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HEADLINES TODAY

Voice To The Voiceless

Headlines Today
Wishes its Readers a Proud and
Meaningful Republic Day...

As The Nation Marks Adoption of the
Constitution, We Reaffirm Our Faith
in Democracy, Unity, and The
Enduring Ideals That Define India.

Editor In Chief....



This Auspicious Day Rekindles India's Unbreakable Resolve: LG Sinha's Message on 77th Republic Day

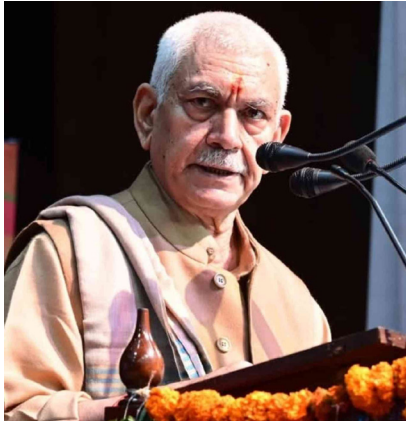
HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 25: On the eve of the 77th Republic Day, Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Manoj Sinha, extended warm greetings and heartfelt good wishes to the people of the Union Territory, calling the occasion a moment of pride, reflection and renewed national resolve.

In his message, the Lieutenant Governor said that Republic Day stands as a powerful reminder of India's historic journey as a sovereign, democratic republic guided by the supreme law of

the land. He paid profound tributes to the visionary architects of the Indian Constitution, whose wisdom, courage and sacrifices secured the nation's freedom and laid the foundation of a constitutional framework rooted in the timeless ideals of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity.

"These enduring principles continue to shape our national ethos and reinforce the democratic and socialist values that define the spirit of India," he said, adding that the Constitution remains a living document guiding the nation's progress and unity.



The Lieutenant Governor conveyed his warm salutations to the people from all walks of life whose dedication and hard work strengthen the nation every day. He acknowledged the invaluable contributions of workers, farmers, doctors, engineers, innovators, entrepreneurs, teachers, students, youth, women, businesspersons, artists, writers, industry leaders and volunteers of civil society, stating that their collective efforts are the driving force behind democratic resilience and holistic development in Jammu and Kashmir.

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Every Vote Builds the Nation's Future: LG Sinha

Reiterated That Historic 2024 Turnout in J&K Reflects Deepening Faith in Democracy

HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, JAN 25: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha on Saturday underscored the transformative power of the ballot, stating that every vote cast shapes the nation's

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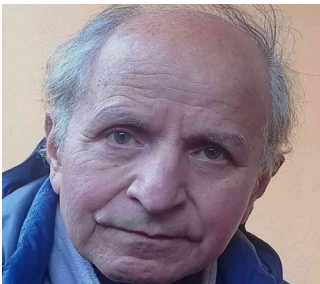
Headlines Today Congratulates Prof. Shafi Shauq on Padma Shri Honour

Editor-in-Chief Jahangir Bukhari calls the award a Historic Recognition of Kashmiri Language and Literary Excellence

HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 25: Headlines Today has extended warm congratulations to eminent writer, poet, critic, translator, intellectual and educationist Professor Shafi Shauq on his selection for the prestigious

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PM Modi Sets Gold Standard for 'Made in India', Calls for World-Class Quality

PM's Mann Ki Baat Vision Highlights Zero-Defect Manufacturing and Celebrates India's Global Start-Up Rise

HT NEWS DESK AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 25: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday delivered a forward-looking and inspiring message to the nation, calling upon Indian industry and start-ups to make quality the defining



strength of the country's manufacturing ecosystem and position Indian products among the world's finest.

In the 130th episode of his monthly radio programme Mann Ki Baat, the Prime Minister urged manufacturers to commit to zero-defect

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India Speaks Peace To A World In Conflict: President Murmu

Highlights National Security, Women's Power, Economic Rise and India's Civilisational Mission

HT NEWS DESK / AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 25: As global conflicts continue to intensify, President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday projected India as a powerful voice of peace and stability, saying the nation is carrying forward its ancient civilisational duty to safeguard humanity's future through harmony and dialogue.

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सत्यमेव जयते

77th

REPUBLIC DAY

GREETINGS TO THE PEOPLE OF
JAMMU & KASHMIR

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS, J&K



Rana Reviews Development Progress In Poonch

Exhorts officers to ensure benefits reach genuine beneficiaries

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

POONCH, JAN 25: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment, and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today chaired a review meeting at Poonch to assess the progress on ongoing developmental works and welfare initiatives being implemented across the district.

The meeting was attended by District Development Commissioner, senior district officers, sectoral heads and representatives of line departments.

