes, ears and the nose.

“Cold weather causes the body to lose heat faster than it can produce it, leading to serious medical emergencies if early signs are ignored,” the advisory states.

Another significant concern flagged by health authorities is carbon monoxide poisoning, which can occur when people improperly use secondary heating sources such as coal burners, gas heaters, or generators in poorly ventilated spaces during power outages.

**Vulnerable Groups at Higher Risk**  
Certain groups are particularly vulnerable during extreme cold. These include elderly persons, especially those lacking adequate heating, food or warm clothing, people staying outdoors for long durations, such as homeless individuals, hikers or workers, individuals consuming excessive alcohol or illicit drugs and infants sleeping in inadequately heated rooms.

The advisory also cites statistics indicating that nearly 50% of cold-related injuries occur among people above 60 years of age, over 75% involve males, and around 20% take place inside homes.

Warning Signs of Hypothermia  
Health Experts at GMC Jammu urged people to seek immediate medical attention if symptoms of

hypothermia appear. These include uncontrollable shivering, slurred speech, confusion or disorientation, memory loss, drowsiness and extreme fatigue.

“Preventing hypothermia is far easier than treating it,” the advisory stressed.

For suspected hypothermia cases, the advisory recommends: moving the affected person to a warm, dry place, removing wet clothing and covering the person with blankets, warming the body slowly, starting from the core, avoiding rapid warming of arms and legs, as it may push cold blood toward the heart and trigger cardiac complications, providing warm drinks if the person is conscious.

For frostbite, GMC Jammu advised shifting the patient to a warm environment, immersing the affected limb in warm (not hot) water until

normal colour returns, removing tight clothing or jewellery from the affected area and avoiding rubbing or massaging frozen skin.

**Cold-Weather Safety Measures**

The advisory also outlined a range of safety precautions, urging residents to: stay indoors during extreme cold spells, check on elderly neighbours and bring pets indoors, keep flashlights and extra batteries ready and avoid using candles due to fire risk, ensure proper insulation of water pipes to prevent freezing, use heating appliances cautiously and maintain adequate ventilation.

**Winter Travel And Vehicle Preparedness**

Motorists have been advised to winterise their vehicles before travel by: Checking battery strength, anti-freeze levels, tyre pressure and brakes, keeping fuel tanks near full to prevent ice formation, carrying a winter sur-

vival kit including blankets, flashlights, high-calorie food, water and a fully charged mobile phone.

Drivers were also advised to clear snow and frost from windshields, headlamps and signal lights, use winter-grade washer fluid, and replace worn wiper blades to ensure visibility.

**Dressing for Extreme Cold**  
GMC Jammu recommended wearing layered clothing to retain body heat effectively, including Thermal inner layers, Windproof and waterproof outerwear, Warm hats, gloves, face masks and insulated boots.

It appealed to the public to remain vigilant, follow safety guidelines, and assist vulnerable individuals during the winter season.

“We wish a happy and healthy winter season to all. Collective awareness and timely precautions can save lives,” the advisory stated—(KNO)

## VPN services suspended in Srinagar

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JAN 05:** The district administration in Srinagar has ordered the immediate suspension of all Virtual Private Network (VPN) services within the district for a period of two months, citing concerns related to public safety, law and order, and cyber security.

According to an order issued by District Magistrate Srinagar Akshay Labroo, IAS, the decision has been taken under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) following a report submitted by the Senior Superintendent of Police, Srinagar.

The order states that the police had apprehensions about the misuse of VPN services by vested interests within the jurisdiction of district Srinagar, which could have an adverse effect on public order and cyber security.

It said such services have the potential to be exploited for unlawful purposes, including inciting unrest, disseminating inflammatory material, and coordinating activities prejudicial to the maintenance of law and order.

The administration noted that VPN services transmit encrypted data and create point-to-point tunnels that conceal IP addresses, enabling users to bypass website restrictions and firewalls. This, the order said, poses risks to cyber security and renders sensitive data and information vulnerable to cyber threats.

“In the interest of public safety, maintenance of law and order, and protection of sensitive information from potential cyber exploitation, it has become imperative to take immediate preventive measures,” the order said.

The District Magistrate has ordered the suspension of all kinds of VPN services in the territorial jurisdiction of district Srinagar for two months from the date of issuance of the order, unless withdrawn earlier.

However, the order clarified that the suspension will not apply to authorised VPN usage by government departments through the National Informatics Centre (NIC).

The order has been passed ex-parte, stating that it is not feasible to serve notice individually upon all concerned persons. The administration has directed that the order be given wide publicity through the district website, leading newspapers, and by affixing copies on notice boards of government offices.

The Senior Superintendent of Police, Srinagar, has been directed to ensure strict implementation of the order in letter and spirit.

# Northern Army Commander Takes Part In Bike Rally, Pays Tribute To Veterans In Udhampur

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, JAN 5:** Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma on Monday took part in the Dhruva motorcycle rally that started in Udhampur, to pay tribute to the sacrifices of India's bravehearts and strengthen the Army's commitment to veteran outreach and military-civil fusion.

Ahead of the 10th Veterans' Day on January 14, the general officer commanding-in-chief (GOC-in-C) laid a solemn wreath at the Dhruva War

Memorial in Udhampur to honour the supreme sacrifices made in the service of the nation.

The rally was ceremonially flagged off here by Param Vir Chakra awardee Honorary Captain Bana Singh and Chinta Devi, wife of Vir Chakra awardee late Naib Subedar Chundi Lal, a defence PRO said.

As an expression of solidarity with and tribute to veterans, Sharma, White Knight Corps GOC, and senior Army officers rode along with the bikers from Udhampur to Nagrota, covering the first

phase of the rally, he said.

“Spanning approximately 740 kilometres, the Dhruva motorcycle rally is a deliberate outreach initiative designed to celebrate the unmatched contribution and supreme sacrifices of India's bravehearts, while strengthening the Indian Army's commitment to veteran outreach and military-civil fusion,” the PRO said.

The rally will traverse the scenic landscape of the Pir Panjal region in the White Knight Corps zone before culminating at the mega ex-servicemen's rally on

January 13 at Rajouri, he said.

