

Srinagar  
Wednesday  
January 21 | 2026  
30 Rajab1447 AH  
Issue No: 18  
Volume: 16  
Pages: 12  
Price: Rs 02/-

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## A Bridge Between Heritage and Tomorrow: LG Inaugurates Redeveloped Amira Kadal in Srinagar

₹7.70-Crore Smart City Project Restores Historic Character While Enhancing Pedestrian Mobility and Urban Life

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JAN 20:** In a significant milestone for Srinagar's urban renewal, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday inaugurated the redeveloped Amira Kadal bridge, reaffirming the LG administration's commitment to harmoniously blending heritage conservation with modern infrastructure.

The historic pedestrian wooden bridge, redeveloped at a cost of ₹7.70 crore under Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), stands as a testimony to the administration's vision of people-centric, culturally sensitive and future-ready urban

Turn on Page 2



## People-Centric Governance Will Drive J&K's Growth: Omar Abdullah

CM Kicks Off Pre-Budget Consultations, Reviews Priorities of Key Departments Ahead of Assembly Session

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, JAN 20:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday began the pre-budget consultation process by chairing detailed meetings with key government departments, underlining that people-centric governance, efficient service delivery and inclusive growth will form the cornerstone of the forthcoming Jammu and Kashmir Budget.

Ahead of the Budget Session of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, scheduled to commence on February 2, the Chief Minister reviewed depart-



mental priorities and assessed public needs, stressing that all proposals must align with the overall development vision of

the Union Territory and ensure balanced growth across regions. Holding the Finance

Turn on Page 2

## Steel Slag Roads Can Transform Himalayan Connectivity: Dr Jitendra Singh

Union Minister Bats for Steel-Based Road Technology, Two-Day Awareness Workshop Scheduled in J&K Next Week

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI, JAN 20:** Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh on Monday strongly pitched steel slag-based road construction technology as a sustainable and durable solution for hilly and difficult terrains, asserting that its wider adoption could significantly improve road resilience in Himalayan states and Union Territories.

Speaking at an event marking the signing of

an agreement between the Technology Development Board (TDB) and Visakhapatnam-based Ramuka Global Eco Work Private Limited, Dr Singh said that despite proven benefits, the use of steel slag technology in Himalayan regions remained limited and required focused outreach, training and awareness among state road construction agencies.

To bridge this gap, the Minister announced that a two-day workshop on steel slag

Turn on Page 2

## Nitin Nabin Takes Over As BJP President



HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 20: Nitin Nabin

was on Tuesday formally declared as the BJP national president.

Turn on Page 2

'In Party Matters, He Is My Boss': PM Modi Hails Nitin Nabin

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI, JAN 20:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday congratulated Nitin Nabin on being elected the national president of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), describing the 45-year-old leader as his "boss" in matters related to the organisation and underlining the party's tradition

Turn on Page 2

## My India, My Vote: J&K Gears Up to Celebrate National Voters Day on January 25

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, JAN 20:** The Jammu and Kashmir Government has announced that National Voters' Day (NVD) will be celebrated across the Union Territory on January 25, 2026, with the theme "My India, My Vote," aiming to strengthen democratic values and promote voter awareness.

Turn on Page 2

## Massive Anti-Terror Hunt Enters Third Day in Kishtwar; Several Detained

Security Forces Intensify Operation in Chatroo as JeM Terrorists Remain Holed Up Amid Challenging Terrain

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

**JAMMU, JAN 20:** A large-scale search operation to flush out terrorists in the upper reaches of Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district entered its third day on Tuesday, with several individuals detained for questioning, officials said.

The operation, launched on Sunday in Sonnar village near Mandral-Singhpura in the Chatroo belt,

turned violent when terrorists attacked security forces with grenades, leaving one paratrooper dead and seven others injured, primarily from splinter wounds. The militants managed to escape deeper into the forest, but authorities successfully busted their fortified hideout, which contained substantial winter supplies, including food, blankets, and utensils.

Senior officers, including Inspector General

Turn on Page 2

## CS assesses progress of ₹7,000 Cr NABARD funded RIDF works across departments

HT NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU, JAN 20:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting of the High Powered Committee (HPC) of NABARD to review the progress and achievements under various tranches of the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) and to assess new projects

Turn on Page 2



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

**A Bridge Between.....**

development. The project, launched in December 2023, was executed with meticulous attention to heritage preservation, structural safety and quality benchmarks.

Dedicating the bridge to the people of Srinagar, the Lieutenant Governor said the redevelopment reflects the administration's larger mission to raise the quality of life through modern technology and inclusive design, without compromising the city's unique cultural identity. He described the project as a "bridge between heritage and tomorrow," both in its physical form and in its underlying philosophy.

Under the LG-led governance framework, urban rejuvenation across Jammu and Kashmir has prioritised the protection of historic assets while upgrading essential infrastructure. The redevelopment of Amira Kadal, one of Srinagar's most iconic crossings, exemplifies this balanced approach, ensuring improved mobility, enhanced safety and renewed aesthetic appeal.

Highlighting the transformative impact of ongoing Smart City initiatives, LG Sinha noted that projects such as the Jhelum Riverfront, Lal Chowk and MA Road redevelopment, Polo View High Street, heritage market facades in Shehri-Khaas, lakefront walkways and riverfront corridors in Jammu have collectively redefined urban spaces. These initiatives have not only revitalised cityscapes but have also strengthened tourism, boosted local commerce and generated fresh economic momentum.

The Lieutenant Governor reiterated that the administration views smart city development as more than just infrastructure creation. The focus, he said, is on building vibrant, efficient and inclusive urban ecosystems that serve present needs while securing a resilient future for the younger generation.

Interacting with traders and shopkeepers at the site, LG Sinha said the reopening of the pedestrian bridge would significantly improve accessibility, encourage footfall and provide a more pleasant and welcoming experience for residents and visitors alike—further reinforcing the administration's commitment to grassroots economic growth.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by MLA Lal Chowk Ahsan Pardeesi, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg, IGP Kashmir V.K. Birdi, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Akshay Labroo, CEO SSCL Fazul Haseeb, senior officials, representatives of trade bodies and prominent citizens, who lauded the LG administration for its consistent and visionary approach to urban development in Jammu and Kashmir.

**People-Centric.....**

portfolio as well, Omar Abdullah held extensive deliberations with departments including Power Development, Housing and Urban Development, Finance, Revenue, General Administration, Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, Tourism, Information and Information Technology.

The meetings were attended by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Additional Chief Secretary Tourism Ashish Chander Verma, Additional Chief Secretary Power Development Shailendra Kumar, Principal Secretary Finance Santosh D. Vaidya, along with Administrative Secretaries of several key departments and senior Finance Department officials.

Officials presented sector-wise assessments, ongoing initiatives and priority requirements, with discussions focusing on improving governance outcomes and strengthening public service delivery.

The consultative exercise will continue on January 21 and 22, covering another 15 key departments.

The Budget for 2026-27 will be presented by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in the Legislative Assembly on February 6, marking the second budget presentation by the Chief Minister.

**Steel Slag.....**

technology would be held in Jammu and Kashmir next week, followed by similar programmes across other states and UTs. The workshops aim to familiarise engineers and officials with the application, durability and economic advantages of steel slag-based road solutions.

Dr Singh noted that Himalayan and hill states face unique challenges such as heavy rainfall, frequent road damage and short working seasons. "These regions stand to benefit the most from faster, more durable repair technologies, yet awareness on the ground is still uneven," he observed.

The Minister said pilot trials of the technology began nearly two years ago, with initial projects in Surat, Gujarat, and parts of the Northeast, including Arunachal Pradesh. Since then, steel slag-based road repair solutions have been adopted to varying extents in states such as Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh. However, he pointed out that even senior engineers in some states were still unaware of the technology's availability.

The event also marked the formalisation of an agreement for the commercial rollout of 'ECOFIX', a ready-to-use pothole repair mix developed by CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CRRI) with support from TDB. The product uses processed iron and steel slag, converting industrial waste into a valuable

construction input, and can be applied even in wet or waterlogged conditions, significantly reducing repair time and traffic disruption.

Officials said laboratory validation and field trials under Indian climatic and traffic conditions have shown that the technology offers better durability and lower lifecycle costs compared to conventional repair methods, while also supporting circular economy goals by reducing dependence on natural aggregates.

Emphasising that publicly funded research must deliver visible public benefits, Dr Singh said innovations like ECOFIX demonstrated how science could address everyday problems such as potholes, which affect road safety, vehicle damage and commuter stress. He also highlighted a shift towards more balanced public-private partnerships, noting that the private partner's investment in the project matched government support.

Under the agreement, TDB and the industry partner plan to set up an iron and steel slag processing facility with an annual capacity of nearly two lakh tonnes, with commercial production expected by the end of 2027. The facility, to be located near major steel plants, is expected to ensure steady raw material supply and generate employment.

Concluding, the Minister said wider adoption of steel slag technology could help states build more resilient, cost-effective and sustainable road infrastructure, particularly in regions prone to extreme weather, and called upon state governments and the media to play an active role in spreading awareness, especially across the Himalayan belt.

**Nitin Nabin.....**

succeeding J P Nadda and beginning a new chapter for the party as it seeks to tighten its grip on politics in the country.

K Laxman, Returning Officer for BJP organisational polls, declared the results of the organisational elections and handed over the certificate of election to 45-year-old Nabin, the youngest ever to occupy the top party post.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Nadda, senior ministers Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, among others, were present at the BJP headquarters to witness the leadership transition.

Nabin became the 12th president of the BJP, which was founded in 1980, the same year he was born.

The low-profile and unassuming Nabin had resigned as the minister for law and justice, urban development and housing in the Bihar government after he was appointed working president of the BJP on December 14.

"This election shows that in the BJP, leadership rises from hard work and dedication, not from dynastic privilege," Laxman said, announcing the outcome of the elections.

"Today is a very historic occasion, when our young, energetic, and talented Nitin Nabin is taking charge as the National President of the world's largest political party, the BJP. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to him on my behalf and on behalf of crores of workers," Nadda said, addressing the gathering. (Agencies)

**'In Party Matters.....**

of collective leadership and discipline.

Addressing a gathering at the BJP headquarters after Nabin was formally declared president, Modi repeatedly referred to him as mananiya (honourable) and said that, as a party worker, he was presenting an account of his work to the new chief. "When it comes to party matters, I am a worker and you are my boss," the Prime Minister remarked, drawing applause from party leaders and workers present at the event.

Nitin Nabin was elected BJP president at the conclusion of the party's Sangathan Parv, a comprehensive organisational exercise that saw elections from the booth level to the national level. He succeeds J P Nadda and becomes the 12th president of the BJP since its founding in 1980—the same year Nabin was born—making him the youngest leader to occupy the post.

Modi said the new president represents a generation that has witnessed the transition from radio to artificial intelligence. "Nitin ji has youthful energy along with rich organisational experience. His guidance will be a priceless asset that will chart our future course of action," he said, adding that the new BJP chief's responsibility extends beyond managing the party to ensuring effective coordination among NDA allies.

In his nearly 40-minute address, the Prime Minister reviewed the achievements of the BJP-led NDA government over the past 11 years, calling it an exercise in accountability before the party president. He also warned against complacency, urging party workers to learn from the decline of the Congress. Citing the grand old party's fall from over 400 Lok Sabha seats in 1984 to struggling to cross the 100-seat mark today, Modi said the BJP must consciously avoid the "bad qualities" that led to Congress's downfall.

Modi stressed that infiltration posed a serious threat to national security and said identifying and deporting infiltrators was essential. He also highlighted the BJP's culture of introspection, noting that the party conducts honest reviews of its performance even after electoral victories.

Speaking on the occasion, BJP Returning Officer K Laxman announced Nabin's election and said it demonstrated that leadership in the BJP emerges from hard work and dedication, not dynastic privilege. Outgoing president J P

Nadda termed the moment historic and said Nabin's elevation symbolised the party's commitment to nurturing young, capable leadership.

Senior leaders including Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, Union ministers, chief ministers of BJP-ruled states, and a large number of party workers were present to witness the transition.

Tracing the BJP's organisational journey, Modi recalled the roles played by leaders such as Atal Bihari Vajpayee, L K Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi, M Venkaiah Naidu, Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah and J P Nadda, asserting that while presidents change, the party's ideals and direction remain constant.

"The BJP is not just an organisation; it is a tradition and a family," Modi said. "Posts may change, but responsibility is lifelong."

**My India, My.....**

As per directions issued by the General Administration Department, all government departments, public sector undertakings (PSUs) and educational institutions have been asked to organise a range of activities, including debates, discussions and competitions such as drawing, painting, essay writing and cultural programmes, particularly in schools and colleges.

The Election Commission of India has advised that the main programmes be held at 11 am or at any other suitable time during the day. In regions where January 24 and 25 fall on holidays, the celebrations may be organised on January 23.

Officials and staff will also administer the National Voters' Day pledge, reaffirming their commitment to the democratic process. Photographs and details of the events will be shared on official social media platforms using the hashtag #NVD2026.

Meanwhile, Administrative Secretaries, Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners have been directed to ensure strict adherence to the instructions and to facilitate meaningful and impactful celebrations across Jammu and Kashmir.

**Massive Anti.....**

of Police, Jammu Zone Bhim Sen Tuti, and Inspector General of CRPF, Jammu R. Gopala Krishna Rao, have personally reached the encounter site and are overseeing the ongoing operations alongside army officials.

Meanwhile, a solemn wreath-laying ceremony was held in Jammu on Tuesday morning to honor the slain Special Force Commando, Havildar Gajendra Singh. Brig Yudhvir Singh Sekhon, Officiating Chief of Staff, White Knight Corps, led the ceremony at Satwari, after which the mortal remains of the commando were sent to his native Uttarakhand for last rites. Deputy Inspector General of Police, Jammu-Kathua-Samba range Shiv Kumar Sharma, Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Minhas, and senior officers from police, CRPF, and BSF attended the ceremony.

On Monday, several individuals were taken in for questioning in connection with the discovery of the hideout, located at an altitude exceeding 12,000 feet. Security forces are working to identify overground workers (OGWs) who allegedly helped the terrorists transport supplies sufficient to sustain at least four militants through the winter months.

In a statement on X, the White Knight Corps confirmed that Operation Trashi-I continues in Chatroo. "The cordon has been further tightened, and search operations expanded. Troops of the corps, along with Police and CRPF, remain deployed to dominate the area," the army said.

Multiple teams of army, police, and paramilitary forces, supported by drones and sniffer dogs, are combing the dense, steep terrain despite limited visibility and challenging conditions. Intelligence reports suggest that two to three Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terrorists remain trapped in the area.

Operations across Jammu have been intensified ahead of Republic Day to ensure peaceful celebrations, amid inputs that Pakistan-based handlers are attempting to infiltrate additional militants into the region, officials said.

**CS assesses.....**

proposed under RIDF XXXI (2025-26) across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department; Additional Chief Secretary, Public Works (R&B); Principal Secretary, Finance; Director General, Resources; Chief General Manager, NABARD; and senior officers from Health, Jal Shakti and other concerned departments.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary undertook a department-wise appraisal of ongoing RIDF projects and emphasized the need for timely completion of works sanctioned under RIDF XXVI and XXVII, which are nearing their final implementation phase. He impressed upon all executing agencies to adhere strictly to stipulated timelines and accord priority to projects showing satisfactory progress.

Stressing the importance of seamless fund flow, the Chief Secretary directed departments to expeditiously secure the remaining tranches from NABARD to ensure successful completion of ongoing programmes. He cautioned against delays and carrying over of liabilities, noting that such lapses could place an additional burden on the normal Capex budgets of departments.

The Chief Secretary also advised departments to upload RIDF projects on the PM Gati

Shakti portal to facilitate effective monitoring and utility analysis. He further enjoined upon the concerned departments to identify and finalize new projects proposed under RIDF XXXI well before the end of February 2026.

Principal Secretary, Finance, Santosh D. Vaidya, briefed the Committee on the overall expenditure and physical progress of projects under various RIDF tranches. He highlighted the need to further enhance expenditure efficiency to maximize developmental outcomes, pointing out that every department has scope for improvement.

Presenting expenditure trends since 2022-23, the Principal Secretary noted a steady increase in utilization, with overall expenditure rising from about 56% in 2022-23 to 76% in 2024-25. He urged departments to maintain and further improve this momentum during the current financial year. He informed that against an expenditure of ₹1,024 Cr in 2024-25, an allocation of ₹1,816 Cr has been made this year for completion of ongoing projects.

Giving a detailed overview, Director General, Resources, M.Y. Itoo, informed the Committee that a total of 1,426 projects worth ₹6,981 Cr had been sanctioned under RIDF XXVI to XXX. Of these, about

35% of the loan amount has been expended so far, with 333 projects already completed across the Union Territory.