Choudhary Mohammad Iqbal, former Director Agriculture Kashmir and CEO, SKUAST-Kashmir, was present as a special invitee.

During the meeting, District Development Commissioner, Ashok Kumar Sharma presented a comprehensive overview

of the physical and financial status of projects being executed under UT Capex, District Capex and other flagship schemes.

The briefing covered a wide range of sectors, including Minor Irrigation, Elementary Education, Health, Public Health Engineering (PHE), Youth Services & Sports, Social Welfare, Agriculture, Horticulture, Urban Development and allied departments.

Key infrastructure and institutional projects reviewed included the Mini Secretariats at Mendhar and Poonch, Ekalavya Model Residential School (EMRS) at Mendhar, University Campus and Motorable Double-Lane Bridge at Sathra.

The Minister also reviewed the implementation and progress of major social sector initiatives such as Amrit Sar-



ovar, Jal Jeevan Mission and various tribal welfare programmes.

Emphasizing the importance of timely execution, Rana directed all the departments to ensure expeditious completion of ongoing projects, stating that delays directly affect the public

service delivery. He underscored the need for a robust monitoring mechanism to guarantee that the benefits of government schemes reach the intended and genuine beneficiaries.

The Minister stressed that teamwork, transparency,

accountability and integrity must remain central to governance at all levels.

Reviewing the progress under National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), the Minister instructed the officers to scale up the formation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to enhance live-

lihood opportunities and promote economic empowerment, particularly among the rural and tribal communities.

Tourism development also featured prominently in the deliberations.

The Chief Executive Officer, Tourism, briefed the meeting

on ongoing tourism-related projects.

The Minister highlighted Poonch's immense untapped tourism potential and called for focused efforts to strengthen the infrastructure and promote sustainable tourism.

Additionally, the Minister reviewed the implementation of major employment and livelihood schemes such as MGN-REGA, IWMP and SANKALP, along with an assessment of the district's achievements and future development targets.

Rana urged all the officers to work with renewed dedication and a people-centric approach, ensuring that development initiatives are completed within stipulated timelines and genuinely improve the quality of life for the people of Poonch.

Scores of delegations call on Javed Rana at Poonch

Civic and developmental issues discussed

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

POONCH, JAN 25: Scores of public delegations from various parts of the district today called on Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana at Dak Bungalow Poonch and apprised him of a range of pressing civic, developmental and sector-specific issues concerning their areas.

The delegations highlighted water-related problems being faced by residents of the city and adjoining areas, stressing the urgent need for strengthening and upgrading existing pumping stations to ensure uninterrupted and adequate water supply.

The Minister was informed about operational bottlenecks,



aging infrastructure and the growing demand due to population increase. Issues pertaining to the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department also came up for discussion, particularly those related to the functioning of the water testing laboratory.

Employees of the PHE water testing laboratory raised concerns regarding service-related matters and sought early redressal of their

long-pending grievances.

The delegations further brought to the notice of the Minister various matters related to CAMPA and afforestation activities in the district. They emphasized the need for transparency, timely execution of plantation drives, involvement of local stakeholders and effective monitoring to ensure environmental conservation and ecological balance.

District Development Council (DDC) member Riyaz Bashir Naaz also led a separate delegation, which raised development-centric issues and sought focused attention towards improving basic amenities and accelerating ongoing projects in the area. The Minister gave a patient hearing to all delegations and assured them that their genuine concerns would be taken up with the concerned departments on priority.

He reiterated Omar Abdullah Government's commitment to addressing public issues in a time-bound manner and ensuring sustainable development of the district. The Minister also directed the concerned officers to examine the issues raised and submit detailed reports for appropriate action.

Team HT in General and Chief Editor

Jehangir Bukhari Congratulates
Peerzada Mumtaz (KAS)

Heartiest congratulations were extended to the District Administration Kupwara's Worthy ACR Kupwara, Mr. Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad (KAS), who received an Award of Appreciation from the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of J&K, Shri Manoj Sinha Ji, on the occasion of National Voters' Day.

This recognition reflects his exemplary service towards strengthening electoral awareness and democratic participation in frontier districts of Kupwara and Baramulla.



CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

This Auspicious.....

Paying special homage to the brave personnel of the armed forces, paramilitary forces and the Jammu and Kashmir Police, Shri Manoj Sinha said their unwavering vigilance, courage and sacrifice form an unbreakable shield protecting the nation and ensuring peace, security and harmony for its citizens.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed deep gratitude to the members of the armed forces, police, paramilitary units and civil administration for upholding the nation's pride during Operation Sindoor. Referring to the brutal terrorist attack in Pahalgam, he described the operation as a defining moment in India's national security doctrine.