Along its route, the motorcycle rally will conduct wreath-laying ceremonies at various war memorials. “It is accompanied by ‘Aarogya Rakshak’ medical teams, which will establish medical outreach camps to provide health screening, preventive care and essential medicines to ex-servicemen,” he added.

Blood pressure monitoring machines will be distributed to senior veterans, reinforcing the Army's sustained focus on medical care.

The Dhruva motorcycle rally stands as a testimony to

the Indian Army's ethos of ‘service beyond uniform’, honouring the past, engaging the present, and reaffirming an unbreakable bond with the veteran community, the PRO said.

“The initiative not only commemorates sacrifice but also celebrates the indomitable spirit, resilience and lifelong service of soldiers,” the officer added.

To commemorate their selfless service and sacrifices, the Northern Army commander felicitated Honorary Captain Bana Singh and Smt Chinta Devi.

## Stay away from drugs: Fardeem Hussain urges Kashmir Youth

HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

**SRINAGAR, JAN 05:** Urging Kashmiri youth to stay away from drugs, six-time international gold medalist Fardeem Hussain on Monday asked the generation-next to focus on their goals while pursuing sports and other constructive activities.

Fardeem made the appeal following his victories at the 2024–2025 World Powerlifting Championships, where he won three gold medals last year and repeated the feat this year, including consecutive wins in Thailand.

Fardeem as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), highlighted the growth of powerlifting competitions in the Valley over the past year, noting an increase in local and national events.

He said his journey from district champion to world champion could serve as an example for youth and stressed that sports can be an alternative to drug use.

Fardeem also acknowledged the support of his coach Vishal Ahmed Khan, his family, and the Jammu and Kashmir Police, which has been involved in drug-prevention programs.

He said he plans to continue competing internationally while mentoring young athletes in Kashmir—(KNO)

## Flights to Leh temporarily halted due to heavy snowfall

HT NEWS NETWORK

**LEH, JAN 05:** Heavy snowfall in Leh on Monday forced airlines to temporarily suspend all flight operations, affecting both take-offs and landings, an official said.

According to an advisory from Indigo Airlines, “Due to snowfall in Leh, flight operations, both take-offs and landings, have been temporarily put on hold. This may lead to extended wait times both onboard and on the ground. To ensure we are ready for departure as soon as we receive clearance, our team may complete boarding formalities in advance. We understand that delays can be inconvenient, and we assure you that our team remains fully committed to make your wait as comfortable as possible. We are closely monitoring the weather and will get you on your way as soon as conditions allow. Customers are advised to check their latest flight status before heading to the airport.”

According to the IMD, Leh recorded a minimum temperature of -9.6 degrees Celsius on Monday with snowfall of 0.6 cm in the last 24 hours.

For the tourists, Leh has turned into a white wonderland with its first spell of snow. Thick layers of snow engulfed the place. Visuals from Leh showed trees completely covered in snow, and houses and fences were also blanketed in snow.(KNS)

## Public Notice

It is to inform the general public that I have cleared loan of my vehicle Brezza Smart Hybrid ZXI (Month- Year of Manufacture 04-2025) bearing registration number LA01 4873 from J&K Bank, Lal Chowk Kargil. Anybody having any objections may contact Manager J&K Bank Lal Chowk, Kargil or RTO Kargil within 7 days of this notice.

Sadiq Ali  
S/o: Mohd Hussain

## Public Notice

I, Showket Ahmad Najar, Resident of Nowpora Kalan, Sopore, Baramulla, hereby inform the general public that my Passport bearing No. N3463214 has been lost in Handwara market, on the route from Degree College Handwara to Handwara Main Market. In this regard, a missing report has been lodged at Police Station Handwara. If anyone finds the said passport, they are requested to kindly return it to the undersigned or submit it at the nearest police station. Please take notice that from 05-01-2026 onwards, if the said passport is misused or used illegally by anyone, I shall not be responsible for any claim, loss, or legal consequence arising therefrom.

Name: Showket Ahmad Najar  
Address: Nowpora Kalan, Sopore, Baramulla  
Contact No.: 7006094265

## Public Notice

It is for the information of the general public that Bisma Amin W/o Bilal Ahmad Rather, R/o Brah has applied for Pesticides License under the name and style of M/S Green Gold Pesticides, Khulchohar. If anybody having any kind of objection in this regard, he/she may file his/her objection before the Plant Protection Officer, Lal Mandi, Srinagar, within seven (07) days from the date of issuance of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Bisma Amin  
W/o Bilal Ahmad Rather  
R/o Brah

## Public Notice

This is for the information to general public that I want to Register D.O.B in Favour of my son and daughter namely Momin Qayoom & Aayat Qayoom S/o, D/o. Ab Qayoom Malla R/o Kultura tehsil Langate, Dist. Kupwara DoB- Momin Qayoom 12/07/2017 Under Aadhaar no.6907 7952 1383. DoB-Aayat Qayoom 02/11/2022 respectively. The case is under process before the office of Executive Magistrate Ist class Langate/BDO office Langate. The said births have happened at hospital /home on said dates respectively. Any body having any objection, may contact Executive Magistrate Ist class Langate/BDO office Langate. Within 7 days from publication of this notice. After expiry of time no objection will be accepted.

Name of the applicant: Ab Qayoom Malla  
R/o: Kultura, Tehsil, Langate,  
District Kupwara JKUT.

# Laptop Care House

Wholesale Dealer Of New And Pre Used Laptops

DEALS IN ALL KINDS OF LAPTOPS AND ACCESSORIES

REPAIRING OF: ALL TYPES OF LAPTOPS & DESKTOPS

SERVICE FOR ALL LAPTOPS



7006083461

## OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR BUDGAM

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, Shri/Smt Nusrat S/o/D/o late Ghulam Rasool Bhat R/O Karipora Tehsil and District Budgam has applied before this office for issuance of Legal Heir certificate.