The sanctioned projects include 1,145 projects of the Public Works Department (R&B) worth ₹5,249 Cr; 90 projects of the Jal Shakti Department worth ₹740 Cr; 104 projects of the Agriculture Department worth ₹517 Cr; 22 projects of the Horticulture Department worth ₹145 Cr; 45 projects of the Animal and Sheep Husbandry Department worth ₹203 Cr; and 20 projects of the Health Department worth ₹127 Cr.

Regarding RIDF XXXI, it was informed that 139 projects amounting to ₹381 Cr had already been sanctioned, while another 40 projects worth ₹227 Cr are under process for sanctioning at NABARD.

The Chief Secretary also underscored the importance of timely submission of Project Completion Certificates (PCCs) and Project Completion Reports (PCRs) for completed works to facilitate the release of additional funds and enable approval of new projects.

Concluding the meeting, the Chief Secretary reiterated that strict adherence to timelines, optimal utilization of funds must remain the hallmark of all NABARD-funded projects to ensure maximum developmental impact at the grassroots level.

**ACB Nabs PWD Staff, Patwari, ASI Among Four In Three Separate Bribery Cases**

■ HT NEWS NETWORK / KNO

**SRINAGAR, JAN 20:** Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Tuesday trapped and arrested four officials, including two PWD employees, a Patwari and an Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI), in three separate cases of demanding and accepting bribes, officials said here.

They said, the arrests were made following complaints lodged by citizens who refused to pay illegal gratification, prompting the ACB to conduct discreet verifications and catch the accused red-handed during sting operations.

According to a statement issued to the news agency the Jammu and Kashmir Anti Corruption bureau today arrested four officials for demanding and accepting bribe. One case was registered at PS ACB Udhampur whereas 02 cases were registered at PS ACB Rajouri.

The statement reads, ACB received a complaint that Anil Jamwal, Jr. Assistant posted in the office of Superintending Engineer PWD R&B Udhampur and Jeet Kumar Computer operator posted in the office of Executive Engineer PWD R&B Udhampur demanded the bribe from the complainant for issuance of contractor card. Since, the complainant did not want to pay bribe, he approached ACB for taking legal action against the accused public servant under law.

It reads, on receipt of the complaint, a discreet verification was conducted, which corroborated the demand of bribe by the public servant concerned and accordingly, a case FIR No. 02/2026 U/S 07 of Prevention of Corruption, Act, 1988 and Section 61(2) BNS, 2023 was registered at PS ACB Udhampur and investigation was taken-up.

"During the course of investigation, a trap team headed by Dy. SP Rank Officer was constituted. The team laid a successful trap and accused public servants were caught red-handed while demanding and accepting bribe amount ₹12000 from the complainant in the presence of independent witnesses," the statement reads.

It also reads, the bribe money was also recovered from the possession of accused in presence of independent witnesses associated with the trap team. Moreover, searches were also conducted at Ram Nagar and Laddan Power House Udhampur respectively, in presence of Magistrate.

In another case, "ACB received a complaint alleging therein that ASI Zamurat Manhas called the complainant at Police Station Mendhar, on the complaint of one Abdul Qayoom for not returning his money. Complainant requested for some time to return the money and Abdul Qayoom agreed. Thereafter, ASI Zamurat Manhas started demanding a bribe from complainant to settle the matter with Abdul Qayoom. He also threatened him that if he does not pay the bribe, he will book him under PSA. Since the complainant is a poor person and did not want to give illegal gratification to the above named accused, he approached and lodged a written complaint in Police Station ACB Rajouri for taking legal action against him."

The statement reads, accordingly Case FIR No. 01/2026 was registered at PS ACB Rajouri and investigation taken up.

"During the course of investigation, a team was constituted. The team caught ASI Zamurat Manhas red handed accused while demanding and accepting ₹5,000 as bribe from the complainant. The accused was arrested on spot and subsequently, searches were also conducted at the residential premises of accused at Mendhar, Surankote and Jammu."

The statement further reads, in yet another case ACB on the basis of a written complaint alleging therein that complainant approached Patwari Mohd. Razaq posted in Patwar Halqa Sokar/Prori, Koteranka for recording the name of his three daughters in the revenue record. However, the concerned Patwari demanded bribe from complainant for recording the name of his daughters in Khasra Girdwari.

"Since the complainant is a poor person and did not want to give illegal gratification to the above named Patwari, he approached and lodged a written complaint in Police Station ACB Rajouri for taking legal action against him. Accordingly case FIR No. 02/2026 was registered at PS ACB Rajouri and investigation taken up."

It reads, after registration of the case, a team of PS ACB Rajouri caught Mohd. Razaq, Patwari red handed while demanding and accepting ₹10,000 as bribe from the complainant. The accused was arrested on spot and subsequently, searches were conducted at the residential premises of accused. Further investigation in all the three cases is going on. (KNO)

**Mercury Dips At Most Places In Kashmir**

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JAN 20:** The

minimum temperature dropped at most places in Kashmir as the valley braces up for spells of rain and snow ahead this week, including the possibility of the first snowfall in the plains this winter, officials said on Tuesday.

Srinagar recorded a low of minus 3.4 degrees Celsius on Monday night, down from the minus 1.2 degrees Celsius the previous night.

The tourist resort of Sonamarg in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district registered a low of minus 6.2 degrees Celsius and was the coldest recorded place in the valley. Shopian and Pulwama towns in south Kashmir recorded a low of minus 4.8 degrees and minus 5.5 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir, which also serves as one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath Yatra, recorded a low

of minus 4.4 degrees Celsius -down from the previous night's minus 1.8 degrees Celsius, the officials said.

The night temperature in the popular ski resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district settled at a low of minus 5.5 degrees Celsius -two degrees down from the previous night, they said.

The minimum temperature in Qazigund, the gateway town of the valley, settled at minus 2.3 degrees Celsius, the officials said.



## Speaker J&K LA addresses 86th AIPOC 2026 at Lucknow

Terms "fairness and responsibility as hallmarks of legislative power"

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**LUCKNOW, JAN 20:** Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, today addressed the 86th All India Presiding Officers Conference (AIPOC) 2026 at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

Abdul Rahim Rather spoke on the "Accountability of the Legislature towards the people" to improve mechanisms for the legislature to be more responsive and accountable to citizens.

The Speaker, while addressing the conference, mentioned verses from Manusmriti and Quran, saying that accountability of the Legislature towards the people had deep roots in ancient Indian democratic traditions, where Dharma guided governance and institutions like Sabha and Samiti ensured public participation.

Referring to hindu scriptures, he called lawmakers as the servants of dharma, not masters of power. He said that Legislatures

are accountable for the welfare and protection of people.

Similarly, in Islam, it is stated that the Legislators must exercise their power with fairness, honesty and responsibility towards the people they serve, the Speaker asserted.

"The Constitution envisions a Legislature that is transparent, responsive and answerable. It entrusts the Legislatures with immense responsibility to frame laws, oversee the Executive, approve public expenditure and provide a forum for debate and dissent" he added.

The Speaker further said that in a democracy, the Legislature is not merely an institution of lawmaking; it is the collective voice, conscience and custodian of the people's will.

Rather asserted that one of the primary ways Legislatures demonstrate accountability is through thoughtful, inclusive and well-scrutinized legislation. "A House that debates with depth and dig-



nity sends a powerful message that people's issues are being taken seriously and laws passed in haste, without adequate debate or stakeholder consultation, may

erode public confidence" he said. He also highlighted that public concern has grown over disruptions, disorders and declining decorum in Legislative chambers,

while passionate disagreement is intrinsic to democracy and persistent disruption undermines public faith.

The Speaker stressed on another vital dimension of Legislative accountability which is effective oversight of the Executive. "Questions, calling attention motions, committee deliberations and budgetary scrutiny are not procedural formalities; they are instruments through which the Legislature safeguards public interest" he exhorted.

The Speaker said that in the digital age, accountability also demands greater transparency and direct engagement with citizens. Live telecasts, open committee systems, accessible legislative records and use of technology can bridge the gap between the Legislature and the people, he asserted.

Secretary, J&K Legislative Assembly, Manoj Kumar Pandita also accompanied the Speaker at the conference.

### JDI Kashmir Shares Grief with Director Information Nitesh Rajoura's Family

Condolence Meet Held in Srinagar Office to Express Solidarity

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JAN 20:** The Joint Directorate of Information (JDI), Kashmir, on Tuesday expressed deep sorrow over the demise of the grandmother of Director Information, Jammu and Kashmir, Nitesh Rajoura, extending collective condolences to him and his bereaved family.

A condolence meeting in this regard was held under the chairmanship of Joint Director Information, Kashmir, Syed Shahnawaz Bukhari, Deputy Director Information, Kashmir, Mohammad Rafiq, Cultural Officer, along with other officers and officials of the department, were present.

During the meeting, participants offered prayers for eternal peace to the departed soul and for strength and patience to the family to endure the irreparable loss.

### "Empowering Voices, Honouring Excellence: IHRO Celebrates 100 Grand Women of Kashmir"

IHRO Jammu & Kashmir to mark International Women's Day 2026 by recognising outstanding women achievers across diverse fields

### HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JAN 20:** In a significant initiative aimed at celebrating women's leadership and empowerment, the International Human Rights Organization (IHRO), Jammu & Kashmir Chapter, has announced a grand observance of International Women's Day 2026 in the Kashmir Valley, to be held on March 8 with dignity, purpose, and social commitment.

As part of the celebration, IHRO J&K has undertaken a historic step by selecting 100 "Grand Women"

from across the Valley through a structured, nomination-based process. The final list of awardees was officially finalised on January 18, following a careful evaluation of their contributions and achievements.

The selected women represent excellence, resilience, and leadership across a wide range of sectors, including science, medicine, academics, sports, law, literature, innovation, social service, and other professional domains. Their work and perseverance, IHRO said, reflect the transformative role women continue to play

in society despite challenges.

The event will feature multiple award categories, including the prestigious ICON Awardees, honouring women whose impact and dedication have made them role models and sources of inspiration for future generations.

Through this initiative, IHRO Jammu & Kashmir reiterated its commitment to promoting gender equality, recognising merit, and amplifying women's voices, while using International Women's Day as a platform to celebrate achievement and inspire social change across the region.



## Traffic Rural Kashmir Cracks Down on Stunt Biking; Chronic Offender Booked in Qazigund

### FAROQ RATHER

**KULGAM, JAN 20:** In a continued drive against rash and stunt driving, the Special Enforcement Team of Traffic Rural Kashmir, under the supervision of SSP Traffic Rural Kashmir Shri Ravinder Pal Singh (JKPS) along with DySP Traffic Qazigund Kulgam Mohammad Aslam (JKPS) on Tuesday

intercepted another chronic stunt biker in the Qazigund area. The offender was identified as Shaver Ahmad Lone, a resident of Hariwarh, Kulgam. Officials said the motorcycle being used for performing dangerous stunts was seized under the relevant provisions of law.

Following the seizure, a counselling session was conducted

during which the stunt biker was sensitized about the serious legal consequences of stunt driving and the negative impact such activities have on students and youth, especially when videos of dangerous stunts are uploaded on social networking platforms, encouraging imitation and risking lives. Police officials stated that, with the objective of completely

curbing rash, negligent and stunt driving, special directions have already been issued by SSP Traffic Rural Kashmir to all field officers to strictly enforce traffic laws and take firm action against violators.

Traffic Police once again appealed to motorists and vehicle owners not to hand over vehicles to minors, stunt drivers, or per-

sons without a valid driving licence, warning that such negligence often leads to serious road accidents and fatalities.

Traffic Rural Kashmir reiterated its commitment to ensuring road safety, protecting lives, and maintaining discipline on roads through sustained enforcement and public awareness measures.

to incur a minimum expenditure of ₹2 crore during the financial year, failing which funds may be withdrawn.

In the Kashmir Division, four major infrastructure projects have been sanctioned, including residential accommodation for PRIs/Protected Persons at Bandidpora and 2-BHK residential apartments with dormitory for BDC at Pulwama. The DDC Office Building at Baramulla has completed structural works, with electrical installations underway, and is targeted for completion by March 2026.

In the Jammu Division, six projects have been approved under SASCI, including construction of the DDC Building at Kishtwar and 2-BHK residential accommodation for DDC/PRIs members at Jammu, Birwan (Udhampur), Kambal Danga (Reasi), Kathua, and Poonch.

To ensure smooth execution, the Secretary directed concerned agencies to expedite pending works, resolve land and DPR-related issues, and maintain close coordination with the Finance Department for timely re-appropriation of funds to avoid lapsing of savings.

Reviewing the status of SNA-SPARSH for 2025-26, it was informed that out of 13 CSS/SLS schemes onboarded, mother sanctions have been received for 11 schemes, while two are pending. The Secretary stressed close monitoring to ensure seamless fund flow and directed officers to expedite pending sanctions, bill processing, system integration, FTO generation, and DSC enrolment.

He emphasised that efficient financial management and real-time expenditure tracking are essential to ensure transparency and effective delivery of development outcomes at the grassroots level.

The meeting was attended by DG Rural Sanitation Anu Malhotra; Directors RDD Kashmir and Jammu; Director Finance; COO Himayat; Joint Director Planning; Additional Secretary RDD&PR; Chief Engineer PW(R&B); Superintending Engineers REW Jammu/Kashmir; and other senior officers.

### Grand Mehfil-e-Shah-e-Meraj (صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم) Organized by Ehsas Foundation at Rajbagh

### GULFAM BARJI

**SRINAGAR, JAN 20:** A spiritually enriching and dignified Grand Mehfil-e-Shah-e-Meraj (صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم) was organized by the Ehsas Foundation at The Black Vintage, Radio Colony, Rajbagh, Srinagar, to mark the auspicious occasion of Shab-e-Isra wa Meraj. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from religious scholars, eminent personalities, poets, naat reciters, and a large gathering of devotees, creating an atmosphere of devotion and reverence.

The Chief Guest on the occasion, SSPAPCR Kashmir Tariq Ahmad Wani, while addressing the gathering, described the miraculous journey of Meraj as a timeless lesson in faith, patience, and complete obedience to Allah. He urged the youth to draw inspiration from the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad (صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم) and stressed the need for unity, brotherhood, and social responsibility. He appreciated the efforts of Ehsas Foundation, stating that such spiritual gatherings play a crucial role in

nurturing peace, discipline, and strong moral values among the younger generation.

Guest of Honour Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Wani, Joint Director Fisheries, commended the Foundation's religious and social initiatives and observed that such programs significantly contribute to spiritual awareness and moral reform in society. Renowned Kashmiri Sufi poet Suhail Ahmad, popularly known as Raj Sahib, also graced the event and mesmerized the audience with his soulful Sufi poetry, beautifully depicting the spiritual magnificence of Meraj (صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم).

General Secretary of Ehsas Foundation, Ms. Abida Rashid, stated that Mehfil-e-Meraj serves as a platform for self-accountability, spiritual purification, and drawing closer to Allah. The programme featured naat recitations and enlightening discourses on the significance of Shab-e-Meraj. At the conclusion, she expressed gratitude to all guests, participants, sponsors, and supporters for making the event a memorable spiritual success.

### Kulgam Police Conduct District-Wide Vehicle Frisking, Search Operations

### FAROQ RATHER

**KULGAM, JAN 20:** Kulgam Police on Tuesday conducted intensive vehicle frisking and search operations across several areas of the district, including Qazigund, Kulgam, Devsar, Quimoh, Mir Bazar, DH Pora, Frisil, Yaripora and Behibagh, besides other areas, on the directions of SSP Kulgam Shri Anayat Ali Choudhary (IPS).

Officials said the drive was carried out as part of routine preventive measures aimed at strengthening law and order and enhancing the overall security scenario in the district. During the operation, police personnel established checking points at strategic locations and carried out thorough checking of vehicles, including four-wheelers and two-wheelers, plying through these areas.

Special focus was laid on the verification of out-of-state vehicles and motorcycles, particularly those found without

registration number plates or valid documents. Drivers and riders were asked to produce relevant papers, while suspicious movements were kept under close surveillance.

Police officials stated that the frisking and checking exercise was aimed at deterring unlawful activities, preventing misuse of vehicles, and ensuring that anti-social elements posing a threat to public safety do not operate freely in the district.

They further added that such search and checking operations will continue at regular intervals in different parts of Kulgam district to maintain a robust security grid.

Reiterating its commitment to maintaining law and order and ensuring the safety and security of the general public, Kulgam Police urged citizens to cooperate with police personnel during checking and verification drives in the interest of peace and public safety.