"India sent a clear and unequivocal message that any terrorist attack on its soil would be treated as an act of war," he said, adding that Operation Sindoor was not merely a military response but a bold declaration of India's strategic resolve and unyielding commitment to national security.

He further commended the exemplary courage and professionalism displayed by the Indian Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police and the CRPF during Operation Mahadev, through which the three Pakistani terrorists involved in the attack were neutralised, ensuring justice and safeguarding the dignity of the nation's mothers and sisters.

The Lieutenant Governor also appreciated the Jammu and Kashmir Police for dismantling a nationwide terror network during October-November last year, successfully preventing several terrorist attacks. Describing the police personnel as India's true heroes, he said the nation remains indebted to their bravery and dedication.

Looking ahead, Shri Manoj Sinha called upon the people of Jammu and Kashmir to move forward with renewed purpose and collective determination to take the Union Territory to greater heights of development and prosperity. He emphasised the need to consolidate existing strengths, accelerate economic growth and create robust, future-ready infrastructure across the region.

Highlighting the importance of innovation and education, the Lieutenant Governor said institutions of higher learning must prepare for a future driven by technological excellence, continuous innovation and a strong entrepreneurial spirit. He urged efforts to position Jammu and Kashmir as a leader in the knowl-

edge-based economy and information technology sector.

He further stressed the importance of inclusive growth, stating that every citizen—especially youth and women—must have fair and equal access to quality education, healthcare and opportunities to realise their full potential.

Concluding his message, the Lieutenant Governor called upon citizens to rise to their responsibilities with sincerity, selflessness and a deep sense of national duty.

"Together, let us reaffirm our unwavering commitment to building a strong, prosperous and developed India," he said.

Every Vote.....

future and strengthens the foundations of democracy.

Addressing the 16th National Voters' Day celebrations here, the Lieutenant Governor said elections are not merely about present-day choices but represent a sacred responsibility towards collective destiny and democratic resilience.

"Every ballot cast becomes foundational to our nation's edifice. Democracy derives its true strength from the collective will of the people," LG Sinha said, urging citizens to exercise their franchise with responsibility and informed judgment.

He described voting as the most potent expression of citizens' aspirations, convictions and purpose, asserting that when exercised wisely, the ballot has the power to shape policies, institutions and national direction.

Highlighting India's democratic legacy, the Lieutenant Governor said the world's largest democracy has flourished by upholding equality, harmony and robust institutional values.

"Though many nations achieved independence when India did, democracy has thrived most vigorously on Indian soil," he observed.

The Lieutenant Governor congratulated the youth and citizens who, after decades, received their first complete opportunity to vote, terming it a milestone in Jammu and Kashmir's democratic journey.

Commending the Election Commission of India and the Chief Electoral Office of J&K for the successful conduct of the 2024 Lok Sabha and J&K Legislative Assembly elections, he said unprecedented voter participation reflected growing public trust.

"In Jammu and Kashmir, faith in democracy has solidified. The record turnout in 2024

proves that citizens now view voting as a duty, not merely a right," he said.

On the occasion, LG Sinha administered the National Voters' Day pledge, felicitated District Election Officers, youth icons and stakeholders, and distributed Electors Photo Identity Cards to new voters.

The event also featured cultural performances highlighting the importance of voting and a video message from the Chief Election Commissioner of India.

Headlines Today.....

Padma Shri Award, terming it a proud moment for Jammu and Kashmir's literary and cultural heritage.

In a special congratulatory message, Headlines Today Editor-in-Chief Jehangir Bukhari said the honour is a well-deserved recognition of Professor Shauq's decades-long, selfless contribution to literature, scholarship and the promotion of the Kashmiri language at both regional and national levels.

"Professor Shafii Shauq's towering intellectual stature, creative brilliance and lifelong dedication to literature have enriched generations of readers and scholars. His selection for the Padma Shri is not only a personal achievement but a collective honour for the entire literary fraternity of the region," Bukhari said.

He added that Professor Shauq's work has played a pivotal role in preserving, interpreting and advancing Kashmiri language and literature, giving it wider visibility and contemporary relevance across the country.

Headlines Today also prayed for Professor Shauq's good health, long life and continued creative engagement, expressing hope that his vast academic and literary legacy will continue to inspire young writers, researchers and students in the years to come.

PM Modi Sets.....

production, asserting that excellence must become the hallmark of every Indian product. He emphasised that from textiles and technology to electronics and packaging, products made in India should be globally recognised for superior quality.

"Let us resolve to improve the quality of whatever we manufacture. An Indian product should become synonymous with 'top quality,'" Modi said, reinforcing his government's sustained focus on strengthening India's manufacturing and export potential.