As per the application submitted, the deceased namely Ghulam Rasool Bhat son of Ali Mohammad Bhat R/o Karipora who is the daughter of the applicant late Ghulam Rasool Bhat had passed away on 15-11-2025 at SMHS Hospital Srinagar as per the death certificate issued by Registrar Births and death SMHS. As per the verification report submitted by the patwari concerned that the deceased has left behind the following surviving legal heirs whose details are given below:

S.No	Name of the legal heirs	Relation with the deceased	Marital status	Occupation	Age approx.
1	Nusrat	Daughter	Unmarried	Home Maker	27
2	Shabnum Ara	Do	Unmarried	Home Maker	30
3	Haneefa Akhter	Do	Unmarried	Student	25
4	Saniya Zehra	Do	Unmarried	Student	20
5	Mohammad Mujeeb Bhat	Do	Minor	Student	15

Before issuance of the said correction, objections if any, with regard to the above-mentioned claim, may be submitted in writing in this office within 07 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice.

In case no objection is received within the stipulated time, it shall be presumed that there is no objection from any quarter and further action shall be taken accordingly.

Sd/- Naib Tehsildar Budgam

## One-day Hindu Conference held at Miran Sahib, emphasizes unity, social harmony and cultural awareness

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, JANUARY 5** : RS Pura witnessed a significant socio-religious gathering today as a one-day Hindu Conference was successfully organized at Swarna Palace, village Krishna Nagar, Miran Sahib block, in the Jammu Division of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The conference saw enthusiastic participation from saints, social activists, intellectuals, retired senior officers, and a large number of local residents, reflecting a strong spirit of unity, awareness, and collective resolve within the community.

The programme was presided over by Shri Purushotam Lal Dadhichi Ji, Jammu and Kashmir In-charge and senior functionary of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha, along with Nirmal Swaroop Swami Ji. Several eminent saints and distinguished personalities graced the occasion, including Sant Radhe Radhe, Sant Narendra Das Maharaj, former Chief Information Commissioner and Professor, Law Department, Jammu University Shri Sudesh Sharma, Shri Subash Chaudhary, retired Principal, Shri Somnath Ji, retired Naib Tehsildar, Bodhraj Ji, retired SP Prosecution,



Shri Desraj Bhagat, retired Director, Geology and Mining, Government of India, Master Ravi Kaith, Shri Sunil Rampal (retired Forest Department), besides many other respected members of society.

Addressing the gathering, saints and speakers from various organizations expressed serious concern over the declining birth

rate among Hindus and voiced apprehensions about deliberate attempts to alter the demographic balance in surrounding regions. They cautioned that such trends pose significant challenges to social harmony, cultural continuity, and the long-term security of society. Speakers emphasized the need for awareness, unity, and responsible action to safeguard

cultural values and social balance.

During the conference, a collective pledge was taken reaffirming the core principles of Sanatan Dharma, stressing that all Hindus are equal and that there is no high or low, no caste, and no division. The speakers repeatedly underlined that unity beyond caste, creed, and social distinctions is the strongest foundation for

preserving identity, values, and collective strength.

The event witnessed the participation of hundreds of local residents, who demonstrated remarkable unity and solidarity. The speakers highlighted that strength lies in organization, urging people to rise above differences, remain united, and work collectively in a discrimination-free and harmonious manner. They emphasized that only through unity, mutual respect, and social cohesion can society protect its existence and ensure a secure, stable, and prosperous future for coming generations.

The conference concluded with a strong call for Hindu unity, social awareness, and cultural awakening, encouraging people to remain vigilant, organized, and committed to the principles of harmony, equality, and collective responsibility. At the end of the programme, the organizers extended heartfelt gratitude to all dignitaries, participants, local residents, and supporters whose cooperation and presence contributed to the successful conduct of the conference and reinforced the message of unity and social cohesion.

## Jammu & Kashmir Sant Samaj Nyas Holds Key Meeting at Baba Shri Krishna Giri Samadhi Jammu

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, JANUARY 5** : A significant meeting of the Jammu & Kashmir Sant Samaj Nyas was held at Baba Shri Krishna Giri Samadhi, under the guidance of Mahant Shri Shanti Giri Ji Maharaj, with Mahant Shri Rajesh Bittu Ji playing a central and leading role in the overall coordination and organisation of the event.

The meeting witnessed in-depth deliberations on various issues and challenges being faced by saints and religious institutions across the region. Mahant Shri Rajesh Bittu Ji, in his capacity as Organisation General Secretary, actively guided the discussions and emphasised the need for structured dialogue with the administration to find practical and lasting solutions.

Administrative officers from Jammu, Udhampur and Kathua districts were present and participated in the discussions, assuring cooperation on matters concerning the Sant Samaj.

During the meeting, Mahant Shri Mohan Giri Ji of Kathua was entrusted with the responsibility of leading the initiative to submit formal representations and memorandums to the administration regarding the issues raised by the Sant Samaj. Additionally, two to three independent committees were constituted to address local concerns in their respective areas.

Mohan Bharati Ji, office bearer of the Jammu & Kashmir Sant Samaj Nyas, stated that the meeting focused on strengthening collective efforts and unity among saints. He added that the Sant Samaj would play a more proactive role in social and administrative matters in the coming days.

Prominent saints present on the occasion included Mahant Shri Ram Narayan Dass Shastri Ji, Arjun Giri Maharaj Ji, Shudh Kirti Ji, Sanjay Dass Ji, Jyoti Anand Saraswati Ji, Jasmer Maharaj Ji, Sai Dass Maharaj, along with several other respected members of the Sant Samaj.

A Bhandara (community feast) was also organised on the occasion, during which the Sant Samaj bestowed special blessings upon all attendees.

Addressing the gathering, Mahant Shri Rajesh Bittu Ji welcomed all saints and participants and assured dedicated and sincere efforts towards resolving all emerging issues of the Sant Samaj. He stressed the importance of unity, discipline, and organised action for strengthening the institution.

It was also announced that new members would be inducted to further strengthen the organisation. Shri Sai Dass Shastri Ji was appointed as Mantri, while Shri Shudh Kirti Ji was unanimously elected as Koshadhyaksh (Treasurer). All members expressed unanimous support for these decisions.

The meeting concluded with a strong consensus on strengthening unity within the Sant Samaj and collectively working towards its evolving role and responsibilities in society.