# J&K Bank Net Profit jumps over 10% YoY for Q3

Strong growth and improved asset quality reflect solid fundamentals: MD & CEO

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JANUARY 20:** J&K Bank today announced healthy financial results for the October-December quarter (Q3 FY 25-26), with net profit rising by 18.7% Quarter-on-Quarter and 10.4% year-on-year (YoY) to Rs 586.73 Cr when compared to Rs 531.51 Cr recorded during the same period last fiscal.

The Bank's Board of Directors approved the numbers for the quarter and nine-months during a meeting held today at the Bank's Divisional Office in Jammu.

Meanwhile, the Bank's net profit for the first nine months of current financial year grew 4.5% YoY to Rs 1565.68 Cr as against Rs 1497.92 Cr recorded for the same period last year, reflecting its sustained growth trajectory.

**Operating Highlights**

The Bank's Net Interest Margin (NIM) for the quarter has improved to 3.62%, up by 6 bps QoQ. Cost-to-Income Ratio of the Bank improved to 55.88% YoY for the quarter from 57.28%, while as Return on Assets (RoA) for nine-months stood at 1.23%.

The Bank's operating metrics reflected steady growth, as the Net Interest Income (NII) witnessed 3.8% growth QoQ to Rs 1488.88 Cr, while the Other Income for the quarter surged 15.3% YoY to Rs 279.46 Cr from Rs 242.32 Cr recorded last financial year. The Bank's Cost of Deposits also declined

to 4.69% QoQ from 4.86%.

Commenting upon operating performance, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "Despite rate cut, impairment provisioning for Grameen Bank and challenging conditions - particularly the events of April 22, their subsequent impact, and the floods that disrupted the local economy - the Bank remains firmly on track to deliver record profits for the fourth consecutive year." "Characterized by robust top-line growth and better asset quality, overall our Q3 performance underscores our strong fundamentals, disciplined execution, and sustained operational efficiency", MD & CEO added.

The Bank's Gross NPA ratio declined YoY to 3.00%, down by 108 basis points (bps) from 4.08%, while as the Net NPA reduced by 26 bps YoY to 0.68% from 0.94% and 8 bps QoQ from 0.76%. The Provision Coverage Ratio (PCR) for the quarter is above 90% at 90.46%.

In his comments on asset quality, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee remarked, "Even as our core geography has navigated significant challenges extending beyond the banking sector, the Bank's asset quality has continued to improve steadily. Supported by robust risk management practices, Gross NPAs have declined from around 4 percent to 3.00% percent, which is almost in line with our stated annual guidance."



"The sustained improvement in asset quality despite such disturbances speaks volumes about the resilience and commitment of borrowers and the underlying robustness of the local economy", he added.

**Business Growth**

Maintaining strong business momentum during the third quarter of the current financial year, the Bank recorded a robust YoY growth of 17.3% in gross advances and a healthy YoY growth of 10.6% in deposits. As on December 31, 2025, the Bank's gross Advances surged to Rs 116248 Cr while total deposits reached Rs 155861 Cr.

Commenting on the business growth, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "Delivering over 17% year-on-year growth in advances - well ahead of the guidance we had shared with the

market - reflects the strength of our franchise, the effectiveness of our credit strategy and the meticulous execution by our teams on the ground. Double-digit growth of deposits in a competitive environment also highlights the trust reposed in the Bank by our customers."

"The accelerated advances growth was driven by focused expansion in retail, MSME, agriculture and select corporate portfolios, supported by improved credit appetite and strengthened customer engagement across both core and emerging geographies. Our consistent focus on deepening relationships within JKL and beyond, improving product penetration and enhancing service delivery continues to support stable balance-sheet expansion", he added.

**Capital Adequacy**

The Bank's Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) under Basel III stood at 15%.

Regarding capital position, MD & CEO remarked, "With our CAR at 15% - which will be further augmented by internal accruals on account of net profit for current fiscal - we are well capitalized to expand our lending operations as per our business plan. Moreover, the board approved capital raise of Rs 1250 Cr will boost our capital adequacy and cushion us comfortably to support calibrated business expansion across key sectors."

"It will enhance our ability to absorb risk, while reinforcing our long-term focus on sustaining asset quality, improving profitability and creating enduring value for our shareholders", he added.

**Key Initiatives**

Highlighting the Bank's key initiatives during the CFY so far, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee remarked, "During these quarters, we remained steadfast in supporting our customers, particularly through initiatives such as the 2025 Rehabilitation Package for disturbance-affected borrowers, which provided extended repayment timelines and additional credit support. This underscores our role as a responsible institution committed to sustaining livelihoods and economic activity in our core operational geographies."

Termining digital transformation as central to the Bank's strategy, he further added, "Simultaneously, we accelerated our digital transformation with the launch of several customer-focused innovations to strengthen customer experience, improve security and efficiency, and position the Bank for sustained, technology-led growth."

On the occasion, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee extended heartfelt gratitude to the customers and stakeholders - especially the promoters - for their unwavering trust and continued support besides entire Bank staff for their steadfast dedication.

## DC Pulwama finalises arrangements for Republic Day 2026 Celebrations

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**PULWAMA, JANUARY 20:** Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, today chaired a meeting at Circuit House Pulwama to finalise arrangements for the upcoming Republic Day 2026 celebrations in the district.

At the outset, the Additional Deputy Commissioner briefed the chair on the responsibilities assigned to various officers with regard to venue preparedness, including seating arrangements, sound systems, illumination, transportation and overall logistical management of the event.



During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner also took a detailed review of the Republic Day preparations from the Additional Deputy Commissioners of Sub-Divisions Awantipora and Tral regarding the arrangements being made at the sub-divisional level. He further directed the concerned officers to ensure that Republic Day celebrations are organised in a befitting manner at tehsil, block and panchayat levels as well, so as to ensure widespread public participation and to strengthen the spirit of patriotism across the district.

Highlighting the significance of Republic Day, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the importance of organising vibrant and culturally enriching programmes showcasing local traditions and in line with the theme of Vande Mataram celebrations. He also reiterated the need for strict compliance with the National Anthem protocol and Flag Code to ensure the dignified hoisting and handling of the National Flag.

Furthermore, the Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments to organise activities and programmes in accordance with Phase-II of the year-long Action Plan for the commemoration of 150 years of "Vande Mataram", aimed at further strengthening the spirit of patriotism.

The Health Department was instructed to ensure adequate medical preparedness at the venue, including the deployment of medical personnel, availability of first-aid facilities and ambulance services, especially in view of the prevailing winter conditions.

The meeting was attended by SSP Pulwama, ADC Pulwama, Tral and Awantipora and other senior officers of the district administration, Police and CRPF, along with all district and sectoral officers.

## Awareness Programme under Child Marriage Free Bharat Campaign held at Bandipora

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA, JANUARY 20:** Under the ongoing Child Marriage Free Bharat Campaign, an awareness cum sensitization programme was conducted today in the Athwato and Pannar areas of District Bandipora with active participation from community stakeholders.

During the programme, Masjid Imams, Auqaf Committee members and local residents were sensitized about the harmful impacts of child marriage, relevant legal provisions and the preventive measures needed to eradicate this social evil.

The role of community leaders, religious institutions, and families in protecting child Rights and ensuring their education and well-being was strongly emphasized.

Officials from DCPU, CWC, CHL and CHD highlighted that child marriage adversely affects the physical, mental, and social development of children, particularly girls, and urged participants to act as community watchdogs by reporting any such incidents.

The Child Helpline number 1098 was widely shared among participants, encouraging them to use the service for reporting cases of child marriage or seeking immediate assistance for children in distress.

The programme concluded with a collective pledge by community members to support government efforts and to work towards making District Bandipora free from child marriage, ensuring a safer and more secure future for children.

## Traffic Awareness Drive conducted in Handwara Sub-Division

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**HANDWARA, JANUARY 20:** On the directions of the Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, Shrikant Balasaheb Suse, and in supervision of Additional Deputy Commissioner, Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi, joint teams of the Revenue Department and the Police Department on Tuesday conducted a comprehensive traffic awareness drive in all Tehsils of Handwara sub-division.

The drive was led by Tehsildars and Naib Tehsildars, who sensitised drivers and motorists about the importance of strictly adhering to traffic rules and regulations. Emphasis was laid on key road safety measures such as safe driving practices, observance of speed limits, mandatory



use of seat belts and helmets, and avoidance of rash and reckless driving to reduce road accidents.

The officers also stressed the need to discourage the use of abusive or inappropriate language and encouraged drivers to maintain polite behaviour, moral conduct, and mutual

respect towards passengers, pedestrians, and fellow road users. They highlighted that disciplined behaviour and ethical conduct are as important as technical compliance with traffic laws.

During the programme, the Tehsildars and Naib Tehsildars interacted with drivers, listened to their grievances, assured appropriate redressal, and encouraged open dialogue to strengthen trust and cooperation between the administration and the transport fraternity.

The initiative aimed to promote road safety, improve driver conduct, and foster a culture of responsible, disciplined, and courteous driving, thereby ensuring safer roads and better public service.

## Patriotic Fervour marks Day-2 of Vande Mataram Celebrations in Shopian

Cultural performances highlight 150 Years of Vande Mataram at GDC Shopian

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, JANUARY 20:** As part of the week-long celebrations (January 19-26, 2026) commemorating Phase-II of 150 years of Vande Mataram, Day 2 of the programme was observed today at the Auditorium Hall, GDC Shopian with great patriotic fervour.

The programme was graced by Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone, Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Shopian, who attended

the event as Chief Guest. The programme was attended by DySP, Mohammed Ashraf; CEO, Bashir Ahmed Shah, CEO Municipal Committee Shopian, YSSO representatives, faculty members, officers, and a large number of students.

In his address, the Chief Guest highlighted the historical significance of Vande Mataram and emphasised the role of youth in strengthening national unity and patriotism.



A vibrant cultural programme was presented by students from

various educational institutions. The performances included patriotic songs, speeches, and folk cultural items, which filled the auditorium with enthusiasm and national pride.

As a part of week long celebrations, cultural programmes commemorating 150 years of Vande Mataram were also organised at Higher Secondary School Zainapora, where students showcased various cultural performances highlighting patriotism and national unity.

## DC Shopian reviews Food Safety Measures

Directs intensified sampling and inspection of establishments

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, JANUARY 20:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today chaired a district-level advisory committee review meeting on food safety standards and directed the concerned officers to expedite sampling and regular checking of all food establishments, medical shops and other business units to ensure availability of high-quality and safe food items to the public.

At the outset, Assistant commissioner, Food Safety, Syed Nighat Hassan briefed the Chair



about the overall food safety scenario in the district, status of sampling conducted so far and the measures being taken to curb sale of substandard and adulterated items. Stressing zero tolerance towards

adulteration and unhygienic practices, The DC instructed the Food Safety wing to conduct frequent market inspections, collect samples in a time-bound manner and take strict action against violators as per

law. He emphasized close coordination among departments to safeguard public health and create awareness among traders about maintaining prescribed standards.

He reiterated that ensuring pure and quality food is a priority of the district administration and asked for submission of progress reports on inspections and sampling carried out across the district.

SSP, Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmed Choudhary; ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; CMO, Assistant Commissioner, Food safety, CEO, CAO, CDPO and other concerned were present.

## DDC Shopian presides over JJM review meeting

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN, JANUARY 20:** District Development Commissioner (DDC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today presided over a review meeting of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) to review and assess the progress of the JJM Schemes and ensure time-bound provision of safe drinking water to every household in the district. The DDC directed concerned officers to ensure completion of projects within set timelines, adherence to quality standards and regular community engagement. He reiterated that JJM is a priority programme aimed at improving public health and living standards.

Emphasis was laid on accelerating works, removing bottlenecks, and maintaining transparency in execution.

During the meeting, the DDC was



informed that out of 62 water supply schemes, 21 schemes have been completed which are fully functional and remaining schemes are also at advances stage of completion and interms of individual works out of 162 works, 109 works have been completed. The proposal for extension of timelines for physical completion of works was also discussed.

# DC SRINAGAR, SSP CHAIRS DISTRICT NCORD MEETING

Comprehensive review of enforcement, prevention and rehabilitation strategies undertaken

HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JANUARY 20:** A meeting of District Level Committee on Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) was today convened under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo here at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office to review the ongoing enforcement actions and preventive initiatives undertaken by various departments in the district to combat the drug menace and strengthen deterrence measures against drug peddlers. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar, Sandeep Chakravarthy was also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, a comprehensive review with regard to the districts performance for the year 2025 was held with a focus on identifying gaps and challenges in combating drug abuse, illicit trafficking, identification of drug hotspots, vulnerable areas and



transit routes.

The meeting also took assessment of drugs related financial investigations and asset forfeiture, prevention of diversion of pharmaceutical

drugs, strengthening inter-agency coordination and intelligence sharing, and enhanced scrutiny of parcels and consignments. The role of the Social Welfare,

School education and Colleges were emphasized particularly with regard to IEC activities. While role of health department was also deliberated upon and status of de-addiction centres, availability of counselling facilities, and rehabilitation programmes for affected individuals.

The NCORD Committee also emphasized the active involvement of educational institutions and religious leaders in awareness generation and community-level interventions.

Addressing the meeting, Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for a coordinated and sustained approach involving all stakeholder departments. He emphasized that enforcement actions must be complemented with strong preventive measures, awareness campaigns, and rehabilitation support to effectively address the drug problem.

The DC called for enhanced IEC activities and community

participation to make Srinagar drug-free.

While speaking on the occasion, the SSP Srinagar highlighted the role of intelligence-driven policing and inter-agency coordination in dismantling drug networks. He emphasized strict action against drug peddlers through financial investigations, asset forfeiture and monitoring of transit routes, while ensuring enhanced scrutiny of parcels and consignments.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Aadil Fareed; Superintendent of Police, Umar Shah; SDM West Irfan Bahadur; SDM EAST, Zubair Ahmad; District Social Welfare Officer, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad; ARTO, Muazzam Ali and Officers of Excise, Drug Control Organization, DYS&S, Heads of ATFs DY SP ANTF, President/Chairman Private Coaching Centers Association, Srinagar and other concerned.

## DC Baramulla visits Main Venue to Review Republic Day 2026 arrangements

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BARAMULLA, JANUARY 20:** Ahead of Republic Day 2026, Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today visited the main venue to review the preparations and assess the arrangements being put in place for the smooth conduct of the celebrations.



During the visit, the DC inspected arrangements related to security, seating, sanitation, electricity, drinking water supply, medical facilities and traffic management. Officers concerned were instructed to ensure that all arrangements are completed well in advance and maintained as per the prescribed standards. Later, the DC chaired a meeting of concerned officers to review overall preparedness. Emphasis was laid on close coordination among line departments, timely execution of assigned responsibilities and ensuring public convenience and safety during the celebrations.

Minga Sherpa highlighted the importance of Republic Day as an occasion of national pride and exhorted all departments to work with dedication and a sense of responsibility to ensure the event is conducted smoothly and in a befitting manner.

## DC Budgam presides over District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) meeting to review progress and strengthen coordination

Approves 1769 cases under HADP, 1420 cases of JKICIP

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, JANUARY 20:** A meeting of the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) was held today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-din Bhat, to undertake a detailed review and accord approvals to eligible cases under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Jammu and Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement in Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKICIP), Integrated Sheep Development Scheme (ISDS) and Integrated Dairy Development Scheme (IDDS).

During the meeting, the status of applications received, scrutinized and approved under each component was reviewed threadbare.

The DC emphasized that the objective of these schemes is to strengthen the rural economy, enhance farm incomes and create sustainable livelihood opportunities, and accordingly directed that approvals be processed with utmost transparency, accountability and adherence to

prescribed guidelines.

While reviewing HADP, it was informed that a total of 5,233 applications have been approved under the Animal Husbandry Department so far, including 400 additional eligible cases approved in today's DLIC. Under the Agriculture Department, 16,803 cases stood approved, including 827 fresh cases approved in the meeting.

Similarly, 10 new cases were approved under the Fisheries Department in the DLIC, raising the total approvals to 115. The Horticulture Department had 3,080 approved cases, with 375 additional cases approved today, taking the total to 3,455 cases.

The meeting was further informed that 153 cases under Sericulture had already been approved. Under Sheep Husbandry, 1,664 cases were approved earlier, while 154 new cases were approved in the DLIC, raising the total to 1,818 cases. Under Horticulture (Plantation & Machinery), 53 cases stood approved till date, including three cases approved today.

It was informed that under HADP,

25,801 cases had been approved prior to the meeting, 1,769 cases were approved in the current DLIC, and the cumulative total has now reached 27,570 cases.

Reviewing the JKICIP, the meeting was informed that under the Agriculture Department, 1534 cases had been approved earlier, while 1373 fresh cases were approved today. Under Fisheries, 269 cases were approved earlier, and 23 additional cases were approved in the meeting, raising the total to 292 cases.