Highlighting the transformative journey

of India's start-up ecosystem under his leadership, the Prime Minister lauded the energy and innovation of the country's youth. He noted that India has emerged as the world's third-largest start-up hub within a decade, reflecting the success of the start-up movement launched in 2016.

"These start-ups are breaking new ground, working in sectors that were unimaginable even ten years ago," Modi said, citing areas such as artificial intelligence, space technology, nuclear energy, semiconductors, mobility, green hydrogen and biotechnology.

The Prime Minister expressed pride in the young innovators driving India's growth story, saluting those already associated with start-ups as well as those aspiring to build new ventures, calling them the backbone of a self-reliant and future-ready India.

During the broadcast, Modi also extended warm greetings to the nation on National Voters' Day and the upcoming Republic Day, reiterating his commitment to democratic values and national unity. (AGENCIES)

India Speaks.....

Addressing the nation on the eve of the 77th Republic Day, the President said India is spreading the message of peace at a time when many parts of the world remain engulfed in unrest. She stressed that peace across the globe is essential to ensure the security and survival of humankind.

"In an atmosphere marked by conflicts in many parts of the world, India is spreading the message of peace," President Murmu said, reaffirming India's long-standing tradition of praying for peace for the entire universe.

Balancing peace with strength, the President highlighted the success of Operation Sindoor, noting that India carried out precision strikes that dismantled terror infrastructure across the border. She said the operation underscored India's growing self-reliance in defence and the Armed Forces' ability to respond decisively to threats.

Recalling her visits to the Siachen Base Camp and operational sorties in advanced fighter jets and a naval submarine, President Murmu said citizens have unwavering faith in the preparedness of the Army, Navy and Air Force, strengthening India's ability to advocate peace from a position of power.

The President also placed strong emphasis on women-led development, describing the rise of Nari Shakti as vital to India's ambition of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

She said women are transforming sectors ranging from grassroots self-help groups to defence, science, space, sports and entrepreneurship.

She noted that more than 10 crore women are engaged in self-help groups, while women now constitute nearly 46 per cent of representatives in Panchayati Raj institutions. The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, she said, will further accelerate women's political empowerment and leadership.

President Murmu hailed Indian women's remarkable achievements in global sports, including victories in the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup and the Blind Women's T20 World Cup, calling the past year a milestone for Indian women on the world stage.

Highlighting social welfare, the President said millions of Indians have been lifted out of poverty through sustained government efforts guided by the ideals of Antyodaya and Sarvodaya. She added that nearly 81 crore citizens are currently benefiting from food security and welfare schemes.

She announced that the Constitution of India is now available in all 22 Eighth Schedule languages, describing the move as a step towards strengthening constitutional awareness and citizen participation. She also highlighted governance reforms aimed at simplifying compliance and reducing bureaucratic obstacles.

On the economy, President Murmu said India continues to be the world's fastest-growing major economy and is firmly on track to become the third-largest economy in the near future. She credited structural reforms and the Goods and Services Tax (GST) for strengthening national economic integration.

The President also spoke about India's leadership in the digital economy, noting that over half of the world's digital transactions are now conducted in India, reflecting the success of technology-driven governance.

Referring to cultural resurgence, President Murmu said India is actively shedding colonial-era mindsets while strengthening indigenous languages, traditions and knowledge systems. She highlighted the celebrations marking 150 years of 'Vande Mataram', calling the song a timeless symbol of national unity.

Calling on citizens to contribute to nation-building, President Murmu urged collective efforts to build a peaceful, inclusive and self-reliant Viksit Bharat, rooted in India's civilisational values and modern aspirations.

16th National Voters Day celebrated in Srinagar

Div Com Kashmir, DC Srinagar felicitate BLOs, distribute EPICs among newly enrolled voters

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 25: On the occasion of 16th National Voters Day celebrations, a grand function was organized by the District Election Office, Srinagar here at Government College of Education, MA Road to mark the foundation day of the Election Commission of India, established on 25th January 1950.

The function was presided over by the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Anshul Garg, while Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo who is also the District Election Officer attended the function as Guest of Honour.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz; Nodal Principal Colleges, Seema Naaz; Electoral Registration Officers, Zubair Ahmad & Umer Gulzar; Election Nodal Officers, Officials of District Election Office, Srinagar BLOs, newly registered voters and other concerned Officials were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Divisional Commissioner Kash-

mir highlighted the significance of National Voters Day in creating awareness and encouraging young citizens who have attained the age of 18 to enrol in the electoral rolls and actively participate in the democratic process. He lauded the efforts of the election machinery and stakeholders for sensitising citizens, especially youth, to become active participants in strengthening democracy.