## 12 Hours Power, 12 Hours Darkness, Omar's 'Power Vision' Exposed: Bali Bhagat

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, JANUARY 5** : Senior BJP leader and former Health Minister Bali Bhagat on Monday launched a scathing attack on the National Conference (NC) government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who also holds the Power portfolio, accusing it of complete failure on its core election promises and pushing Jammu into daily darkness.

Bhagat said that while the NC had promised free electricity during election campaigns, the reality is that the Omar Abdullah government has failed to ensure even 24 hours of regular power supply, let alone free electricity.

"People were promised relief, but today they are struggling with nearly 12 hours of daily power cuts. Free electricity has remained only a slogan," he remarked.

He added that claims of 24x7 power exist only in speeches, while on the ground Jammu faces what he termed as '50 percent darkness and 50 percent waiting'. "Despite smart meters being installed, power curtailment has increased and electricity bills have gone up, exposing the hollow promises of the NC government," Bhagat said.

Highlighting the growing public distress, the senior BJP leader said that households, traders, students, patients, and small business owners are bearing the brunt of erratic power supply, especially during harsh weather conditions. He alleged that Jammu is being deliberately neglected, calling it a clear case of regional discrimination.

Holding Omar Abdullah personally accountable, Bhagat said that as Power Minister, the Chief Minister cannot escape responsibility. "If the government cannot provide uninterrupted electricity, it should at least have the honesty to admit its failure instead of misleading the people with false assurances," he asserted.

Bhagat demanded immediate steps to end prolonged power curtailments, rollback of unjustified billing burdens, and fulfillment of promises made to the people. He warned that continued neglect of Jammu's grievances would force the BJP to intensify its democratic struggle to protect the rights and interests of the region.

## JKCA ON CUSP OF HISTORIC MILESTONE: FIRST BCCI VIJAY MERCHANT TROPHY IN SIGHT

Smagey, Adnan, Sanil, Jaskaran shine as young guns chase glory

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SURAT, JANUARY 5** : Jammu & Kashmir Cricket Association's U-16 squad stands on the brink of a groundbreaking triumph, poised to claim its maiden BCCI Vijay Merchant Trophy in the Boys' U-16 Tournament at Lalbhai Contractor Stadium here.

In a dominant display, J&K's bowlers orchestrated a stunning collapse of Mizoram in the Vijay Merchant Trophy Plate Group final, bundling them out for a paltry 100 in their first innings. Skipper Lawmatop scored with gritty 36, while Johan managed 14. No other batsman reached double figures,



underscoring the bowlers' mastery.

Promising left-arm spinner Sanil Singh and pace ace Jaskaran Singh

spearheaded the attack with 3 wickets each. Rajveer Singh and Hamaaf Firdous chipped in with one scalp apiece. J&K responded in style, reaching a commanding 223/4 at stumps on Day 1. Skipper Smagey Khajuria anchored the innings unbeaten on 74 off 112 balls (11 fours, 1 six), with Jaskaran Singh alongside on 18 not out.

Explosive batter Adnan Manzoor blazed 74 off 55 balls (13 fours, 2 sixes), while Karman Singh and Arsalan Nayak added crucial 27s each. Henry claimed 3 wickets for Mizoram, with Hruaizela taking one. J&K hold a first-innings lead of 123 runs with six wickets intact, poised for a decisive advantage.

## CLUJ Flags Off Cultural Contingent for North Zone Inter-University Youth Festival

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, JANUARY 5** : Cluster University of Jammu (CLUJ) today flagged off its vibrant Cultural Contingent for participation in the 39th Inter-University Youth Festival (North Zone), being organised by the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), New Delhi, and hosted by Chitkara University, Chandigarh. The national-level festival brings together some of the finest young talents from universities across the northern region, offering a prestigious platform for artistic and cultural expression.

The flag-off ceremony was held at Government MAM College, Jammu, and was led by Dr. Twinkle Suri, Dean Academic Affairs, CLUJ, in the august presence of Prof. D. S. Manhas, Dean Students Welfare, Dr. Ashaq Hussain, Associate Dean Students Welfare, Dr. Devinder



Kour, Chairperson, Campus Cultural Committee, along with faculty members and administrative officials of the University.

In his message, the Vice-Chancellor, Cluster University of Jammu, Prof. K. S. Chandrasekar, extended his heartfelt best wishes to the participating students. He underscored the importance of

cultural platforms in higher education, stating that cultural engagement is a vital component of holistic learning. "Such national forums provide our students an opportunity to showcase their talent, confidence, and the rich cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir. I am confident that the contingent will represent the

University with pride, discipline, and excellence," he remarked.

While interacting with the students, Dr. Twinkle Suri described the participants as cultural ambassadors of CLUJ. She encouraged them to perform with confidence, uphold discipline, and reflect the artistic, intellectual, and ethical values of the institution

through their participation. Expressing his optimism, Prof. D. S. Manhas, Dean DSW, stated that the University's cultural contingent is well-prepared and capable of making a meaningful impact at the national-level youth festival.

The contingent comprises around 49 student participants and is being led by Dr. Ashaq Hussain, Associate Dean DSW, along with Dr. Devinder Kour, Chairperson, Campus Cultural Committee and 9 other Professional artists. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Ashaq Hussain informed that CLUJ will compete in 26 events spanning literary competitions, fine arts, dance and music.

He added that the University's teams have undergone rigorous preparation and expressed confidence that the students will deliver outstanding performances and bring laurels to the institution.

## UT Administration will bring Sacred Buddha Relics to Ladakh soon: LG

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI, JANUARY 5** : The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, today visited the Rai Pitthora Cultural Complex to witness the Grand International Exposition of the sacred Piprahwa relics of Bhagwan Buddha.

The exhibition, titled "The Light & the Lotus: Relics of the Awakened One" was recently inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, showcasing priceless relics that have returned to India after more than a century, marking a historic moment for the nation and the global Buddhist community.

During his visit, the Lieutenant Governor paid reverence to the sacred relics and described their return to India as a matter of

deep civilizational pride and spiritual significance. He said that the relics of Bhagwan Buddha are not merely historical artefacts, but living symbols of India's timeless values of peace, compassion, and harmony, which continue to guide humanity even today.