Under Horticulture, approvals increased from 254 to 270 cases with the clearance of 16 new cases. Likewise, under Sheep Husbandry, 74 cases had already been approved, while 8 fresh cases were approved today, taking the total to 82 cases. Under Horticulture (Plantation & Machinery), two cases stood approved.

Cumulatively, under JKICIP, 3,554 cases have been approved till date, including 1,420 cases approved in the DLIC meeting.

Under the Integrated Sheep Development Scheme (ISDS), it was informed that 544 cases had been

approved earlier, and 100 additional eligible cases were approved in the DLIC. Similarly, under the Integrated Dairy Development Scheme (IDDS), approvals increased from 186 to 237 cases with the clearance of 51 fresh cases.

The DC stressed that approved cases must be grounded without delay, and directed all line departments to ensure timely release of benefits, regular field verification, and close monitoring of outcomes.

He further emphasized that the implementation of these schemes should result in tangible improvement in productivity, income generation and employment opportunities across Budgam district.

The DC passed the directions to concerned officers to fast-track remaining eligible cases, maintain accurate digital records, and ensure that no deserving beneficiary is left out under these flagship development programmes.

The meeting was attended by CPO, ACP, CAO, CAHO, CHO, DSHO, AMO, AD Fisheries, LDM, PC KVK, and other concerned district and sectoral officers.

## DC Budgam chairs DTC Meeting to review Telecom Infrastructure issues

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, JANUARY 20:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, today chaired a meeting of the District Telecom Committee (DTC) to review issues related to the installation of mobile towers and overall telecom infrastructure development in the district.

The meeting focused on addressing public grievances, streamlining inter-departmental coordination, and facilitating the expeditious implementation of telecom projects, including the USOF 4G Saturation Project in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

During the meeting, the DC emphasized the importance of robust telecom connectivity for governance, emergency services, education and economic activities. He directed all concerned departments to extend timely clearances and cooperation to telecom service providers, while strictly adhering to safety, environmental and regulatory norms.

The DC reiterated that the District Telecom Committee shall act as a single-window coordination mechanism to resolve public grievances related to mobile tower installations and other telecom-related issues. He further directed that the



Committee shall meet at regular intervals to ensure effective monitoring and speedy resolution of pending matters.

The DC stressed that all departments must work in close coordination to ensure the timely completion of telecom infrastructure projects, especially in unserved and underserved areas of the district, thereby improving digital connectivity and public service delivery.

The meeting was attended by ADC Budgam; SE, PWD Budgam; CPO budgam, CMO Budgam, ADG (LSA), J&K, DoT; XEN, PDD Budgam; DFO Budgam, DySP HQ; DO, PCB Budgam; DIO, NIC Budgam and representative of ULB /Development Authority.

## DC Kupwara reviews various revenue related matters

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA, JANUARY 20:** Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, today chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of various revenue-related initiatives in the district including digitisation of land records, SWAMITVA scheme, and other allied issues. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Handwara, ACR Kupwara, SDM Lolab and Tehsildars. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed review of the status of ongoing revenue construction works and emphasized the importance of timely execution of works. He laid special stress on the digitization of Jamabandies, directing the Tehsildars to take up the task in a mission mode and ensure its completion strictly within the prescribed timelines. The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed progress under the Micro irrigation Census and SWAMITVA Scheme, updation of Jal Shakti assets and called for close monitoring, inter-departmental coordination, and regular reporting to address bottlenecks and improve efficiency in service delivery.

## DC Kupwara reviews measures for road safety, traffic regulation in DRSC meeting

HT NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA, JANUARY 20:** Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, today convened a meeting of the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) to comprehensively review the implementation of road safety measures and traffic regulation across the district. The Deputy Commissioner underscored that road safety is a matter of paramount importance, directly concerning the protection of human lives. He exhorted all stakeholders to take all necessary measures in ensuring safer roads in addition to cooperation from general public by adhering strictly to traffic rules and regulations. He directed the enforcement agencies to intensify on-ground regulation and adopt stringent measures against violators in order to minimize the occurrence of road accidents. During



the deliberations, discussions held regarding analysis of road accidents and subsequent measures taken for avoiding future occurrence. The DC also directed strong action restricting underage and teenage driving. He emphasized the need for timely disbursement of compensation to injured persons and to the next of kin of deceased victims of road accidents. Directions

were also issued for strengthening emergency medical evacuation protocols, including adequate deployment of ambulances across accident-prone stretches to provide immediate medical assistance and readiness of health institutions.

Multi-dimensional committee was directed to conduct a comprehensive audit of school buses to ensure compliance with

safety standards and regulations, while the ARTO Kupwara was directed to carry out regular inspections of driving schools to verify adherence to prescribed norms and training standards. The Public Works Department, PMGSY and BEACON authorities were instructed to conduct road safety audit on regular basis particularly on hilly roads and highways. Progress made on identification of blackspots and rectify corrective measures was also discussed.

In addition, ARTO and Traffic Police, in coordination with the Chief Education Officer, will conduct extensive road safety awareness campaigns in schools during upcoming academic sessions.

The Public Works Department was further directed to undertake curve improvements on major roads, particularly in hilly areas and to ensure timely patching and

repair of both main and inner roads throughout the district to facilitate smooth movement of vehicles. BEACON authorities were asked to install appropriate signages on their roads especially at blind curves. He also directed Beacon authorities to ensure all safety norms during ongoing NH-701 works to avoid accidents.

The Traffic Department was instructed to intensify enforcement of traffic regulations in market areas to minimise traffic congestions. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan; ADC Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi; Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Kupwara; Chief Education Officer Kupwara; Executive Engineers of PWD; ARTO Kupwara, DySP DAR Handwara and officers from Traffic, Health, and other concerned departments.

## DC Budgam reviews Winter Preparedness; Issues Line-Wise directions to ensure Public Convenience

HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, JANUARY 20:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, today chaired a comprehensive meeting to review district-level winter

preparedness, with emphasis on snow clearance, essential services, emergency response and public assistance mechanisms.

The DC directed the R&B and Mechanical Departments to ensure all snow clearance machinery and manpower remain

in ready condition and stationed at designated locations.

The Mechanical Department informed that 23 snow clearance machines are available at the Budgam Snow Clearance Control Room for winter season 2025-26, comprising of 8 Snow Machines

with Variable V-Ploughs, 11 Snow Cats with Fixed V-Ploughs, besides, a Backhoe Loader, Snow Cutter/Blower (Unimog), Snow Blower (Fresia) and one Wheel Loader (Liugong).

The DC instructed that machinery shall be deployed as

and when required to ensure timely clearance of all main roads, link roads and priority routes.

The DC directed the Power Development Department to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply and maintain preparedness for immediate restoration of

damaged lines and infrastructure during snowfall.

Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti Department were instructed to ensure smooth and uninterrupted water supply across the district, especially in snow-bound and vulnerable

areas. The CMO Budgam was directed to ensure 24x7 availability of ambulance services, adequate medical staff, essential drugs and emergency healthcare facilities in both upper reaches and low-lying areas.

**HT EDITORIAL**

**Need to stop dummy admissions in government schools**

The recent results of 10th and 12th classes highlighted the achievements of the students of the different government schools. Many students of the government schools performed very well in these examinations and got positions as well as distinctions in these examinations. The results of the government schools were somewhat astounding as the students of the government schools would not figure in the merit list as was the case this time around.

In the past a handful of students of the government schools would achieve distinction and there were rare occasions when such students would get a position in the board examination. There are many people who opine that the splendid performance of the students of government schools has been possible due to the coaching they received in the private coaching centres. These people are not ready to give credit to the teachers of the government schools.

Over the years a disturbing trend has emerged in the educational scenario of Kashmir. It has been observed that hundreds of students receiving education in the private schools after passing matriculation get admission in the government schools. These students seldom attend classes in the schools and attend private tuitions in the different coaching centres. In other words, it can be said that dummy admissions have ruled the roost in the educational institutions at the government level. This trend needs to be stopped at the earliest.

Since the private schools charge a hefty sum from the students, the parents of such students ensure that their wards never miss any lecture or class. This is not the case with the government schools. In most of the government schools the people at helm don't bother about the attendance of the students. In most of the cases the teachers and the other staff are concerned about their salaries and are not worried about the attendance or absence of the children.

It is imperative that responsibility is inculcated among the teaching and non-teaching staff of the government schools. Once this is done then the teaching staff would devote their attention towards the attendance of the students and nobody would bunk the classes as is being done in the present day context. This would improve the teaching standards of the government schools at both the secondary and higher secondary levels. At the end of the day there would be a real competition between the students of government and private schools.

**Autos in the Remote Villages**



■ SAHIL MANZOOR BHATI

It gives me immense pleasure to see autos running on village roads and connecting remote villages to nearby towns and cities. The introduction of auto-rickshaws in villages has brought a positive change in rural life. Villages that were once isolated are now witnessing a huge rush of autos on their roads. These autos are providing comfort and convenience to people and saving them from long and tiring walks.

In earlier times, villagers had to cover long distances on foot. There were no proper roads or transport facilities. People used shortcuts through mountains, hills, forests, rivers, and agricultural lands to reach their destinations. These journeys were full of hardships and dangers. Elderly people, women, and children suffered the most due to the lack of transportation. There was no comfort, and reaching a nearby market or hospital was a difficult task.

With the passage of time, things have changed rapidly. Development has reached villages, and transportation facilities have improved. Autos have become a lifeline for villagers. They help people travel easily from one place to another. Students use autos to reach schools and colleges. Farmers use them to transport vegetables, fruits, and other agricultural products to markets. Patients can now reach hospitals on time, which has saved many lives.

Today, villages are no longer completely cut off

from cities. There is a visible reduction in the gap between rural and urban areas. Roads, electricity, internet, and transport facilities have brought villages closer to cities. Autos play an important role in this transformation. They act as a bridge between villages and towns and improve communication and connectivity.

In the future, the world may become like a single rounded tray where every country and every region is connected and aware of each other. The internet has already made this possible to a great extent. Today, we have powerful digital platforms where people can meet and interact with each other through social media applications like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and many others. These platforms have connected villages to the global world.

Due to the internet and improved transportation, the difference between cities and villages is slowly decreasing. Villagers now have access to information, education, and entertainment just like city people. This is a good sign for the present generation and the generations to come. They will be able to enjoy their lives anywhere in the world without facing barriers between cities and villages.

**Present Scenario of Cities and Villages**

As far as our nation is concerned, India is heading towards great achievements in almost every field. Significant progress has been made in science and technology, agriculture, horticulture, pisciculture, entrepreneurship, and education. Villages are no longer backward; they are becoming centers of growth and development.

India has also achieved remarkable success in the field of space science. Space research is one of the most challenging areas, and it often takes decades or even centuries to achieve major goals. The year 2023 was a great and memorable year for the entire nation when India successfully landed its Chandrayaan mission on the Moon. This achievement

placed India among the top space-faring countries of the world, alongside nations like the USA and China.

Such achievements inspire rural youth as well. With better roads, transport facilities, and internet access, village students can now dream big. They can prepare for competitive exams, learn new skills online, and contribute to the nation's progress.

Today, villages are becoming peaceful places with clear signs of development. Road connectivity has reached almost every corner of the country. Roads lead to development, and strong road networks are the backbone of progress. Almost every village is now connected by roads, making travel easier and faster.

Autos play a crucial role in making road connectivity meaningful. Roads without transport facilities are of little use. Autos ensure that people can use roads effectively for daily travel, trade, education, and healthcare. They provide employment opportunities to drivers and mechanics and contribute to the rural economy.

Moreover, autos are affordable and suitable for village roads. They can travel on narrow roads and rough paths where larger vehicles cannot reach easily. This makes them ideal for rural areas. They are eco-friendly compared to bigger vehicles and consume less fuel.

In conclusion, the introduction of autos in remote villages has transformed rural life. They have reduced hardships, improved connectivity, and brought comfort to villagers. Autos have helped bridge the gap between villages and cities and have become symbols of progress and development. With continuous improvement in infrastructure and technology, villages will continue to grow and prosper, contributing significantly to the nation's overall development.

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**5th Death' Anniversary**

**A heartfelt tribute to Late Sardar Rafiq Hussein Khan**



■ M S NAZKI

Late Sardar Rafiq Hussein Khan was a gift from the almighty to the people of Mendhar!

'He indeed was a class act, in fact a complete package which was centred around being humane and serving humanity was his prime aim in life! Politics for him was just a staircase to serve mankind!

'Today is his Fifth death anniversary but Sardar lives in the hearts of the people. History with its flickering lamp stumbles along the trail of the past, trying to reconstruct its scenes, to revive its echoes, and kindle with pale gleams the passion of former days. Today the people of Mendhar would be doing that and the images of the tall lanky Sardar walking into their houses would be coming as flashbacks with tears adding a flavour of different kind!

'Sardar, always referred to himself as 'a lucky man. Well, now the people of Mendhar and all those who met him are saying that we're the lucky ones to have known him. What a privilege it has been. Obviously it was!

'He was one of the bigger minarets of People's Democratic Party, I often use the term the party of Lawyers. Sardar Rafiq Hussein Khan was also a lawyer as a young man. His aim in life was to help the people and he sorted out many problems free of cost. A smile on the face of his client satisfied him more than anything else. Politics came by default because he was a popular man when Mendhar was a forlorn place but now is a buzzing one!

'Sardar was a great man, a wonderful intellect, a great soul of matchless courage, one of the great men born in Mendhar. Today we meet to pay a tribute of love and respect to Late Rafiq Hussein Khan because he used his matchless power for the good of man. That is the reason as to why people in Mendhar still love and respect him! They will keep doing so till infinity!

'Of all public figures and benefactors of mankind, no one is loved by history more than the literary patron. Sardar was just a lawyer and a politi-



cian. There are many in this category. But he was also a statesman who in his time ensured that the people of Mendhar were not left deprived of anything. He lived in village Harni, a frugal house and not that extravagantly built architecture. Simplicity was his forte and dynamism to do something for the masses was his energy! Till his end he wanted to do something but then one is born with the breathing time already written in God's future diary! Everyone's is!

Many years ago, my mother suggested to me, in reference to a splendid school-teacher who had died, that in life one came across only a few truly special people. Lots of good ones she said, plenty of fabulous folk, but only a few who are special. Sardar

Rafiq, conclusively, was one of those - one of those special people. Not so much because he was so extraordinarily good at doing things in life, but because of the way in which he applied the various gifts, politics amongst them, which were given to him. Sardar was no waster not of time, not of talent nor a shirker of any situation or challenge which confronted him.

The political history of his is great. He was elected four times as a MLA to the then Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. He was a cabinet minister but had no airs about himself. Anyone could approach him anytime and if need be every time. Whatever he could do, he would do and that was a guaranteed fact. The people knew it and trust me if they are in trouble,

they always look towards the Khan household. They know that they would not be disappointed. That was the aura he had created.

He maintained excellence without arrogance, earned respect without ever assuming it, and displayed confidence and self-assurance within his immense humility. For as long as perhaps the last two months before it was time to finally pack up, maybe more maybe less, he knew, deep down I think, that the game was up. But he was damned if he would let anyone know. He was such a stubborn fellow. It was as if he was more concerned about the suffering of those around him, those few intensely close friends kept by this very private man, than about the suffering he was going through himself. The qualities of thoughtfulness and caring, of courage and bravery and didn't he so often show in his demeanour and attitude were among his finest. For all the flamboyance and bravado as a politician, Sardar was not one to overdramatize things. He said things as they were and he resolved that his dreadful illness would be his own problem and as it escalated he would not panic others with its potential end.

And yet, most fascinatingly, amazingly really, his loss echoed all around Mendhar last year. That was because he cared. He cared about standards, about commitment to the chosen cause, about quality in all things. He wanted to go on and on and on but could not have. Sardar Rafiq Hussein Khan for me was man of joy and delight in all he did and in others around him. The endless chatter, that laughter with his head thrown skywards, those dancing happy eyes and that welcoming ripper of a smile. And the unbridled enthusiasm for a determined march on all the challenges of life didn't matter what they were, simple things even such as a chatter with people moving on the roads, buying food for the hungry, making the poor kids smile and the respectful bow to the golden oldies were some of the features of his magnanimous personality!

Years back he was alive but now he is no more with us but his memories remain etched in the hearts of the people. Now he must be watching Mendhar and the people from the heavens and smiling. Perhaps saying, 'wish I could be with you. Never mind if I'm invisible but I can see you all! So live a joyful life staying united and keep moving ahead in life as that is the only way out!'