The Div Com also commended the District Election Office Srinagar for the successful conduct of the 2024 Lok Sabha and J&K Assembly Elections, which witnessed a substantial increase in voter turnout.

DC/DEO Srinagar in his welcome address said that the National voters Day serves as a reminder to all the eligible voters of their duty to participate in the electoral process and responsibilities to participate in the electoral process, to strengthen the democratic setup. He expressed appreciation for the dedication of BLOs, Electoral Registration Officers, the District Election Office and the Education Depart-



ment in keeping the electoral process vibrant and dynamic in the district.

He informed that the District Election Office is actively expanding electoral literacy through awareness programmes in schools, colleges, and prominent public places across the district.

During the programme, a message from the Chief Election Commissioner of India, Shri Gyanesh Kumar, was telecasted virtually.

On the occasion, participants were administered a pledge regarding National Voters Day by Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir.

Later, the Divisional Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner distributed Electoral Photo Identity Cards (EPICs) to newly enrolled voters. They also felicitated BLOs of Srinagar district for their dedicated services in voter registration. SDM East, Zubair Ahmad presented vote of thanks at the end of the programme.

Notably, the Election Commission of India has chosen the theme "My India, My Vote – Indian Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy" for this year's National Voters' Day.

Javid Dar greets people on National Voters' Day, calls for active participation

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 25: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today extended greetings to the citizens on the occasion of National Voters' Day 2026, being observed across the country under the theme "My India, My Vote – Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy."

In his message, the Minister conveyed special greetings to the young and first-time voters, emphasizing their crucial role in strengthening the democratic fabric of the nation. "The right to vote is not merely a constitutional privilege; it is a solemn duty and a powerful instrument to shape the future of our nation," asserted the Minister.

He called upon the citizens to actively participate in the democratic process and reaffirm their faith in democracy. He urged everyone to uphold the values enshrined in the Constitution and remain committed to free, fair, transparent and peaceful elections.

The Minister further highlighted that National Voters' Day serves as an important reminder of the responsibility each citizen carries in ensuring a vibrant and inclusive democracy.

District Budgam receives Best District Election Award for Bye-Elections-2025

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM, JAN 25: Budgam District has been conferred with the Best District Election Award for its outstanding performance in the conduct of the recent Bye-Elections.

The award was presented by the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir at a function convened at the Convention Centre, Jammu.

The award recognizes the District administration's exemplary planning, efficient execution, and strict adherence to the guidelines of the Election Commission of India.

The district was selected for the award in recognition of its transparent, peaceful, voter-friendly election management, ensuring high standards of electoral integrity and seamless coordination among all stakeholders.



Dr Bilal Mohi ud Din Bhat, District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam dedicated this award to the Team Budgam and all other stakeholders. "It is an acknowledgement to the collective efforts of all officers, polling personnel and security forces who contributed to the successful conduct of the bye-elections," he said. The DEO appreciated the cooperation of political parties, candidates, media, and voters.

The district administration reaffirmed its commitment to upholding democratic values and strong belief in transparency and professionalism.

IBC J&K Chapter Calls for Resilient and Sustainable Infrastructure on National Tourism Day

■ FAROOQ RATHER

SRINAGAR, JAN 25: The Indian Buildings Congress (IBC), Jammu & Kashmir Chapter, on Saturday organised a technical discussion to mark National Tourism Day, highlighting the critical role of safe, sustainable and resilient infrastructure in strengthening the tourism sector in Jammu & Kashmir.

Addressing the gathering, Er. Irfan Shafi Parry, Honorary Secretary, IBC J&K Chapter, said that tourism is a major driver of the region's economy and emphasized that well-planned and robust infrastructure is essential for economic growth, employment generation and balanced regional development. He noted that recent incidents of heavy snowfall, windstorms and other extreme weather events across the region have once again exposed the vulnerability of existing tourism infrastructure, underlining the urgent need for climate-responsive planning.

Speakers during the discussion stressed the importance of planned development, strict adherence to quality construction standards and the adoption of appropriate, context-specific building technologies. They also highlighted the need to promote disaster-resilient and environmentally sensitive infrastructure, keeping in view Jammu & Kashmir's fragile ecology, seismic sensitivity and increasing exposure to weather-related hazards.

The importance of renewable energy solutions was also underlined, with special emphasis on the use of solar lighting in tourist destinations, public spaces and access pathways. The speakers observed that solar-based solutions can significantly reduce dependence on conventional power sources and ensure uninterrupted illumination during power outages caused by snowfall, thereby enhancing safety and convenience for visitors.