Kavinder Gupta noted that the exhibition at the historic Qila Rai Pitthora complex adds a profound spiritual chapter to a site already rich in India's heritage. He said the presence of the sacred relics at this ancient location reflects the continuity of India's civilisation, where history and spirituality come together to inspire present and future generations.

The Lieutenant Governor lauded the efforts of the Government of India ensuring



that the sacred relics, which were taken away during the colonial period, have returned to their rightful home. He said this step has restored an important part of India's cultural and spiritual legacy and reaffirmed the country's role as the custodian of Lord Buddha's heritage.

Highlighting the global

reverence for Bhagwan Buddha, Shri Kavinder Gupta said that wherever the sacred relics have travelled across the world in recent months, they have evoked immense faith and devotion among millions of people, cutting across nationalities and cultures. He remarked that this universal appeal underlines the fact that

Lord Buddha belongs to all humanity and continues to connect people through shared values of peace and coexistence.

The Lieutenant Governor specifically emphasised the deep spiritual bond between Ladakh and the teachings of Bhagwan Buddha. He said Ladakh, often referred to as the "Land of High

Passes" and a stronghold of Buddhist culture, has preserved and practised the Buddha's teachings for centuries through its monasteries, traditions, and way of life.

In this context, Shri Kavinder Gupta stated that the UT Administration of Ladakh has taken up the matter with the Union Ministry of Culture to bring the sacred Buddha relics to Ladakh as well.

"We have taken up the matter with the Union Ministry of Culture to bring the sacred Buddha relics to Ladakh, and we are hopeful that this effort will bear fruit. The presence of these relics in Ladakh, even for a limited period, will be a moment of great spiritual significance for the people of the region and for devotees from across the Himalayas," the

Lieutenant Governor said.

He expressed hope that the sacred relics, if brought to Ladakh, would further strengthen the region's role as a centre of Buddhist learning and spirituality, promote spiritual tourism, and provide devotees with an opportunity to receive the blessings of Bhagwan Buddha in the serene Himalayan landscape.

The Lieutenant Governor urged people, especially youth, to visit the exhibition and connect with the teachings of Bhagwan Buddha, which remain highly relevant in today's world. He said the exhibition serves as a powerful bridge between India's glorious past and its aspirations for a future rooted in peace, harmony, and mutual respect.

# INDIA EMERGES AS RESPONSIBLE MARITIME POWER : RAJNATH SINGH

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JAN 5 :** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said that while the world is going through a period of maritime uncertainty, India has proved time and again it secures peace and stability not only of its own interests, but also of the entire Indo-Pacific region.

Speaking at the commissioning ceremony of Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Samudra Pratap, India's first indigenously designed Pollution Control Vessel, he said India bears the thought process of taking everyone along to become a responsible maritime power.

Built by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL), the vessel is the largest ship in the Coast Guard's fleet and is set to significantly enhance India's environmental response, coastal surveillance and maritime safety operations.

Emphasising the Coast Guard's multi-dimensional role, Rajnath Singh said India has sent a clear message to its adversaries that any misadventure will be met with a bold and befitting response, asserting that India remains a responsible maritime power committed to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

"In the coming times, we will have to shape norms in the field



of maritime governance, strengthen capacity-building initiatives, and take forward cooperative frameworks. The Indian Coast Guard will have to take its operational doctrines, institutional practices and technological innovations to benchmarks, whose best practices will be followed across the world," the minister said. Calling for future-ready reforms, he underlined that ICG must now evolve from a platform-centric force to an intelligence-driven and integration-centric

force to effectively address emerging maritime threats. "Given the challenges we face today, it is not enough for the Indian Coast Guard to remain a platform-centric force. Now there is a need to move towards an intelligence-driven and integration-centric approach. This change will not come from ships or equipment alone, but from strengthening institutional depth and human capital," he said.

In a historic first, the frontline ship also witnessed the appointment of women officers, reflecting the

growing role of women in India's maritime security architecture. Describing Samudra Pratap as an embodiment of India's mature defence industrial ecosystem, Singh said it showcased GSL's modern and indigenous approach to meeting today's complex maritime challenges.

"ICGS Samudra Pratap has been specially designed for pollution control, but its role is not limited to this alone. As multiple capabilities have been integrated into a single platform, the ship will prove to

be effective in coastal patrol and strengthen maritime safety. It is a product of the modern approach adopted by the GSL to enhance flexibility and readiness to deal with present-day maritime challenges," said Singh.

The ship is equipped with advanced pollution detection systems, dedicated pollution response boats, and modern firefighting capabilities. It also features a helicopter hangar and aviation support facilities, which can significantly increase its reach and effectiveness.

"Through its quick detection, precise station-keeping, and efficient recovery systems, ICGS Samudra Pratap will further strengthen capabilities. It will ensure that pollution incidents are controlled on time, preventing damage to coral reefs, mangroves, fisheries, and marine biodiversity. This is directly linked to the sustainability of coastal communities and the blue economy," he said.

Emphasising that a clean sea guarantees safe trade, safe lives, and a safe environment, Singh stated that platforms such as ICGS Samudra Pratap provide confidence that India not only understands its maritime responsibilities, but is fully prepared to fulfil them. UNI

## Fear, not law, holding back bail orders in trial courts: Supreme Court

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JAN 5 :** The Supreme Court on Monday expressed serious concern that trial court judges across the country are increasingly reluctant to grant bail, not because cases lack merit, but due to a persistent fear of facing departmental or disciplinary action.

A Bench comprising Justice J.B. Pardiwala and Justice K.V. Vishwanathan cautioned that this climate of fear is eroding judicial independence at the district level and is directly contributing to an excessive number of bail applications reaching High Courts



and the Supreme Court.

The Bench observed that the initiation of disciplinary proceedings against judicial officers merely on suspicion, or for an alleged improper exercise of discretion, has created hesitation among trial judges to grant bail even in cases where the law clearly permits it.

The Court warned that such an approach discourages judges from performing their core judicial function freely and independently. "These fears should not influence judicial decision-making. If trial judges begin declining bail in deserving cases due to apprehension of administrative action, the entire justice delivery system suffers," the Court noted, adding that this is one of the key reasons higher courts are burdened with bail matters.