# Musings on the Mysterious Death of Christopher Marlowe



■ DR. RATAN BHATTACHARJEE

Of late in Jaipur Literature Festival 2026, Pulitzer winner Stephen Greenblatt revisited the short and fiery life of Christopher Marlowe, Shakespeare's greatest rival. He could not stop himself from crossing lines — artistic, political, sexual, theological — in an England where crossing the wrong line could get you killed said Greenblatt. The million dollar question is if the young Marlowe was killed for his free thinking or it just happened in a brawl at a pub when he was overdrunk. Or was it a state sanctioned assassination of an aesthet that Marlowe was accused to have been. Marlowe was officially killed in a tavern brawl over a bill in 1593, but his death remains a mystery with theories suggesting political assassination due to his atheism, espionage, or association with powerful figures like Sir Walter Raleigh, possibly silenced by government agents. On May 30, 1593, Marlowe was stabbed in Deptford, England, at a lodging house. The coroner's report stated that his associate, Ingram Frizer killed him in self-defense during a fight over the bill for dinner. Some in later times believed that the Privy Council or figures like the Earl of Essex ordered his death to stop him from exposing Catholic sympathies or other secrets.

The deaths of poets and writers have often coincided with historical moments of tension, revolution, and dogmatism. For centuries, the world has witnessed the killing of thinkers from Socrates forced to drink hemlock to the execution of Spanish poet Federico García Lorca during the Civil War, to the assassination of intellectuals in Bangladesh in 1971, to the brutal murders of writers in modern India like young dramatist Safdar Hashmi or other secular bloggers. These lives were eliminated not because they commanded armies or controlled wealth, but because they dared to articulate dissenting truths. A tyrant fears the poet because the poet humanizes the oppressed, unmasks the tyrannical, and reminds society of its moral obligations. Words survive long after swords dull, and so the wielder of power seeks to stop words at their source.

Christopher Marlowe remains one of the most incandescent figures of the English Renaissance—brilliant, rebellious, dangerous, and doomed. Born in 1564, the same year as William Shakespeare, Marlowe rose like a comet across the theatrical sky of Elizabethan England, blazing with genius yet burning too fast for his own survival. If Shakespeare came to embody longevity, balance, and gradual mastery, Marlowe embodied intensity, audacity, and peril. He was Shakespeare's greatest rival not merely because of chronological coincidence or stylistic innovation, but because he redefined the dramatic possibilities of the English stage at a moment when Shakespeare himself was still learning his craft. Yet Marlowe's life ended abruptly and violently at the age of twenty-nine, in circumstances that remain unresolved, controversial, and endlessly fascinating. His death was not simply the death of a man; it was the silencing of a voice that threatened to alter the very direction of English drama.

Every act of violence against a writer also reflects the deep anxieties of a society struggling with its own contradictions. Writers serve as mirrors, and for many societies standing before that mirror is unbearable. The poet sees what others overlook. They see fractures in political rhetoric, hypocrisies buried in cultural pride, injustices ignored in the daily rush of life. Their task is not to flatter but to reveal. A poem that questions a war, a novel that exposes caste violence, an essay that critiques religious fundamentalism—these become threats to those

who profit from silence. Thus, the murder of a writer is a desperate attempt to kill the mirror itself. Yet history shows that the mirror often returns, sharper than before, carried by new voices. The killing of a writer or poet also exposes the vulnerability of freedom in any society. Freedom of expression is not a static achievement; it must be protected and revitalized every day. When a poet is slain, it signals that the space for dialogue is shrinking. Societies that once celebrated intellectual debates become hostile to complexity, preferring sterile uniformity over rich diversity of thought. Fear replaces curiosity, conformity replaces imagination. In such an atmosphere, people censor themselves long before the state does.

The murder of one writer becomes a silent warning to a thousand others. It creates a chilling effect that is often more destructive than censorship itself, for the fear of reprisal kills unwritten books, unsung poems, and unborn ideas. Yet, paradoxically, the murder of writers has often led to the strengthening of the very ideals their killers tried to erase. Lorca's poetry remains timeless, the works of Anna Politkovskaya became emblematic of courage, and the thoughts of Perumal Murugan triumphed even after being forced into silence for a time. Writers become martyrs in the collective landscape of memory. Their words gain new power, becoming symbols of resistance against oppression. The murder of a poet also transforms the relationship between society and literature. It reminds readers—often complacent—that literature is not always a decorative art but a dangerous one. Poetry is not petals; it can be fire. Fiction is not an escape; it can be a revolution. Writers, especially in politically turbulent societies, write at risk. They translate their inner courage into language, and through that language they awaken others. When such a life is taken, the public recoils, debates intensify, movements erupt, and civil society introspects.

In a time when disinformation spreads faster than truth and when ideological divisions are sharper than ever, the murder of writers becomes a barometer of democracy's health. A democracy that cannot protect its writers is a democracy in decline. True freedom is tested not by how a society treats its agreeable voices but by how it tolerates dissenting ones. Writers, by nature, are dissenters. Their role is not to comfort but to challenge, to ask uncomfortable questions, to give voice to the marginalized, to probe the silences that others avoid. A society that kills such voices is complicit in its own intellectual impoverishment. And yet the story is not entirely bleak. For every murdered writer, dozens arise, carrying forward the fire. Literature has always survived violence, censorship, exile, and erasure. The spirit of creation cannot be fully subdued. Even in prison cells writers like Nazrul Islam have composed masterpieces. Even under threat they have published. Even after death they have inspired movements. The world continues to produce poets who speak against war, writers who chronicle injustice, essayists who expose corruption, novelists who safeguard the dignity of the oppressed. The courage of these voices is the greatest tribute to those who were silenced. Don Quixote was written while Cervantes was imprisoned in 17th Century Spain. The Travels of Marco Polo by Rustichello da Pisa was written while he was captured by Genoese forces. Marco Polo dictated the stories of his Asian travels to fellow inmate Rustichello, creating a landmark travelogue. The Consolation of Philosophy was written by Boethius around 523 AD while he had been awaiting execution. De Profundis a profound, sombre, and self-reflective letter was written during Wilde's two-year hard labor sentence in Reading Gaol. John Bunyan wrote his masterpiece The Pilgrim's Progress during a 12-year imprisonment for preaching without a license. Long Walk to Freedom by Nelson Mandela was based on a manuscript written during his 27-year imprisonment and this memoir is now a testament to the fight against apartheid. Fyodor Dostoevsky's The House of the Dead

**The murder of one writer becomes a silent warning to a thousand others. It creates a chilling effect that is often more destructive than censorship itself, for the fear of reprisal kills unwritten books, unsung poems, and unborn ideas. Yet, paradoxically, the murder of writers has often led to the strengthening of the very ideals their killers tried to erase. Lorca's poetry remains timeless, the works of Anna Politkovskaya became emblematic of courage**

was inspired by his four years Siberian Labour Camp which is today a foundational text of prison literature. The famous American poet e.e.cummings wrote his autobiographical novel The Enormous Room which is his documenting of four-month detention in a French prison during World War I.

The imprisonment or murder of writers and poets, therefore, is not just a phenomenon of brutality; it is a complex human drama involving power, fear, truth, and memory. It represents the perpetual struggle between those who seek to control narratives and those who strive to expand them. It forces us to reconsider our collective responsibility: to read fearlessly, to defend those who speak, to question the forces that suppress thought, and to build a culture where every voice can breathe without fear. In the end, killing a writer never kills the truth. It may delay it, distort it, or wound it, but truth persists in whispers, in hidden manuscripts, in forbidden verses, in the memories of readers, in the courage of future generations. The murder of a poet is, paradoxically, the murder of the fear that sought to kill the poem. For words outlive bullets, ideas outlast violence, and the human spirit—restless, questioning, and creative—continues to rise from the ashes of every silenced voice.

Marlowe emerged from a background very different from Shakespeare's. Born in Canterbury to a shoemaker, he was educated at the King's School and later at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, on a scholarship that implied not only academic brilliance but political usefulness. His university career was already shrouded in suspicion, for he was frequently absent from Cambridge, leading to rumours that he had converted to Catholicism or fled abroad. On the stage, Marlowe was revolutionary. Before him, English drama often relied on stiff moral allegories or lumbering historical chronicles written in halting verse. Marlowe introduced a new music to the theatre: mighty blank verse, flexible, sonorous, and emotionally charged. His characters were driven by colossal ambition—Tamburlaine thirsting for world conquest, Doctor Faustus selling his soul for forbidden knowledge, Barabas in The Jew of Malta reveling in ruthless revenge, and Edward II tragically undone by desire and weakness. These figures were not mere moral exempla; they were psychologically compelling, intellectually restless, and defiantly transgressive. Shakespeare learned much from Marlowe's example, absorbing his use of blank verse and his fascination with power and ambition, even as he later surpassed him in complexity and range. Without Marlowe, Shakespeare's early development

would be unthinkable.

Yet Marlowe's brilliance came with a perilous edge. He was notorious for his atheism—or at least for holding views that appeared dangerously close to it in a deeply religious age. He was accused of blasphemy, of mocking the Bible, of denying the divinity of Christ. His plays themselves echo this rebellious spirit: Faustus challenges divine limits; Tamburlaine defies God as well as kings. In Elizabethan England, such audacity was never merely artistic—it was political. We know that Giordano Bruno was burnt in open street for defending Galileo's theory and for shouting boldly, 'The Bible is false.' The final weeks of Marlowe's life were marked by mounting danger. In May 1593, a series of threatening anti-immigrant pamphlets appeared in London, targeting Dutch and French Protestants. One such libel was posted on the wall of a churchyard and written in a style that suspiciously echoed Marlowe's own verse. The authorities were alarmed. In a city already tense with plague, economic distress, and fears of rebellion, such inflammatory writing was intolerable. Marlowe was quickly drawn into the investigation. His former roommate, the playwright Thomas Kyd, was arrested and tortured; under duress, Kyd implicated Marlowe, claiming that heretical papers found among his belongings actually belonged to Marlowe. We cannot forget that in later times, after the passage of three centuries, Shelley's was rusticated from Oxford for his publication of "On the Necessity of Aethism".

Some scholars argue that Marlowe was effectively executed without trial, his killing sanctioned at the highest levels of power. Others propose that he was the victim of an internal intelligence dispute or a personal vendetta disguised as official business. There is even a more radical theory—that Marlowe's death was staged, allowing him to escape England and continue writing under another name, perhaps even under the name of Shakespeare himself. While this latter idea remains speculative and unsupported by solid evidence, its persistence testifies to the enduring mystery surrounding Marlowe's end. What is beyond doubt is that Marlowe's death benefited many parties. The government avoided a potentially explosive heresy trial. The intelligence services eliminated a volatile operative. The theatrical world lost its most dangerous innovator, clearing the path for Shakespeare to dominate the stage. Shakespeare, who was already active as a playwright in 1593, would go on to explore themes Marlowe had pioneered—ambition, power, moral conflict—but with a greater caution, a subtler irony, and a deeper psychological balance. In a sense, Shakespeare survived by learning from Marlowe's excesses as well as his achievements. The tragedy of Marlowe's death lies not only in its violence but in its timing. He was at the height of his creative powers. Doctor Faustus alone suggests a mind grappling with the ultimate questions of human existence: the limits of knowledge, the price of ambition, the terror of damnation. Today, Marlowe is remembered as Shakespeare's greatest rival, but rivalry alone does not capture his significance. He was a trailblazer whose work reshaped English drama and expanded the expressive possibilities of the language. His mysterious death has become part of his legend, reinforcing the image of a dramatist too dangerous to live, too brilliant to be forgotten. In the shadowy room at Deptford where his life ended, the Renaissance lost one of its boldest voices. Yet in his plays, that voice continues to speak—defiant, seductive, and unsettling—reminding us that the pursuit of truth and power has always come at a cost.

**International Tagore Awardee Multilingual poet and writer Dr. Ratan Bhattacharjee is a Former Affiliate Faculty Virginia Commonwealth University & Ex Associate Professor and Head Post Graduate Dept of English Dum Dum Motijheel College. Email prof.ratanbhattacharjee@gmail.com**

## My Feminine

*I call myself,  
A man  
They prefer to call me  
I live in the world  
That stops saying,  
Hey you .....  
I have female trait  
I cry like a woman  
I act like a woman,  
To see my side gets hurt  
They watch me  
They call me  
They old charms well  
I am silent to her screams  
I am paradoxical,  
On the civilization  
That befriended us  
The being I call,  
A woman  
I am a woman like you  
Like Amal Clooney  
Like the actress in the stage  
I am in love  
With the world,  
That's me.*



Sidharth P K

## Nut of Contention

*Three big Kalpavrukshas  
Protected home from relentless Sun  
Also, from the loneliness  
Of me and my pet...  
There go the cute squirrels,  
My arrival made them run away  
The morsels from the pet's plate  
Used to be their savoury  
Devoured and shared the insects  
Not the only visible updates!  
Peeped the stark eyes of the  
Next door.... burning like the sun!  
Complaints came in loads  
About the falling long branches  
May harm their always 'clean' premises!  
Wanted to cut off the front-green 'God'  
The sour hearts were empty...  
Warmth of the missing souls  
Filled the air with vicious blames  
The road was the property of none.  
Alas! The trees stood on that route  
The falling nuts made the bellies boil  
Without fire, concrete walls  
stood between  
Heaven and Hell, and like Babel, one fell  
The Duo is still the 'nut of contention'  
Much is not left to be mentioned  
The age-old tale of jealousy and gluttony  
Treat the heart, not the head!!  
The milk is visibly white  
Lime and Charcoal are the same  
The chess of abuses wrings the nectar  
And consumed by the Nut itself!!*



M. Kusuma

# LG Ladakh interacts with J&K Ice Hockey Team

Encourages Players to uphold Sportsmanship & Excellence at Khelo India Winter Games

**HT NEWS NETWORK**

**LEH, JAN 20:** The Ice Hockey team of Jammu and Kashmir today paid a courtesy visit to the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, at Lok Niwas, Leh. The team is presently in Leh to take part in the prestigious ongoing 6th edition of the Khelo India Winter Games being held in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Lt Governor extended a warm welcome to the players and officials, and lauded their dedication, discipline and passion for ice hockey. He said that the Khelo India Winter Games have emerged as a significant platform for nurturing winter sports talent and providing national exposure to young athletes, particularly from the Himalayan and cold regions.

Shri Kavinder Gupta encouraged the players to give their best performance in the Games



and uphold the spirit of sportsmanship, teamwork and excellence. He expressed confidence that such national-level events would further strengthen India's winter sports ecosystem and inspire the youth to actively engage in sports for physical fitness and holistic development.

The Jammu and Kashmir Ice Hockey team comprises Shri Shabir Ahmad Dar, Nodal Officer, Shri Sahil Gupta (Coach), Jasvinder Singh, Rahil Choudary,

Parth Slathia, Dhruv Gupta, Jaipreet Singh, Surya Bhaskar Sharma, Jaideep Singh, Smaksh Bhardwaj, Varun Anand, Navjot Singh, Hiteshwar Singh, Abhinav Gupta, Krish Upal, Ghulam Nabi Tak, Maroof Gulzar and Salim Ahmad.

The players expressed their gratitude to the Lt Governor for his encouragement and support, stating that his interaction boosted their morale ahead of the competitions in the Khelo India Winter Games.

## J&K BJP leaders felicitate Nitin Nabin on his election as BJP National President

**HT NEWS NETWORK**

**NEW DELHI, JAN 20:** Jammu & Kashmir BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma CA, along with senior party leaders from the Union Territory, felicitated Nitin Nabin on his election as the National President of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

J&K BJP General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul, Leader of Opposition in J&K Assembly Sunil Sharma, MP Jugal Kishore Sharma, former Dy CM Dr. Nirmal Singh, General Secretary Gopal Mahajan, MLAs Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, Shakti Raj Parihar, Yudhvir Sethi, Balwant Singh Mankotia, Mohan Lal Bhagat, Vice-Presidents Priya Sethi,



and Rakesh Mahajan (RO), Ved Sharma, Rajni Sethi, Adv Rajesh Gupta, Rohit Dubey, Rajiv Pandita, Shailja Gupta, Dharminder Kumar, Jaideep Singh Sambyal, and others were also present on the occasion.

The leaders extended their warm congratulations and conveyed their best wishes for a successful and impactful tenure at the helm of the world's largest political party.

Speaking on the occasion, Sat Sharma said that Nitin Nabin's elevation reflects the BJP's strong organizational culture, commitment to grassroots leadership, and emphasis on disciplined, dedicated activists. He expressed confidence that under Nabin's leadership, the party would further strengthen its ideological foundations, expand its outreach, and continue to work decisively for the nation's development.

Ashok Koul reaffirmed the J&K BJP's full support to the national leadership in advancing the vision of a strong, inclusive, and developed India.

Sunil Sharma said that Nitin Nabin's leadership will further energize the party cadre and strengthen BJP's resolve to serve the nation with discipline and dedication.