The event concluded with a collective call for coordinated efforts among planners, engineers and policymakers to develop resilient infrastructure that supports sustainable tourism growth in Jammu & Kashmir.



16th National Voters Day observed at Udhampur

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR, JAN 25: An impressive function was organized by District Administration Udhampur in the premises of DC Office Complex to celebrate the 16th National Voter's Day on the theme "My India, My Vote" with the tagline "Citizen at the Heart of the Indian Democracy."

Additional Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Prem Singh was the chief guest while Additional Senior Superintendent of Police, Sandeep Bhat was the guest of honour and Deputy District Election Officer, Babu Pardeep Kumar presided over the programme on the occasion.

PO Poshan, Subash Dogra, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Dr Umesh Shan, Assistant Commissioner Development, Om Parkash along with senior officers, prominent citizens, BLOs and students of various educational institutions attended the programme.

Dy DEO presented a welcome address and highlighted the importance of the National voter's day. He also administered a pledge to all the participants to uphold the dignity of elections and vote in the elections without any fear, inducement or influence.

The ADC distributed EPIC cards to electors registered in the electoral rolls for the first time. He said that the main objective of celebrating this day is to strengthen our democratic system by creating awareness



among the young and future voters about the importance of their vote and hence involving their greater participation in the whole electoral system.

He also appreciated the tireless efforts made by Dy DEO and his team for organizing this impressive function.

During the programme, students of various educational institutions and folk artists presented theme based cultural performances and awareness skits, which were highly appreciated by the participants.

Later, the chief guest flagged off a rally from the DC Office Complex to further spread the message of voter awareness across the district.

Celebration of 150 Years of Vande Mataram: DC Ganderbal flags-off Youth Run

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL, JAN 25: As part of the second phase of the ongoing commemoration of 150 years of the National Song "Vande Mataram," Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, today flagged-off a Youth Run from the Mini Secretariat, Ganderbal.

The marathon was organised with the objective of promoting physical fitness, encouraging active participation among youth and officials, and strengthening the spirit of nationalism and unity.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Dr. Syed Faheem Bihaqi, District Youth Services and Sports Officer, besides other officers and officials, were present on the occasion.

Officials of the Youth Services and Sports Department, including Physical Education Lecturers, Physical Education Masters, Physical Education Teachers, Rehbar-e-Khel and National Youth Corps, actively participated in the event. Their enthusiastic participation reflected a strong sense of teamwork, discipline, and commitment to national values.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that the celebration of Vande Mataram is a reminder of the nation's rich heritage and the sacrifices made for freedom. He emphasized that such activities inspire youth to imbibe the values of patriotism, unity, and discipline. "The Youth Run is a symbolic expression of our collective resolve to honour the national song by promoting health, harmony and dedication towards the nation," he added.

The run concluded successfully at the Clock Tower, Ganderbal, marking the event as a meaningful and spirited tribute to the 150-year legacy of the National Song Vande Mataram.



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Devsar Tehsil Administration Celebrates 16th National Voters' Day with Emphasis on Democratic Participation

■ FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, JAN 25: The Tehsil Administration Devsar on Saturday celebrated the 16th National Voters' Day 2026 under the theme "My India, My Vote" with a vibrant programme aimed at promoting democratic participation and enhancing electoral awareness among citizens. The event commenced with awareness speeches, followed by a welcome address by Dr Shabir Ahmad Padder, Principal, Altaf Memorial Government Degree College Kilam, who highlighted the significance of voting, democracy and constitutional values in strengthening the nation. He stressed the need for informed and responsible participation in the electoral process, particularly among the youth. The function was presided over by Mr Rakeeb Ahmad (JKAS), Tehsildar Devsar, who emphasized the crucial role of every citizen's vote in sustaining the democratic spirit of the country. He urged participants to actively engage in the electoral process and contribute towards building a strong and inclusive democracy. On the occasion, EPIC cards were distributed among newly enrolled voters to encourage their participation in forthcoming elections.



A painting competition was also organised for students to creatively express the importance of voting and democracy. Appreciation certificates were later distributed among the participants in recognition of their efforts and enthusiasm.

Additionally, Block Level Officers (BLOs) were felicitated for their outstanding performance and dedication in strengthening the electoral process at the grassroots level.

The programme witnessed large participation from students, tehsil office staff, supervisors, Lumbardars, Chowkidars and senior citizens. Participants collectively took the Voters' Day pledge, reaffirming their commitment to uphold democratic values and to encourage active civic engagement across the region.

Ramban Administration celebrates 16th National Voters' Day across district

HT NEWS NETWORK

RAMBAN, JAN 25: The District Administration Ramban, under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner (District Election Officer) Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan, celebrated the 16th National Voters' Day (NVD) with enthusiasm and active participation across the district.