The observations were made while setting aside the dismissal of a judicial officer from Madhya Pradesh, who had been removed from service on allegations of corruption and adopting inconsistent standards while deciding bail applications under the Madhya Pradesh Excise Act.

In a concurring opinion, Justice Pardiwala emphasised that a mere incorrect order or an erroneous exercise of discretion in granting bail cannot, by itself, justify disciplinary action against a judicial officer. Highlighting the constitutional importance of an independent district judiciary, Justice Pardiwala said trial courts exercise powers that are fundamental to the functioning of India's justice system. When their autonomy is compromised and fear replaces judicial independence, the rule of law and democratic values are weakened.

The Court further remarked that over time, trial judges have shown a growing tendency to avoid exercising discretion in bail matters, which undermines their role as the first line of judicial scrutiny in criminal cases. Calling upon High Courts, which exercise supervisory control over the subordinate judiciary, the Supreme Court urged them to ensure that judicial officers are not subjected to departmental inquiries solely because an order is later perceived to be incorrect.

It emphasised that judges must be allowed to dispense justice fearlessly and without undue pressure, in line with the fundamental principles of judicial independence. UNI

## RBI makes Rs 50,000 Cr OMO purchase to infuse liquidity into Banking System

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JAN 5 :** The Reserve Bank of India on Monday carried out an open market operation (OMO) purchase of government securities, signaling its continued focus on ensuring adequate liquidity in the financial system.

Under the operation, the central bank purchased government bonds with an aggregate notified amount of Rs 50,000 crore, covering a wide range of maturities.

The OMO purchase saw strong participation across securities maturing between 2029 and 2054, reflecting healthy demand from market participants.

The largest absorption was witnessed in the 7.40 per cent government security maturing in 2035, where the RBI accepted securities worth Rs 18,897 Cr. This was followed by the 7.41 per cent government security maturing in 2036, with an accepted amount



of Rs 12,500 Cr.

Other securities included in the operation were the 7.73 per cent government security maturing in 2034, with acceptance of Rs 7,949 Cr, and the 7.95 per cent government security maturing in 2032, where Rs 4,063 Cr was absorbed.

The RBI also purchased Rs 3,499 Cr. of the 7.10 per cent government security maturing in 2029 and Rs 3,092 crore of the long-tenor 7.09 per cent government security maturing in 2054. No amount was accepted for the 8.30 per cent government security maturing in 2040.

The cut-off yields for the accepted securities ranged from 6.02 per cent for the 2029 maturity to 7.27 per cent for the 2054 maturity, broadly aligning with prevailing market conditions. Corresponding cut-off prices varied across maturities, indicating calibrated absorption by the central bank across the yield curve.

Market participants view the OMO purchase as a clear signal of the RBI's intent to maintain comfortable liquidity conditions amid evolving macroeconomic dynamics. By injecting durable liquidity through bond purchases, the central bank aims to support smooth transmission of monetary policy, stabilise bond markets and ensure sufficient funds are available to meet credit demand.

The operation is also expected to help ease pressure on government bond yields and support orderly market conditions, particularly at a time when liquidity needs tend to rise due to seasonal factors and increased credit requirements. Detailed results of the OMO purchase are expected to be released shortly.

Overall, the latest OMO underscores the RBI's proactive approach in managing liquidity and reinforcing financial stability, while remaining aligned with its broader objective of supporting economic growth. UNI

## Delhi HC issues notice on Lalu plea against framing of charges in IRCTC scam case

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

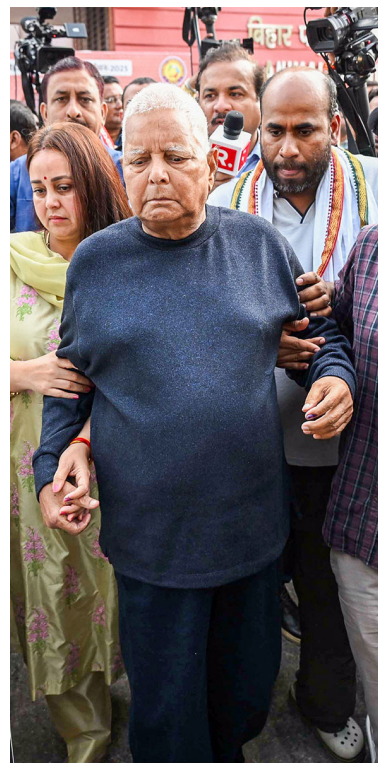
**NEW DELHI, MAY 5 :** The Delhi High Court on Monday issued notice on a petition filed by former Bihar Chief Minister and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) supremo Lalu Prasad Yadav, challenging the framing of charges against him in the alleged IRCTC corruption case.

Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma sought a response from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and listed the matter for further hearing on January 14.

Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal appeared on behalf of Yadav, while the CBI was represented by Senior Advocate and Special Public Prosecutor D.P. Singh.

The plea questions an order dated October 13, 2025, passed by the trial court, by which charges were framed against Yadav, his wife, and former Bihar Chief Minister Rabri Devi, his son Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, and 11 other accused.

The trial court framed charges for offences of cheating and criminal conspiracy and also invoked provisions



of the Prevention of Corruption Act. According to the order, a common

charge under Section 120B (criminal conspiracy) read with Section 420 (cheating) of the Indian Penal Code and Sections 13(2) read with 13(1)(d) (ii) and (iii) of the Prevention of Corruption Act was directed to be framed against all 14 accused.

While framing charges, the trial court had observed that the land and share transactions forming part of the case were "possibly an instance of crony capitalism fostered in the garb of eliciting private participation" in the development of railway hotels at Ranchi and Puri.

Apart from members of the Yadav family, charges have also been framed against Pradeep Kumar Goel, Rakesh Saxena, Bhupendra Kumar Agarwal, Rakesh Kumar Gogia, and Vinod Kumar Asthana.

The trial court had further directed framing of separate charges under Section 420 IPC against Lalu Prasad Yadav, Rabri Devi, Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, M/s LARA Projects LLP, Vijay Kochhar, Vinay Kochhar, Sarla Gupta, and Prem Chand Gupta.