Jugal Kishore Sharma said that the new national president's experience, organizational skills, and connect with party workers would energize the cadre across the country.

## Abhay Kumar Mahajan congratulates New BJP National President Nitin Nabin

**HT NEWS NETWORK**

**JAMMU, JAN 20:** BJP Employees Cell Co-Convenor J&K UT, Abhay Kumar Mahajan IPS Congratulated New BJP National President Nitin Nabin on his taking over of Charge.

Mahajan welcomed the 12th National President who is the youngest National President at the age of 45, with vast experience of having worked at various levels in the party cadre, be it Yuva Morcha, 5 times MLA and Minister.

Mahajan hailed his being appointed National President which explicit his capabilities which have been recognized by seniors. While wishing long life to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi Mahajan praised for such decision and for taking India to New heights.



## Laghu Udyog Bharati Holds Meeting with RSS Prant Pracharak, Calls MSMEs of J&K to Join Nationwide Body

**HT NEWS NETWORK**

**JAMMU, JAN 20:** A meeting of the State Office Bearers of Laghu Udyog Bharati, Jammu & Kashmir, was held with Mukesh Kumar, RSS Prant Pracharak, Jammu & Kashmir. The meeting focused on organizational strengthening and future planning for the welfare of micro, small and medium enterprises in the region.

Mukesh Kumar, during the meeting, spoke about strengthening the organization, increasing membership, and future programmes and initiatives, and emphasized that organizational discipline, collective working, and a long-term vision are essential for nation building through industry.

All the office bearers present



in the meeting resolved to work unitedly for the welfare of small industries and to further strengthen Laghu Udyog Bharati across Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Parveen Pargal, National Executive Member, Laghu Udyog Bharati; Dinesh Gupta, President, Laghu Udyog Bharati Jammu &

Kashmir; Ankit Gupta, State Vice President; Aagam Jain, State General Secretary; Ishant Gupta, State Secretary Finance; Pranav Gupta, State Joint Gen-

eral Secretary; and Mukul Mahajan, State Joint General Secretary.

Parveen Pargal stated that Laghu Udyog Bharati is a national-level organization and has official representation in various government bodies including the GST Council, ESIC, EPFO and other policy-making institutions. He urged MSMEs of Jammu & Kashmir to become members of the nationwide organization which is actively working for the welfare and protection of MSMEs.

Dinesh Gupta also addressed the meeting and shared a detailed report on the working system of Laghu Udyog Bharati. He explained how the organization continuously works at policy and ground levels to safeguard the interests of MSMEs and to support their growth and development.

## BJP Mahila Morcha Holds Monthly Meeting at District Samba; Focus on Mann Ki Baat and Organizational Strengthening

**HT NEWS NETWORK**

**SAMBA, JAN 20:** Under the leadership of Adv. Neha Mahajan, President, BJPJKUT Mahila Morcha, along with Er. Urvashi Gupta, General Secretary, BJP Mahila Morcha & Parliamentary Constituency Incharge, Jammu-Reasi, and geeta bhagat, general secretary, a monthly organizational meeting of BJP Mahila Morcha, District Samba was held with the objective of strengthening the organization at the grassroots level and ensuring effective implementation of party programmes.

The meeting was chaired under the headship of Indu Sambyal and witnessed the presence of senior Mahila Morcha leaders.

Usha Rajput (Prabhari) and Neelam Jasrotia (Seh Prabhari) were felicitated on the occasion following their recent nominations. The programme was also attended by Asha Rani, District President, and Amit Dubey, General Secretary, among other senior leaders and dedicated party workers.

The stage proceedings were efficiently conducted by Monika, General Secretary, while the vote of thanks was presented by Shakti,



appreciating the participation and contributions of all attendees.

Addressing the gathering, Adv. Neha Mahajan briefed the participants about the ongoing and upcoming programmes of the party, with special emphasis on the effective outreach of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Mann Ki Baat programme. She underlined the importance of connecting with people at

the booth and ward levels to spread the vision of Viksit Bharat and to strengthen the party's organizational structure.

The meeting concluded with a collective resolve to further intensify public outreach, strengthen organizational machinery, and work with dedication to take the party's policies and programmes to every section of society.

## IED FOUND, DEFUSED ALONG HIGHWAY

**HT NEWS NETWORK**

**BARAMULLA, JAN 20:** Security forces on Tuesday detected and defused an improvised explosive device (IED) along the Srinagar-Baramulla national highway in Tappan area of Pattan in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, officials said.

An official said that the IED was found planted on the roadside along the national highway during a routine road-opening operation.

"The explosive device was spotted by a road-opening party of 29 Rashtriya Rifles along with personnel from Pattan police," the official said.

Following the detection, the area was immediately secured and vehicular movement on the highway was suspended as a precautionary measure, he added.

A bomb disposal squad was subsequently called to the spot, which safely defused the IED without causing any damage or casualties.

Traffic on the Srinagar-Baramulla highway was restored from both sides after the successful disposal of the explosive device, the official said.

Police have registered a case in connection with the incident and an investigation has been initiated to ascertain who planted the IED and for what purpose, he added. (KNS)

## MGNREGA was backbone of economy of rural poor: Ashok Sharma

**HT NEWS NETWORK**

**SUNDERBANI, JAN 20:** Former MLC & JKPC Chief Spokesperson Mr Ravinder Sharma has said that centre government should restore statehood to J&K without any further delay, as people are suffering a lot.

Addressing a large gathering of party workers Chaired by DCC President Ashok Sharma at Sunderbani today as part of MGNREGA Bachao Sangram and Hamari Riyasat- Hamara Haq movement, JKPC Chief Spokesperson criticised the divisive slogans by BJP and certain other forces, for vested political interests and said that unity of regions within Jammu and Kashmir is paramount for equitable treatment and development and centre should restore statehood to J&K at the earliest.

He said that certain forces



are playing divisive politics posing threat to the unity, integrity and identity of J&K and regions within UT, for cheap publicity and vested interests, which is very dangerous for peace, harmony and future of Jammu and Kashmir. The political and social strength of Jammu province lies in its unity on secular lines and brotherhood, which should be maintained at all costs, for equitable treatment and development.

He also questioned the economic and job policy of BJP leading to huge unemployment and criticised the repeal of MGNREGA and said that it is big blow to rural jobless by Modi government.

DCC President Rajouri Mr Ashok Sharma lashed out at the Centre over repeal of MGNREGA

and termed it anti poor. Congress will continue to expose BJP's anti labour, anti poor policies, he added.

He said that Congress has already announced intensification of statehood movement and said that we shall fight for the rights of common people.

Adv Aiyaz Kataria, Block Presidents Dfo (retd) N C Sharma, Tirth Ram Sharma, Sdr Ajit Singh

, Yog Raj Sharma, Dr Ved Sudan, Thoru Ram, Sub Om Parkash, Principals retd Lachhman Khajuria, Vijay Damral, Rajeev Chadha, Kasturi Lal, Capt Joginder Singh and several senior leaders addressed the gathering and pledged to carry out mass awareness against the wrong policies of BJP.

The speakers criticised the Modi government for the deliberate delay in grant of statehood and depriving people of their democratic rights and identity. They said that movement for restoration of statehood.

The gathering passed a resolution seeking restoration of statehood to J&K, criticised repeal of MGNREGA and further to regularise all daily wagers, need based. Contractuals, adhoc, consolidated and all temporary based employees in a time bound manner.

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

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Subject: Application of Rahil Ahmad Bath, S/o Nazir Ahmad Bath, R/o Kawari Gam, Tehsil Achabal, District Anantnag for issuance of RBA Certificate.

Whereas the above named applicant has applied in this office for issuance of RBA Certificate in his favour. In this connection, report from the concerned Patwari Halqa has been sought, which reveals that the applicant is a resident of village Kawari Gam, Tehsil Achabal, District Anantnag and belongs to RBA category.

The residential status and family particulars of the applicant stand verified as per records.

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

Issued under my hand and seal of this office.

**By Order**  
**Naib Tehsildar**  
**Achabal**

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir  
**Office of the Naib Tehsildar, Anantnag**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Subject: Application of Shabir Ahmad Shah, S/o Mohd Yousuf Shah, Suhana Shabir, D/o Shabir Ahmad Shah and Mehak Shabir, D/o Shabir Ahmad Shah, R/o Kawarigam, Tehsil Anantnag, District Anantnag for issuance of RBA / OBC Certificate.

Whereas the above-named applicants have applied in this office for issuance of RBA/OBC Certificate in their favour. In this connection, a report from the concerned Patwari Halqa has been sought, which reveals that the applicants are residents of village Kawarigam, Tehsil Anantnag, District Anantnag and their family particulars stand verified as per revenue records. The annual income of the family is within the prescribed limits.

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

Issued under my hand and seal of this office.

**By Order**  
**Naib Tehsildar**  
**Anantnag**

**Public Notice**

This is to inform the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Aadhaar Card bearing Aadhaar No. 2772 3564 0646 . Now I want to change my name from Abdul Majeed Wani (Old Name) to Ab Majid Wani (New Name). In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he or she may approach the concerned authorities within a period of seven days. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

**Name:- Ab Majid Wani**  
**S/o:-Abdul Aziz Wani**  
**R/O:- ompora Budgam Budgam , Jammu And Kashmir- 191111**

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**Public Notice**

I hereby declare that my name and parentage have been wrongly mentioned in my Driving Licence No. JK-011999006833. Incorrect particulars:  
Name: Ghulam Mohammad Lone  
Father's Name: Mohammad Maqbool Lone  
Correct particulars:  
Name: Gulam Mohd Loan  
Father's Name: Maqbool Loan

This public notice is issued to rectify the above error for all official and legal purposes.

If anyone has any objection to this correction, he/she may contact the undersigned within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Thereafter, no objection shall be entertained.

**Name: Gulam Mohd Loan**  
**Father's Name: Maqbool Loan**

**Public Notice**

I, Asmat Khurshed intend to add my surname and be known as Asmat Khurshed Khan in my J&K Bank account records. Any person having an objection to the same may contact jk bank main bazar sopore within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, no objection shall be presumed and the bank record will be updated accordingly.

**Name (Existing): Asmat Khurshed**  
**Proposed Name: Asmat Khurshed Khan**  
**Date: 21 January 26**  
**Place: JK Bank mainbazar Sopore**  
**Signature: Asmat Khurshed**  
**Contact No.:**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I have changed my name from (old name) Altaf Ahmed Khanday to (New Name) Altaf Ahmad Khanday. In future I will be known as (New Name) ALTAF AHMAD KHANDAY. If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 07 days. After 7days no objection will be accepted

**Public Notice**

My daughter's name & her Mother's has been wrongly written as AINOOR and mother name REHANA in her Date Birth certificate bearing id no 101002560529 issued by SDH Kreeri while her correct name is AINOOR JAFFAR & mothers name is REHANA TABASUM which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he / she may file his/her objection in the office of BMD / SDH KREERI within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

**Name...JAFFAR AHMAD LONE**  
**F/O ...AINOOR JAFFAR**  
**R/O... DOLIPORA**  
**TEHSIL....KREERI**

**Public Notice**

I MOHAMMAD ASHRAF MALIK S/O ABDUL RASHID MALIK R/O WAGILA WAGOORA .Here by inform to general public that I am applying for pesticides & Fertilizer License if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may contact with Head office HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT LAL MANDI SRINAGAR within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

**Name....MOHAMMAD ASHRAF MALIK**  
**S/O...ABDUL RASHID MALIK**  
**R/O...WAGILA WAGOORA**

**Before the Hon'ble Court of Additional District & Sessions Judge at Handwara**

In the case of:  
Mala Begum  
D/o: Mohd Mukhtar Bhat  
W/o:- Nazir Ahmad Bhat  
R/o: Maratgam  
Tehsil: Handwara  
District: Kupwara  
(Caveator)  
V/S  
Public At Large  
(Caveatees)

Caveat application under section 148 A of In the matter of- CPC,  
May it please the Honorable Court  
That the application is humbly submitted as under:  
1. That the caveator is the domicile of UT of J&K.  
2. That the caveator is the owner & in possession of land situated at Revenue estate Maratgam Tehsil: Handwara District: Kupwara.  
3. That the caveator apprehends that the caveatees may institute any suit or any other proceedings with regard to the aforesaid land against caveator.  
4. That in case Caveatees file any suit or other proceedings before this Honorable Court against caveator, in that eventuality caveator may be given an opportunity of being heard before passing any interim or final order and the caveator may kindly be intimated and be put to notice.  
5. That the copy of caveat has been served to caveatees through registered post and receipt thereof is annexed herewith.  
6. That an affidavit in support of application is annexed here with.

In the premises it is therefore humbly prayed that in eventuality of any suit or any other proceedings in case preferred by caveatees against caveator before this Honorable court, the caveator shall be given an opportunity of being heard before passing any interim or final order same shall serve the ends of justice.

**Caveator through Counsel**  
**Adv. Mudasir Manzoor**  
**Add. Dist. & Sessions Court Handwara**

**Public Notice**

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill ) power connection is registered on the name of MOHD AKBAR NAJAR S/O GH RASOOL NAJAR R/O...HAIL JAGIR Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 0212040001258 wants to be registered on my MOHD IQBAL NAJAR S/O GH AHMAD NAJAR R/O HAIL JAGIR .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

**Name..MOHD IQBAL NAJAR S/O ... GH AHMAD NAJAR , R/O ...HAIL JAGIR**

**Public Notice**

I am applying for fresh fertilizers license if anybody having any objection in this regard he /she may file in the office of CHIEF AGRICULTURE OFFICER BARAMULLA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

**Name.... Dar Shafi Ul Naseem S/O Mohammad Ramzan Dar R/O ...Khisipora Kreeri Dstt ....Baramulla**

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

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

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of YARBASH AHMAD KHAN S/O ABDUL MAJEED KHAN R/O SALOOSA Tehsil KREERI Dist. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 15/03/1992 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order .In this connection.

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

**Sd/- Executive Magistrate 1st Class Kreeri**

Government of Jammu and Kashmir  
**Office of the Child Development Project Officer Poshan Project Kalaroos Kupwara**

Subject: Advertisement for Recruitment of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) in Anganwadi Centers of Poshan Project Kalaroos.

**Ref: 1. Govt. Order No. 222- JK (SWD) of 2022 dated 30-11-2022.**  
**2. Govt. order No. 103- JK (SWD) of 2023 dated 28-04-2023.**  
**3. MD/Poshan/47213-23 Dated: 24-12-2025**  
**4. DPO/POSHAN/25/6043-55 Dated: 29-12-2025**

**Advertisement No: 02- CDPO-KALAROOS of 2026**  
**Dated: 19-01-2026**

Applications on prescribed proforma (Annexure-1) are hereby invited from the eligible female candidates of the Panch/ward shown against the below mentioned Panchayat Halqa, for the engagement of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) for the Anganwadi Centers of POSHAN Project Kalaroos on "Honorarium basis". The application along with required documents should reach to the office of Child Development Project Officer Kalaroos (Main Market Kalaroos) within 15 days from the date of publication of the said notice against proper receipt.

a) Date of commencement for submission of application forms: 21-01-2026  
b) Last date for submission of applications is: 04-02-2026

S.No	District	Project	Name of Panchayat	Vacancy of Shayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)		Name of Anganwadi Centre
				Panch Ward No.		
1	Kupwara	Kalaroos	Madmadow	03		Mir Moh Madmadow Old
2	Kupwara	Kalaroos	Parraypora	04		Khan Moh Parraypora
3	Kupwara	Kalaroos	Dudi	03		Chan Moh Dudi

**Criteria for Selection of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) shall remain as envisaged in The Govt. Order No: 222- JK (SWD) OF 2022, Dated: 30-11-2022 i.e,**

- Women candidates in the age group of 18-37 years shall be eligible (age shall be calculated on the 1st day of calendar year i.e. 01-01-2026).
- The candidate should be a domicile of the UT of J&K.
- The candidate should be a resident of the Electoral Ward where Anganwadi Centre is located.
- Minimum qualification for Anganwadi Helper shall be Matriculation.
- In case no matriculate candidate is available in the Ward, candidates with qualification not less than 8th standard shall be considered.
- The selection shall be made purely as per merit in light of the instructions of the administrative Department communicated vide no.: SWD-ICDS/43/2022, Dated: 14-08- 2023 and as per the communication of Mission Director, Poshan J&K vide No.: SMD/ICDS/Recruitment/2022-23/21349-72, Dated: 14-07-2023.