The District level programme was held at the conference hall, Maitra and was presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Varunjeet Singh Charak, in the presence of ACR Shokat Hayat Mattoo, Dy. DEO Sayed Mazahir Hussain Shah, ACD Sheraz Ahmed and other senior officers. The event was attended by prominent citizens, new voters, PWD voters, officials, students and stakeholders.

During the programme, CEO Mohammad Sultan Khan administered the Voters' Pledge, urging participants to be sincere, impartial, fearless and responsible voters and reaffirming their commitment to strengthening Indian democracy.

Meanwhile, students from various schools participated in a debate competition on the theme "My India, My Vote," highlighting the importance of electoral participation and civic responsibility among the youth.



Addressing the gathering, ADC, Varunjeet Singh Charak recalled that National Voters' Day marks the foundation day of the

Election Commission of India (ECI). He encouraged eligible youth to enroll as voters and obtain their EPIC cards, describing it as a document of pride for every Indian citizen.

He also lauded the dedicated efforts of Booth Level Officers (BLOs), Supervisors, Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs) and Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) for ensuring

the smooth conduct of electoral processes.

Deputy DEO, Sayed Mazahir Hussain Shah highlighted the various voter awareness activities conducted across the district and elaborated on the significance of the day, the achievements of the ECI and the vital role of elections in a democracy. The speakers urged citizens, particularly the youth, to motivate their families and communities to participate actively in elections.

Certificates of appreciation were distributed by the ADC and other dignitaries to officers and BLOs for their exemplary contributions. Students who excelled in the debate competitions were also felicitated.

Following the main event, a massive voters' awareness rally was flagged off by the ADC from the District Administrative Complex Maitra. The rally witnessed enthusiastic participation from citizens, students, officers & stakeholders and culminated at Maitra Chowk.

National Voters' Day was also celebrated at sub-divisional, tehsil and institutional levels across Ramban, with awareness programmes organized in educational and vocational institutions to promote informed and inclusive voter participation.

16th National Voters' Day celebrated in Doda

HT NEWS NETWORK

DODA, JAN 25: The 16th National Voters' Day was celebrated with enthusiasm at the FLC Hall, New Administrative Block, DC Office Complex, Doda, under the theme "My India, My Vote – Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy."

The programme was organized by the District Election Office, Doda. ADDC Doda Roshan Lal was the Chief Guest, while ADC Doda Anil Kumar Thakur graced the occasion as Guest of Honour.

The event witnessed the presence of senior district officers, representatives of various departments, students from schools and colleges and members of the public.

The programme began with the National Voters' Day pledge, which was administered by Deputy District Election Officer Doda, Ashraf Pervez.

In his welcome address, Dy DEO congratulated the participants on National Voters' Day and highlighted the importance of voting in a democratic system. He emphasized that every vote matters and plays a vital role in strengthening democracy.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Guest ADDC



Doda, Roshan Lal extended greetings on National Voters' Day and stressed the need for free, fair and informed voting without any pressure. He appealed to citizens to uphold democratic values and exercise their right to vote responsibly.

Speaking on the occasion, Guest of Honour ADC Doda, Anil Kumar Thakur appreciated the efforts of DC Doda Harvinder Singh for establishing the FLC Hall and urged citizens, especially youth, to actively participate in the electoral process. He also encouraged eligible citizens to enroll themselves as voters through the Election Commission portal.

Students also delivered speeches and presentations explaining the significance of voting and the objectives of National Voters' Day, along with patriotic songs focusing on electoral participation.

A Padyatra on the theme "My India, My Vote" was organized from Government Boys School Doda, in which students from various government and private schools participated. The rally culminated at the DC Office Complex, where participants assembled at the FLC Hall.

As part of the celebrations marking 150 glorious years of Vande Mataram, a collective recitation was also held. At the conclusion of the programme, mementos were distributed to officers, officials of the District Election Office, BLOs and representatives from various departments in recognition of their dedication and contribution towards the successful conduct of election.

DEO Kathua celebrates 16th National Voters' Day

HT NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA, JAN 25: District Election Office Kathua today observed the 16th National Voters' Day by organising an awareness programme at the Auditorium Hall of Government Degree College (Boys), Kathua, with the objective of promoting democratic values and encouraging informed electoral participation, particularly among youth.

The proceedings were formally inaugurated by the Chief Guest, ADDC Kathua, Surinder Mohan Sharma, who kick-started the programme by lighting the traditional lamp.