The matter will now be heard on the next listed date. UNI

## BJP welcomes SC ruling in rejecting bail of Umar Khalid in Delhi riots case

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JAN 5 :** The ruling BJP on Monday welcomed the Supreme Court's decision rejecting the bail pleas of Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam, saying the ruling clearly establishes the serious and planned nature of the 2020 Delhi riots.

Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters here, party national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla said the Supreme Court has held that the charges against Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam are, prima facie, linked to terrorism and the Delhi riots and appear to be correct.

He noted that the Court observed the case is not an ordinary crime but a grave offence, comparable to attempts to break the country, and must be viewed from the perspective of national security.

Poonawalla said the apex court also made it clear that the violence in Delhi was neither accidental nor coincidental, but deliberate and well-planned. He added that the ruling has caused discomfort among what he described as the "Tukde-Tukde gang" and its supporters, both within the country and abroad, who had been expressing sympathy for the accused.

The BJP spokesperson alleged that the riots were part of a larger pattern seen in several countries, where attempts are made for violent transfer of power, and claimed that parties such as the Congress and the Samajwadi Party have either openly or indirectly supported such tendencies.

He accused the opposition ecosystem of promoting what he termed an anti-Hindu mindset and vote-bank politics, and of glorifying historical invaders and extremist elements.

Poonawalla further alleged that the same political ecosystem has, at different times, expressed sympathy for convicted terrorists and extremists, including Afzal Guru, Yakub Memon, those killed in the Batla House encounter, and Naxalites, and is now extending support to Sharjeel Imam and Umar Khalid.

Raising questions for opposition parties, Poonawalla asked whether the Congress, the Samajwadi Party, the Trinamool Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party would apologise to the families of Ankit Sharma, Ratan Lal and Dilbar Negi, who were killed during the Delhi riots, in light of the Supreme Court's clear observations.

He also referred to the case of Tahir Hussain, from whose residence petrol bombs and other materials were allegedly recovered, and said Hussain was associated with the Aam Aadmi Party.

Poonawalla questioned whether, in the past, such elements were given protection on the basis of what he described as the 'M factor'.

The BJP reiterated that the Supreme Court's decision reinforces the seriousness of the charges in the Delhi riots case and underlines the need to view such incidents through the lens of national security, Poonawalla added. UNI

## SC sets aside Gujarat HC ruling on customs duty for Adani Power SEZ electricity supplies

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JAN 5 :** The Supreme Court on Monday set aside a June 28, 2019 judgment of the Gujarat High Court, which had denied relief to Adani Power on the levy of customs duty on electricity supplied from its Special Economic Zone (SEZ) unit at Mundra to the Domestic Tariff Area (DTA). A Bench comprising Justice Aravind Kumar and Justice N.V. Anjaria delivered the verdict.

The Court was examining whether the Gujarat High Court was justified in limiting the effect of its earlier 2015 ruling and in declining to entertain Adani Power's broader challenge to the levy of customs duty imposed after 2010 on electricity supplied from an SEZ to the DTA. Adani Power, which operates a large coal-based thermal power plant within the Mundra SEZ as a co-developer, supplies electricity both within the SEZ and to distribution companies in Gujarat and other states. The dispute arose after amendments to the customs framework sought to impose duty on electricity cleared from an SEZ to the DTA, despite the fact that electricity imported into India from foreign countries was not subject to any such levy. During the hearing, Adani Power was represented by Senior Advocate P. Chidambaram, along with Advocates Mahesh Agarwal, Anshuman Srivastava, Rohan Talwar, Naman Agarwal and E.C. Agrawala, who contended that the levy was discriminatory and contrary to the SEZ framework. The union of India, represented by Additional Solicitor General Raghvendra

P. Shankar, along with Advocates Gurmeet Singh Makker, Sharath Nambiar, Diwakar Sharma, Satvika Thakur, B. Sunita Rao and Ishaan Sharma, defended the levy and supported the High Court's reasoning. In an earlier round of litigation, the Gujarat High Court in July 2015 had struck down part of the levy mechanism and held that Adani Power was entitled to exemption from customs duty on electricity supplied from the SEZ to the DTA for a limited period between June 2009 and September 2010.

That ruling was allowed to attain finality after the Supreme Court declined to interfere. Subsequently, SEZ authorities maintained that the exemption granted to Adani was confined strictly to the specified period and that customs duty was payable on electricity supplied thereafter. Adani challenged this interpretation before the Gujarat High Court in 2016, seeking a declaration that no customs duty was payable even beyond the earlier period, along with a refund of amounts already recovered. However, in its June 2019 judgment, the High Court rejected Adani's plea, holding that the 2015 decision had consciously restricted relief to a defined time frame and that broader relief could not be claimed through a subsequent writ petition. The High Court also observed that extending the exemption could result in Adani deriving a double benefit under the post-2010 regulatory regime. The Supreme Court has now overturned that decision, reopening the issue of the levy of customs duty on electricity supplied from SEZs to the DTA.



# Root and Brook shine before afternoon gloom ends play early

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**MELBOURNE:** Little over an hour into the Ashes finale at SCG, another truncated Test appeared to be in motion and looked set to punctuate a whirlwind series that has left a rather hollow feeling for many. But England recovered from 57 for 3 as batting became easier on a surface that offered seam movement with the new ball.

Joe Root and Harry Brook combined for an unbroken 154-run stand - the second-highest partnership of the series for either side - to ensure England reached stumps in a decent position after just 45 overs were bowled due to rain and lightning.

The measured batting of Root and Brook combined with Sydney's annual sketchy weather means, surely, that this match will last considerably longer than the two-day Tests in Perth and Melbourne.

With so much pressure on SCG curator Adam Lewis, having grimly watched his counterpart Matt Page face a public grilling after the Boxing Day Test, he left just 5mm of grass on the pitch - half the length of the maligned furry MCG surface.

Lewis appears set to escape scrutiny, with the spotlight likely to shine on Australia's selectors after deciding not to select offspinner Todd Murphy. With seam-bowling allrounder Beau Webster replacing quick Jhye Richardson, Australia stepped on the SCG field without a specialist spinner for the first time since 1888. The ground's characteristics have changed notably in recent seasons, moving away from its spin-friendly traditions. But by the afternoon, with Root and Brook in complete control, skipper Steven Smith probably wished he could deploy Murphy with Australia's attack lacking variety. The trio of frontline quicks each picked up a wicket but allrounder Cameron

Green, whose place in the team was under major scrutiny, struggled to hit the right length and finished with 0 for 57 from eight overs.