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

- Panch Ward Certificate and Voter list issued by BDO concerned.
- Un-married certificate issued by Tehsildar in case name appears with parents in electoral roll.
- Domicile Certificate issued by Tehsildar concerned.
- Date of Birth Certificate.
- Academic Qualification Certificates with class 10 Mark card.
- Non employment Certificate.
- Self-Addressed envelope with postage stamp of Rs 5/-
- Affidavit from first class magistrate stating following facts.
  - All Documents/details submitted along with the application form for engagement of Sahayika (Anganwadi Helper) are correct, without any mismatch, duplicacy, or fallacious in nature. If found incorrect or in any of the above stated situation the candidature of deponent may be cancelled and liable to action under law.
  - The deponent has read the HR policy no. 222-JK(SWD) of 2022 dated: 30.11.2022 and is well versed with all salient features of the policy and shall be applicable to the deponent in case of selection as Sahayika (Anganwadi Helper).

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

**(ANNEXURE-I)**

**Advt Notification No. & Date Form Sr. No.**

**APPLICATION FORM FOR ENGAGEMENT OF SAHAYIKA (ANGANWADI HELPER)**

- Name of the District: Kupwara
- Name of the Poshan (ICDS) Project: KALAROOS
- Name of the Anganwadi Centre for which engagement sought.....
- Panch Ward no. .... of Panchayat Halqa .....
- Name of the Candidate (In Block Letters) .....
- Fathers Name (In Block Letters) .....
- Marital Status: - (Married/ Un-Married) .....
- Husbands Name (if married) .....
- Permanent Address: Mohalla .....  
Village ..... Panch Ward no. .... Name of the Panchayat Halqa. ....

Block: ..... Pin code .....

- Mobile No: ..... Email ID: .....
- Date of Birth: ...../...../..... (in words) .....
- Age as on 01-01-2026: Years..... months ..... Days
- Academic Qualification:

S.No	Examination passed	Board/School	Year of passing	Marks Obt.	Max. Marks	%age
1	Matric					
2	Middle					

- Does candidate belong to family of retired AWW (Yes / No) .....
- Documents attached.
  - Panch Ward Certificate and voter list issued by BDO concerned.
  - Domicile Certificate issued by Tehsildar concerned.
  - Date of Birth Certificate.
  - Un-married certificate issued by Tehsildar concerned, if the name of candidate appears with parents in the voter list.
  - Academic Qualification Certificates with Marks card of 10
  - If candidate belong to family of retired AWHs, then copy of e-ticket of ration card.
  - Non-employment Certificate.
  - Self-Addressed envelope with postage stamp of Rs 5/-.
  - Affidavit.

**Signature of Candidate**

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

**Signature of Candidate**

**No: CDPO/KIr/Adv/26/632-45**  
**Dated: 19-01-2026**

**Sd/- Child Dev. Project Officer**  
**Poshan Project Kalaroos**

**DIPK: 10191/25 | Dated: 20-01-2026**

# DC Budgam distributes 253 Ice Boxes to Fishers under JKCIIP

Says JKCIIP initiative boosts Fisheries Sector in the district

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM, JANUARY 20:** Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, today distributed 253 units of ice boxes among vulnerable fishers and fish farmers of District Budgam.

The ice boxes have been procured by the Fisheries Department under the Jammu and Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement Project (JKCIIP) as part of sustained efforts to strengthen the fisheries sector and improve the socio-economic conditions of fishing communities.

The initiative has been undertaken with the objective of increasing the shelf life of fish commodities, preventing post-harvest losses, and ensuring hygienic handling of fish, particularly by street fish vendors. The provision of ice boxes will also help fishers and fish farmers avoid distress sales, enabling them to store and transport fish safely and sell their produce at better prices through improved market access.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC Budgam said that the Fisheries



Department is playing a vital role in uplifting the livelihoods of traditional fishers and fish farmers by introducing need-based interventions under JKCIIP.

He emphasized that post-harvest management is a critical component in enhancing income levels and ensuring sustainability of the

fisheries sector.

The DC further stated that the distributed ice boxes would significantly contribute towards maintaining quality and freshness of fish, thereby ensuring that consumers receive safe, hygienic, and high-quality fish at their doorsteps. He added that such

initiatives not only benefit producers but also strengthen consumer confidence in locally produced fish.

The DC reiterated the District Administration's commitment to inclusive development, stating that focused attention is being given to vulnerable and marginalized communities to ensure they are brought into the mainstream of economic growth. He urged beneficiaries to make optimum use of the assets provided and adopt best practices in hygienic fish handling and marketing.

The DC said that the programme is expected to improve living conditions of the downtrodden fishing community, enhance income of fish farmers through better market linkages, and reduce wastage caused by spoilage during transportation and sale. He said that initiative also aligns with the broader objective of promoting sustainable livelihoods and strengthening the rural economy of District Budgam.

On the occasion, Officials of the Fisheries Department were also present, besides various beneficiaries.

# JKEDI trains 153 entrepreneurs under RAMP scheme; Concludes MDPs in five Districts

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JANUARY 20:** The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) has successfully concluded the sixth and seventh batches of Management Development Programmes (MDPs) in Baramulla, Shopian, Kupwara, Poonch and Budgam districts under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme.

The scheme is funded by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, and implemented by the Industries and Commerce Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

The six-day intensive MDPs, were held at NRLM Cluster Level Federation Centre (CLF), Kahitangan, Baramulla, Kapran, Shopian, Tangnar Nagam, Budgam, DECC Kupwara and at JKEDI District Centre Poonch. A total of 153 aspiring and existing entrepreneurs successfully completed the 30-hour structured training programme, which comprised expert interactions and field exposure visits.

Notably, 125 women entrepreneurs participated in the batches, marking a significant stride towards gender inclusivity in the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem. The programmes were conducted by the respective District Centres of JKEDI under the overall supervision of the Director, JKEDI.

The MDPs were designed to enhance managerial, financial and strategic competencies of participants, enabling them

to scale up their enterprises, improve competitiveness and develop sustainable business models. The initiative aligns with the broader objectives of the RAMP programme, which seeks to strengthen and modernise the MSME ecosystem across the country.

The curriculum, developed by subject matter experts, covered key areas including business planning, marketing strategies, use of digital tools, financial literacy, statutory compliance, innovation and leadership development. The training also featured mentorship sessions, case studies, interactive discussions and hands-on workshops to provide participants with practical, real-world business insights.

Sector-specific sessions formed an important component of the MDPs, with experts from the District Industries Centres (DICs) and the Labour and Employment Department interacting with participants to share domain-specific guidance. In addition, field visits to successful enterprises were organised to provide firsthand exposure to operational best practices.

The programmes were regularly monitored by designated Range and Reviewing Officers, who interacted with participants to assess training quality and gather feedback, ensuring effective implementation and impact.

The successful conclusion of the MDPs reflects JKEDI's continued commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and building local capacity to drive economic growth in Jammu and Kashmir.

# District Administration Kupwara organizes patriotic rally to commemorate 150 years of 'Vande Mataram'

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA, JANUARY 20:** In continuation to the commemoration of 150 years of National Pride 'Vande Mataram', the District Administration Kupwara today organized a vibrant and patriotic rally to celebrate the spirit of nationalism and honour India's freedom struggle.

The rally commenced from Fountain Chowk, Kupwara, and culminated at the General Bus Stand, Kupwara. It witnessed enthusiastic participation from officers and officials of the district administration, police personnel, students, youth,

traders and members of civil society, reflecting a strong collective commitment towards national unity and pride.

Adding to the patriotic fervour, the Police Band led the rally and performed soul-stirring patriotic tunes, evoking a sense of pride and reverence among the participants and onlookers alike. The melodious renditions created an atmosphere charged with national spirit and remembrance of the sacrifices made by freedom fighters.

As part of the programme, the DIPR Kupwara organized cultural performances highlighting key episodes of India's freedom



movement. These performances artistically depicted the struggle, sacrifices, and resilience of the nation's heroes, while also emphasizing the enduring relevance of Vande Mataram as a symbol of unity, devotion, and national identity.

The initiative aimed to foster awareness, especially among the younger generation, about the historical significance of Vande Mataram and to strengthen feelings of patriotism, social harmony, and respect for the nation's rich legacy.

Similarly, a Police band rally was organized at Handwara Chowk to commemorate the 150 years of Vande Mataram.

# JK Bank RSETI Anantnag establishes Computer Laboratory

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG, JANUARY 20:** In a significant step towards promoting skill development in the district, a NABARD-funded Computer Laboratory was inaugurated today at the JK Bank-Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI), Anantnag.

The Laboratory was inaugurated by the Assistant General Manager (AGM) NABARD Anantnag, Rouf Zargar, who was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The event was also attended by the Lead District Manager (LDM) Mohammad Shafi and Director, RSETI, Mushtaq Ahmad.

The newly established computer lab has been set up with financial assistance from NABARD under its Financial Inclusion Fund (FIF). The facility is expected to significantly enhance the quality of training and digital learning for rural youth.

Along with the inauguration of the computer lab, the first batch of 30 candidates was also inaugurated for a 40-day Basic Computer Accounting and Book-Keeping course. The course aims to impart practical computer and accounting skills to unemployed youth, enabling them to improve their employability and explore self-employment opportunities.

Addressing the gathering, the AGM NABARD highlighted the growing importance of skill development in the present economic scenario. He emphasized NABARD's proactive role in supporting skill development and capacity building initiatives, particularly through RSETIs, to empower rural youth and promote sustainable livelihoods.

The Lead District Manager, Anantnag, spoke in detail about the various credit and financing facilities available with banks for trained youth and aspiring entrepreneurs. He also briefed the participants about the Mission YUVA programme and encouraged trainees to take advantage of government and banking support schemes for starting income-generating activities.

The Director, RSETI Anantnag, elaborated on the role and mandate of RSETIs in fostering self-employment through need-based training programmes. He acknowledged NABARD's continuous support in strengthening infrastructure and facilitating the conduct of such skill development initiatives.

# DLSA Srinagar organizes awareness programme under "Bal Vivah Mukh Bharat" Campaign

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JANUARY 20:** District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar organized an awareness program on the prevention of child marriage at Lal Bazaar, Srinagar under the aegis of J&K Legal Services Authority as a part of the nationwide 100-day intensive awareness campaign "Bal Vivah Mukh Bharat".

The campaign has been launched by the Ministry of Women & Child Development with the objective of strengthening legal awareness, outreach and rapid prevention at the grassroot level in line with the ASHA (Awareness, Support, Help & Action) Framework.



The program was conducted with the objective of sensitizing the community about the social, legal and health consequences of child marriage and to promote the rights and welfare of children.

During the awareness session, the PLVs educated the participants about the prohibition of Child Marriage Act-2006, highlighting the legal age of marriage, the punishment for offenders and the role of citizens in reporting incidents of child marriage.

# DC Baramulla inspects Road Expansion Works on Baramulla-Uri NH-1

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**BARAMULLA, JANUARY 20:** Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today conducted an extensive inspection of the ongoing road widening works along the Baramulla-Uri NH-01 Package -IV road to assess progress and address issues affecting public convenience.

During the visit, the DC, accompanied by the Assistant Commissioner Revenue and other concerned officers, inspected multiple road expansion sites and reviewed the quality, pace, and execution of works being undertaken by the executing agencies. Special attention was given to the Dhanakhan area, where recent landslides had disrupted the smooth flow of traffic and posed risks to commuters.



Taking serious note of the situation, the DC directed the concerned authorities and executing agencies to

expedite the pace of construction, particularly in landslide-prone and vulnerable stretches, to prevent recurrent disruptions and ensure uninterrupted traffic movement.

The DC further instructed the agencies to adopt all necessary preventive and protective measures to mitigate the risk of future landslides.

Meanwhile, Minga Sherpa directed that traffic diversion plans be implemented wherever feasible during the execution of works, ensuring minimal inconvenience to the general public and maintaining smooth vehicular movement.

The DC stressed the importance of timely completion, adherence to quality standards and urged the officers on the ground to conduct regular monitoring and ensure strict compliance with safety norms.

# SWD organises sensitization program on "Bal Vivah Mukh Bharat" campaign

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR, JANUARY 20:** In a significant step towards strengthening the nationwide campaign to eliminate child marriage, a sensitization programme on "Bal Vivah Mukh Bharat" was organized for Anganwadi Workers at HSS kothibagh Srinagar under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao by Mission Shakti, Social Welfare Department (SWD) Srinagar.

The programme aimed to enhance awareness and capacity building of Anganwadi Workers, who play a pivotal role at the grassroots level, to identify, prevent, and report instances of child marriage and to promote the rights, education, health, and protection of children, especially girls.



During the session, resource persons of Social Welfare and Education department elaborated on the legal provisions of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, the adverse

social, health, and psychological consequences of child marriage, and the importance of community vigilance and timely intervention.

Emphasis was laid on the role of Anganwadi Workers as change

agents, counsellors, and first responders in their respective communities.

The speakers highlighted that ending child marriage is not only a legal obligation but also a social

responsibility essential for achieving gender equality, women empowerment, and sustainable development. Anganwadi Workers were encouraged to actively engage with parents, adolescents, Panchayati Raj Institutions, schools, and community leaders to create sustained awareness against child marriage.

Interactive discussions, case studies, and experience-sharing sessions were also conducted, enabling participants to better understand practical challenges and solutions in preventing child marriages at the ward level.

The programme concluded with a collective pledge by all participants to work tirelessly towards making their communities child marriage-free, thereby contributing to the vision of a "Bal Vivah Mukh Bharat."

# Bring all NCR cities under National Clean Air Programme: Bhupender Yadav

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, 20 JAN** : As the national capital region continues to grapple with the air pollution crisis, union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav on Tuesday said that all NCR cities should be brought under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) framework.

The remarks were made during a meeting headed by the minister to review the action plans of Rohtak, Manesar, Panipat and Karnal to combat the pollution woes faced by the NCR cities, which intensify during the winter months.

According to an official document, Yadav also urged increasing the pollution monitoring stations in the region, calling for an integration with the SAMEER app, the national pollution reporting app, to allow real-time monitoring of the air quality.

To step up action against industries operating without the required permits, the Environment Minister, during Tuesday's meeting, directed officials to compile data on Consent to Operate (CTO) and



Consent to Establish (CTE) approvals, commercial electricity connections, and GST-registered industrial units.

Officials said the datasets will be used to identify polluting and illegally operating units, particularly those functioning without mandatory pollution monitoring and control systems, including the Online Continuous Emission/Effluent Monitoring

System (OCEMS) and Air Pollution Control Devices (APCDs).

Last year, on December 3, to curb emissions from some of the most polluting industries in the NCR, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) directed 2,254 industrial units to install

calibrated Online Continuous Emission Monitoring Systems (OCEMS) and Air Pollution Control Devices (APCDs) by December 31,

2025. These units fall under 17 identified air-polluting categories, including metal, textiles, food and food processing, and other red and medium-category industries that are among the key contributors to Delhi's PM2.5 load.

According to CAQM officials, the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) were instructed to supervise the

implementation of these directions and take strict action against violators, even to the extent of issuing closure orders for non-compliant units. Officials said delinquent industries would initially be "handheld" to encourage voluntary and accelerated installation of OCEMS and APCDs, but enforcement will tighten after the deadline.

On January 9, the pollution watch dog announced the closure of 16 industrial units across NCR for environmental violations. Among the industries served, 14 are from Sonapat district of Haryana, while the remaining two belong to Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, according to a statement issued by the pollution watchdog.

Range of environmental norms were flouted by these industries, including the use of unapproved fuels, emissions with visible smoke from industrial processes, non-compliance with norms for Diesel Generator (DG) sets, and missing or out-of-order Air Pollution Control Devices (APCDs), among others. UNI

## Delhi gov't announces West Region bus route rationalisation

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JAN 20** : The Delhi Government on Tuesday announced the rollout of the Bus Route Rationalisation for West Delhi, under which CNG buses are being phased out, to be replaced by electric buses, by the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC).

The project is being undertaken jointly by the Delhi government and DTC to improve last mile connectivity across the National Capital.

Under the new rationalisation scheme, DTC services in West Delhi will see more electric buses being run, from January 21.

This exercise has already been successfully implemented in East Delhi, and the next phase is set to begin in North Delhi.



The rationalisation comes at a time when the city is progressively phasing out its 15-year-old DTC CNG low-floor buses as per statutory guidelines.

Services across the West Region have been restructured to maintain operational continuity, optimise fleet usage, and minimise passenger waiting time.

The exercise ensures that no twelve(12)-meter (CNG and Electric) bus route has been discontinued. Instead, routes have been carefully reorganised based on demand, ridership patterns, and corridor importance.

An official from the transport department stated that additional buses have been deployed during peak hours under the Unified Time Table (morning and evening) to provide smoother travel during high-demand periods.

The rationalisation also integrates the deployment of 9-meter electric "Devi" buses, with up to 50 percent of the existing e-bus fleet being utilised across selected 12-meter routes to maintain service consistency.