Brook was mostly circumspect by his standards, but did counter-attack when Green resorted to a short-ball tactic, while Root played in trademark style by scoring heavily behind square on the off side.

England, of course, will have hoped their two lead batters could have mustered such a partnership earlier in the series, but the tourists have started their quest for a second consecutive consolation victory brightly.

Amid sunny and humid morning conditions, a relief with grim weather on the radar, skipper Ben Stokes elected to bat after the coin again fell in his favour. It was perhaps another curious decision given his penchant for bowling first before this tour, which had been the catalyst for England's victory at the MCG. His mood would have soured after England's top-order struggled with the seam movement on a green-tinged surface, losing 3 for 18 by the middle of the first session. Before the collapse, opener Ben Duckett had feasted on unusually ragged bowling from nemesis Mitchell Starc, who he whacked for five boundaries in less than four overs.

After a hapless series on-field and some embarrassing shenanigans off it, Duckett appeared to be carrying over the momentum from his invaluable second-innings cameo at the MCG. He hit Starc for consecutive boundaries to roll to 27 in 23 balls as he and Zak Crawley appeared on the way towards a blossoming partnership that had never previously reached the eighth over in the series. But Starc finally found the right length and Duckett could not help himself, tamely prodding to a flying Alex Carey. Having impressed in his Ashes debut at the MCG, Jacob Bethell was once again calm and watchful against occasional rampant seam

movement from Scott Boland.

Bethell did not open his account until his 15th ball when he cut Starc through backward point for a boundary, but it was respite amid familiar woe for England's batters. After swatting a short ball to the fence, Crawley's latest teaser ended when he fell lbw to a full delivery from Michael Neser before Bethell nicked off to Boland, who had moved over the wicket.

At this juncture, there were fears of another frantic innings with Cricket Australia's hierarchy no doubt watching on nervously. But Root and Brook batted sensibly to ensure England stabilised by lunch.

While he removed the monkey on his back after his brilliant ton in Brisbane, Root's troubles in Australia have mostly remained this series. But this was a golden opportunity to settle in for the long haul despite him almost nicking off on the first delivery. He nailed his next attempt at his trademark cover drive to get him going, while Brook's first boundary was unsurprisingly less orthodox after top-edging Boland over the slips.

But Brook was then uncharacteristically restrained in a notable contrast to his madcap 41 in the first-innings at the MCG. Australia's attack tried to bait him by settling into a length outside off stump but Brook mostly kept his aggressive instincts in check.

He had his eyes set on a belated conversion having made starts in each of his first-innings this series and found himself in a nice groove with Root, who after lunch reached 40 for just the second time in the series. Australia lacked inspiration on a slowing surface and they resorted to a short-ball tactic in the hope that Brook would lose his patience. It almost went to plan when Brook on 45 top-edged Starc into a gap on the leg side before he regrouped to whack Webster for a boundary to bring up a 63-ball half-century.

## India Makes Its Mark at Ciaspolada 2026

Muzamil Mir, Malhotra and Chaudhary Lead India's Strong Finish in Italy

■ GOWHAR NAZIR

**NEW DELHI:** India recorded a notable international outing at the 52nd Ciaspolada International Snowshoe Race 2026, with its athletes securing multiple top-five finishes at one of the world's most demanding snowshoe competitions held in northern Italy.

The standout performance came from Muzamil Hussain Mir of Kashmir, representing India in the Senior Men's 20-39 age group, widely considered the most competitive category of the race. Competing against world champions and elite European endurance runners, Mir clinched an impressive third position, underlining India's growing competitiveness in global winter endurance events.

India's junior athletes delivered equally strong performances. Dhani Malhotra claimed the Junior Girls title, while Aashna Chaudhary finished as runner-up, giving India a one-two presence at the



top end of the junior girls' standings. In the Junior Boys category, Ankit Khokhar secured fourth place, followed closely by Akshir Singh Kush, who finished fifth after a determined run on the challenging snow-covered course.

In the senior women's division, Anjum Chaudhary added to India's strong overall showing by finishing fifth, rounding off a successful campaign across age groups and categories.

The performances at Ciaspolada 2026 reflect a steady rise of Indian athletes in international winter sports, particularly in endurance disciplines traditionally dominated by European competitors.

India's results in Italy mark a significant step forward and highlight the country's expanding footprint on the global winter sports stage.

## Veteran Athletes Shine as Baramulla Hosts Inaugural Masters Athletics Championship

■ HT SPORTS DESK

**SOPORE:** The 1st Masters Athletics Championship Baramulla 2025-26 concluded successfully, marking a significant milestone in the promotion of athletics among veteran sportspersons in north Kashmir. The championship was organised by the District Masters Athletics Association Baramulla under the aegis of the Masters Athletics Association of Jammu & Kashmir, in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from masters athletes across the district, reflecting a growing culture of fitness, discipline and lifelong engagement in sports. Competitions were held in a spirited atmosphere, celebrating both performance and perseverance.



The opening ceremony was graced by Naseer Ahmed, Manager, J&K Bank, as Chief Guest,

who lauded the organisers for creating a platform that encourages senior athletes to remain active and competitive. The closing ceremony was presided over by Mushtaq Ahmed, Manager,

J&K Bank, as Chief Guest, who congratulated the athletes, officials and organisers for the smooth and successful conduct of the championship.

Several prominent sports per-

sonalities and officials were present on the occasion, including Haji Abdul Qayoom, former Chief Sports Officer, J&K Sports Council; Pir Irshad Ahmad, Incharge Khushal Stadium Sopore; Khazir Muhammad Ganie, Technical Official AKFI; Majid Malik, former President Sopore Cricket Association; B.A. Mir, former ZPEO, Department of Youth Services and Sports; and ZPEO Sopore incharges Mohammad Rafiq and Nasit Hamid.

The championship concluded on a positive and inspiring note, reaffirming the commitment of sports bodies in Baramulla to promote athletics across all age groups and to strengthen the culture of masters sports in the region.

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