Additionally, adjustments have been made for routes affected by the closure of certain CNG depots in the West Zone to ensure that services continue without major disruption. Overall, the exercise strengthens service delivery across all 181 routes in the West Region.

The official also claimed that since the formation of the current BJP government, more than 3,600 electric buses have been added to Delhi's public transport fleet, marking one of the fastest EV mobility expansions in India.

"The government aims to increase this number to over 5,000 e-buses by March 2026 and further expand it to more than 7,000 by November 2026," the official added.

Delhi Transport Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh stated that the rationalisation of routes in the West Region is designed to improve reliability, shorten waiting times, and enhance service delivery. UNI

## Delhi cabinet approves Rs.60 cr common facility centres in Badli, Bawana for MSMEs

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JAN 20** : The Delhi cabinet headed by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Tuesday approved a proposal for the establishment of two Common Facility Centres (CFCs) for small and medium businesses in the Badli and Bawana industrial areas.

The total estimated cost of the project has been fixed at Rs.60 crore, with Rs.30 crore allocated for each centre. CFCs will also provide facilities for workers' skill development, technical training, and product quality improvement.

Infrastructure to promote environmentally sustainable production, including common effluent treatment systems and green technologies, will also be developed.

Delhi CM Rekha Gupta said that limited investment capacity often prevents small entrepreneurs from accessing modern technology and expensive machinery.

"The Common Facility Centres will effectively bridge this gap and significantly improve the ease of doing business for small units," she added.

Gupta further stated that the project is being implemented under the Government of India's Micro and Small Enterprises - Cluster Development Programme (MSE-CDP).

She said "the primary objective of the scheme is to provide, under one roof, facilities that are otherwise beyond the reach of individual small entrepreneurs. Through these centres, micro and small enterprises will gain shared access to modern machinery, testing laboratories, and training facilities without heavy capital investment."

Gupta explained that the centres will help industrial units reduce costs, particularly benefiting micro and newly established enterprises. Shared services and collective bargaining will lower production costs and strengthen market access.

"This will enhance product quality and competitiveness, generate new employment opportunities, and ensure the sustainable development of industrial clusters," she added.

Gupta emphasised that the Delhi Government aims to enable micro and small enterprises to become self-reliant, adopt modern technology, and strengthen their presence in national and international markets. The CFC projects will provide a strong foundation in this direction.

She expressed confidence that the Cabinet-approved decision will give fresh momentum to Delhi's industrial growth and open new avenues of development for small entrepreneurs. UNI

## Indian Navy to display 'combat-ready, aatmanirbhar' might at Republic Day Parade 2026

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JAN 20** : The Indian Navy will present a powerful blend of tradition, self-reliance and future readiness during the upcoming Republic Day Parade (RDP) 2026, with its marching contingent, tableau and band reflecting the Service's vision of being a 'Combat Ready, Cohesive and Aatmanirbhar Force, safeguarding the seas for a Viksit and Samridha Bharat', Contingent Commander Lt Karan Nagyal said on Tuesday.

Briefing the media ahead of the Navy's Republic Day Parade press preview, Lt Nagyal said the RDP remains a grand spectacle of national unity, showcasing India's cultural diversity, military prowess and technological advancements, with all participating elements demonstrating an unwavering commitment to national security.

The Indian Navy's marching contingent this year will comprise 144 young personnel who will march shoulder to shoulder along the historic Kartavya Path, symbolising the Navy as a progressive and strong maritime

force capable of defending India's maritime interests.

Representing a 'mini-India', the contingent includes sailors from different States and Union Territories, with an average age of 25 years. Carefully selected from across all branches of the Navy, the personnel have undergone over two months of specialised training to withstand the rigours of the parade. The contingent will be led by Lt Karan Nagyal, with Lt Pawan Kumar Gandhi, Lt Priti Kumari and Lt Varun Dreveriya serving as Platoon Commanders.

The Indian Navy's tableau for 2026 will vividly depict the theme of a 'Strong Navy for a Strong Nation', highlighting the Service's multi-dimensional capabilities and its resolve to safeguard maritime interests anytime, anywhere and anyhow. The tableau traces India's rich maritime heritage to its modern, indigenous combat strength. It features a stitched ship dating back to the 5th century CE, now named INS V Kaundinya, Maratha Navy 'Gurab' class ships, and frontline indigenous assets including aircraft carrier INS Vikrant, P-17A Nilgiri-class stealth frigates INS Himgiri

and INS Udayagiri, a Kalvari-class submarine and the GSAT-7R (Project Rohini) communication satellite.

The tableau will also showcase the circumnavigation route followed by the crew of INS V Tarini during the Navika Sagar Parikrama-II expedition. The tableau has been conceived and designed by Cdr Zubair Siddiqui and Lt Lekshmi K Ravi of the Navy's Warship Design Bureau.

Adding a special dimension, young girl cadets from the Sea Cadet Corps (SCC), a non-governmental organisation imparting basic nautical skills to youth in Mumbai, will march alongside the tableau, marking their return to the Republic Day Parade after several decades. Complementing the visual grandeur, the Indian Navy band comprising 80 musicians will be led by Master Chief Petty Officer Musician First Class M Antony Raj. At the Beating Retreat ceremony on January 29, the band will perform a range of soul-stirring and foot-tapping compositions, accompanied by intricate formations. Notably, the band includes six women Agniveer musicians. UNI

## NeVA, data-driven reforms key to transparent legislatures, says Delhi Speaker

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JAN 20** : Delhi Legislative Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta on Tuesday said that democracy derives its true legitimacy not merely from the existence of accountability mechanisms, but from how sincerely and seriously legislatures exercise them.

He also expressed concern over declining legislative sittings and stressed the need for stronger oversight of the executive.

Addressing the 86th All India Presiding Officers Conference (AIPOC), being held in Lucknow, Gupta described legislative accountability as a living relationship between the people

and their elected representatives.

He said, "Legislatures are the most visible expression of democratic governance and form the moral and constitutional foundation of democracy."

Highlighting the role of legislatures, the Speaker said that while the judiciary protects constitutional values and the executive implements policies, the authority of the executive flows from the legislature and remains accountable to it.

"Any weakening of the legislature directly affects democratic oversight and public trust," he added.

Gupta expressed concern over the declining number of House sittings and effective working



hours, stating that fewer sittings reduce scrutiny of the executive and limit opportunities for Members to raise issues of public importance.

He stressed that accountability must be demonstrated through regular sittings, disciplined conduct, and meaningful debate by both the government and the opposition.

Gupta highlighted the historic assertion of legislative

independence in 1930, which strengthened democratic traditions, the separation of powers, and the authority of the Chair.

The Speaker underlined the importance of ministerial assurances made on the floor of the House, calling them formal commitments that must be fulfilled.

He emphasised the role of legislative committees, particularly Assurance Committees, in monitoring implementation and ensuring outcomes.

Referring to technological reforms, Gupta highlighted the National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA), noting that paperless sessions of the assembly have improved efficiency and transparency while also

contributing to environmental conservation, saving nearly 80 trees.

He also spoke about the National Legislative Index (NLI), which provides a framework to assess legislative performance across states on parameters such as sittings, working hours, debates and committee effectiveness.

Advocating capacity-building, Gupta also called for greater institutional research support to help Members engage in fact-based and data-driven debates.

He expressed confidence that sustained reforms rooted in constitutional values would strengthen legislatures and reinforce democratic accountability across the country. UNI

# SC AGREES TO EXAMINE IF ED CAN FILE PETITION BEFORE HCs UNDER ARTICLE 226 AS JURISTIC PERSON

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**NEW DELHI, JAN 20** : The Supreme Court on Tuesday agreed to examine whether the Enforcement Directorate can file a writ petition before high courts under Article 226 of the Constitution for enforcement of its rights as a 'juristic person'.

A juristic person is a non-human legal entity recognised by the law and entitled to rights and duties in the same way as a human being.

A bench of Justices Dipankar

Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma issued notice to the agency on appeals filed by Kerala and Tamil Nadu governments challenging an order passed by the Kerala High Court which upheld the ED's locus to file writ petitions under Article 226.

Article 226 refers to power of high courts to issue certain writs.

The Kerala High Court, in its order passed on September 26, last year had upheld a single judge order staying the judicial inquiry into the ED probe of the

2020 gold smuggling through diplomatic channel.

The judicial inquiry commission was set up following allegations that ED officials coerced the accused to implicate political leaders, including the CM, in the gold smuggling case.

The high court had dismissed an appeal filed by the Kerala government challenging the single bench's interim stay order.

It had observed that the appeal lacked merit, and the single bench had committed no



error in entertaining the ED's petition and staying the inquiry.

The case originated from a May 7, 2021, state govt notification ordering a judicial inquiry under the Commission of Inquiry Act, 1952, against ED officials accused of coercing the accused to implicate political leaders.

Former HC judge Justice V K Mohanan was appointed to head the inquiry commission. It was tasked with examining evidence, including an audio clip attributed to accused Swap-

na Suresh and a letter by accused Sandeep Nair, both alleging coercion by ED officers.

ED deputy director moved HC, questioning the state's authority to order an inquiry against a central investigating agency.

The single bench held that the ED had locus standi (the right to approach the court) and granted an interim stay of the notification on August 11, 2021, prompting the state government to file an appeal. (Agencies)



# Kohli's Masterclass Defies Tragedy

Fearless Spirit Sets Him Apart from Tendulkar

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**INDORE:** India loves itself a tragic hero. Bollywood had a "tragedy king" before it had its first "superstar". The said superstar's most accomplished role was that of a tragic hero dying of cancer. Ghazal is a vast art form that spreads out from its literal meaning "to talk to the beloved", but for a long time in India it just meant sad songs of unrequited love. Some of the ghazal singers used to be as popular as rockstars of the west. India didn't experience Beatlemania as much as they did Ghazalmania.

Even today, Bollywood's most popular singer specialises in sad songs. Ironically, the said singer is Virat Kohli's favourite. Kohli is no tragic hero. Indian cricket has had its share. Sachin Tendulkar, Kohli's hero, was for long a lone warrior, the boy on the burning deck. One of his most iconic photos was from the Boxing Day Test of 1999, walking back after being dismissed, accepting applause, a flock of seagulls in the background, which to the photographer himself was symbolic of his lone battle.

MS Dhoni, Kohli's next hero, didn't mind playing the misunderstood victim. His announcement to retire from international cricket played to a quintessential Bollywood sad song. Kohli left Test cricket with "I

Did It My Way". And he is still doing it his way in ODIs. Part of the reason why Kohli will never be tragic hero is his personality and competitiveness. He is just a happy person at heart. He is either cheerful or angry, never helpless. Arguably no player gets involved in as many altercations or bromances as him.

Part of the reason also is that Kohli has been part of much stronger teams than Tendulkar ever was. That has had some part to play in his great chasing record of only four out of his 28 chasing hundreds before Indore coming in defeats. The great chase-master that he might be, he doesn't have those single-handed miracle chases batting with the tail that roll off the tongue. Of course, he is so good he doesn't let them become hopeless.

Kohli has a game good enough to go at a run a ball even when preserving wickets or rebuilding. He also has generally batted with more accomplished ODI batters than Tendulkar did, which means he doesn't have to pull the trigger early. Even in the most hopeless position Kohli had won India a chase, from 63 for 4 against England in Pune, he had Kedar Jadhav, who outshone him. That line-up had Hardik Pandya and Ravindra Jadeja at Nos. 7 and 8. This Indore ODI is the closest Kohli was going to come to experiencing what Tendulkar used to. Don't be mistaken, this top five is

as good as any, but Nitish Kumar Reddy and Jadeja at Nos 6 and 7 show the lack of batting depth that India haven't had to play with in a long time. Then there was a chase of 338 in a series-decider.

New Zealand threatening to win an ODI series in India for the first time after having achieved the same in Tests just a season ago. A wicket lost early, and Kohli walks out a beautiful mix of risk-free accumulator of yore and the new freer version of himself. He looks to get off the mark with a dab to third, a shot he has recently used much less of, but also hits a six off the seventh ball he faces. This is the third time he has hit a six in his first 20 balls in his last six innings. In the two years before that, he did so only once, that too off a free hit.

India keep losing wickets, though, which means Kohli is forced to rein himself in. Even before 13 overs are done, he finds himself batting with Reddy, the worst-case scenario for India. New Zealand can't get him out but isolate him beautifully. He is able to face only 75 out of the first 180 balls bowled when he is at the wicket, and 100 out of 240. The batting is masterful, perhaps the best version of Kohli. With 352 runs in three matches, Daryl Mitchell is the deserving Player of the Series, but Kohli has looked even less likely to get out, scoring only slightly slower.

## New Zealand Conquer India, On Their Own Terms

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**SYDNEY:** One of the great feelings for a cricketer has to be to come to India and shush the crowd, be it with a wicket or with a boundary. Not only does it give them pleasure, it also confirms to them they are controlling the game. To Pat Cummins belong the now-immortal words: "nothing more satisfying than hearing a big crowd go silent".

Daryl Mitchell has done that quite often. In the World Cup semi-final at the imposing Wankhede Stadium, a couple of days before Cummins said what he said, you could hear trains pull into the nearby Churchgate station as he hit nine fours and seven sixes in his 134. The crowd had the last laugh that night as for the second time in that tournament, Mitchell's hundred against India fell short of the desired match result. They also knew they had dodged a bullet there.

As New Zealand finally won an ODI series in India for the first time, Mitchell silenced the crowd 39 times in his 319 balls in the middle, hitting 31 fours and eight sixes in his series tally of 352. So self-effacing is Mitchell that when asked how it felt to hush the crowd up, he said: "We are quite used to that [in New Zealand]. That's pretty normal for us. Nice and quiet on the grass banks."

They might not make it sound so but they know what a huge achievement it is. To get there, they had to become the first team in three years to beat India in a home ODI despite losing the toss. They had to snap their eight-match losing streak against India. And with what? A side that had about fourth the experience of India, a side with eight first-time visitors to India, two eventual debutants and five players with fewer than 10 games under their belt. Mitchell was colossal, Glenn Phillips probably went from being super athlete to a batter you need to fear, Kyle Jamieson continued to haunt India, the opposition captain acknowledged what a difference their fielding made, but to beat India in India, New Zealand did the unthinkable. They outspun India with both bat and ball.

There probably is no other way to beat India in India. The teams pretty much cancelled each other out when it comes to fast bowling; if anything, India were marginally better. Against spin, though, New Zealand scored 351 runs off 318 balls and lost just three wickets as opposed to India's 317 runs off 354 balls for the loss of five wickets. You could say winning the toss helped in Rajkot, but in Indore it was the New Zealand spinners bowling under lights. And Michael Bracewell couldn't even bowl because of injury. And still India ended up facing more spin than New Zealand. That in itself is a story.

## Australian Open: Centurion Djokovic launches bid for record 25th Grand Slam with emphatic win

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**MELBOURNE:** Novak Djokovic began his latest bid for a record 25th Grand Slam crown with an emphatic straight-sets victory Monday as fellow Australian Open title contenders Iga Swiatek and Coco Gauff also won but with less sparkle. Three-time finalist Daniil Medvedev stayed alive, as did 40-year-old Stan Wawrinka, who rolled back the clock to reach the second round in his tournament farewell.

Serbian great Djokovic, 38, tamed Spain's 71st-ranked Pedro Martinez 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 on Rod Laver Arena, a court where he has won a record 10 Australian Open crowns.

The world number four owns 24 major titles, equal for the most ever with Australia's Margaret Court, but a 25th has remained agonisingly out of reach.

His last came at the 2023 US Open with Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz sharing all eight since then. "What can I say? I

like the sound of it. Centurion is pretty nice," he said after his 100th victory at the Australian Open. "I always give my best whenever I'm on the court. Obviously, history-making is a great motivation, and particularly in the last 5-10 years of my career."

The 2014 champion Wawrinka lived to fight another day with a gutsy four-set victory.

The three-time major winner is playing his last season before retiring and gave his all to down Serbia's Laslo Djere 5-7, 6-3, 6-4,

7-6 (7/4) in front of a crowd willing him to victory.

"The passion is still intact. But I'm not young any more, so I need to be careful also," said the Swiss warhorse, who made his Australian Open debut in 2006. Medvedev, runner-up in 2021, 2022 and 2024, warmed up for Melbourne with victory in Brisbane and ground to a 7-5, 6-2, 7-6 (7/2) opening round win over Dutchman Jesper de Jong.

The famously feisty Russian

said he was trying to be more "positive" on court.

"So far I'm doing it well," he said. Sixth seed Alex de Minaur, the big home hope, was also a straight-sets winner on another hot day where temperatures reached about 30C and record crowds of more than 100,000 faced long queues to get into Melbourne Park.

The tournament is over, however, for seventh seed Felix Auger-Aliassime, who retired from his match with cramp.

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