ADC Kathua Vishavjeet Singh, ERO Kathua Vishav Partap Singh (ACR), ERO Jasrota Akhil Sadotra (ACD), CPO Ranjeet Thakur, RTO Surinder Sharma, Dy DEO Nagesh Singh, ENT Manjula Rattan, other district officers and a large number of college and school students were present on the occasion.

As part of the event, a symposium was organised in which students from various schools and colleges actively participated and deliberated on the importance of voting, ethical electoral participation and the role of youth in strengthening democracy. Skits and Nukkad Natak presented by students



effectively conveyed messages on voter awareness, inclusiveness and informed participation.

A signature campaign was also conducted during the programme, wherein participants expressed their commitment towards strengthening the democratic process. Besides, a Voters' Pledge was administered, reaffirming the resolve of participants to uphold democratic values and exercise their franchise responsibly.

In the symposium competition, Lakshmi from GDC Women secured the first position, Nancy Kangotra of Learning Temple School secured the second position, while Suman Sharma of GDC Kathua was adjudged third. Consolation prizes were also awarded to other participants. All participants of the skits and Nukkad Natak were also felicitated for their performances.

Addressing the gathering, ADDC Surinder Mohan Sharma appealed to the people, especially first-time voters, to actively participate in the electoral process and exercise their right to vote responsibly. He highlighted the vital role of Electoral Registration Officers and the ongoing Continuous Electoral Registration exercise, urging all eligible citizens to ensure their enrolment in the electoral rolls. He further emphasised that active participation of young voters and maximum voter turnout are essential for electing the right representatives and strengthening democratic institutions.

On the occasion, the District Election Office Kathua felicitated the ERO Kathua and ERO Barnoti, ENT Kathua besides appreciating the efforts of the staff of the Election Department. The contributions of various departments associated with election-related awareness campaigns were also acknowledged.

Samba District commemorates 16th National Voters' Day

HT NEWS NETWORK

SAMBA, JAN 25: The 16th National Voters' Day was observed with enthusiasm and civic spirit in District Samba at the Conference Hall of the District Administrative Complex, Nandini Hills.

The celebration, held under the theme "My India, My Vote," sought to underscore the importance of democratic participation and strengthen electoral awareness, particularly among youth and first-time voters.

The programme was conducted under the guidance and supervision of the District Election Officer, Samba, Ayushi Sudan. The ceremony was presided over by senior district officials, including Additional District Commissioner (ADC) Samba, Jagdish Singh;

Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Ajay Bharti; and Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP), Garu Ram, along with other officers and officials of the district administration.

The occasion witnessed significant participation from NCC cadets, college students and newly enrolled voters. The gathering collectively administered the Voters' Pledge, reaffirming their commitment to upholding democratic values and ensuring active participation in the electoral process. Addressing the gathering, ADC Jagdish Singh highlighted the vital role of youth in strengthening democratic institutions, stating, "Our youth are the cornerstone of our democratic framework and their active participation in elections shapes the future of the nation."

As part of the commemorative activities, recognition was accorded to young voters, Persons with Disabilities (PwD) voters, senior citizens, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and election officials in appreciation of their contributions to the electoral process. The key highlights of the programme included the promotion of informed and responsible voting practices, encouragement of enhanced youth participation in electoral processes, felicitation of election functionaries and stakeholders and a civically reinforcing voter awareness and democratic commitment.

The programme culminated with a rally symbolizing the collective resolve of the community to uphold democratic principles and exercise the right to vote responsibly.

ADC Bhaderwah leads National Voters' Day celebrations at Bhaderwah

HT NEWS NETWORK

BHADARWAH, JAN 25: National Voters' Day was celebrated at Community Hall Bhaderwah with enthusiasm to spread awareness about the importance of voting and democratic values.

ADC Bhaderwah Sunil Kumar Bhutyal addressed the gathering and delivered a brief yet impactful speech, emphasizing the significance of National Voters' Day and encouraging citizens, particularly the youth, to actively



participate in the democratic process.

The event was attended by Tehsildar Bhaderwah, EO MCB Bhaderwah, Naib Tehsildar Bhaderwah, AEE Jal Shakti, ZEO Bhaderwah, ZEPO Bhaderwah, along with other Sub-Division level officers and officials.

Students from various schools also participated in the programme, making the event lively and meaningful.

The function was also celebrated at all polling stations across Bhaderwah, where Booth Level Officers (BLOs) shared their views on the importance of National Voters' Day and educated voters about their rights and responsibilities. The programme concluded with a rally that proceeded towards the ADC office, where participants took a pledge to strengthen democracy through informed and responsible voting.

16th National Voters' Day Celebrated with Enthusiasm at Kulgam



FAROOQ RATHER

KULGAM, JAN 25: The 16th National Voters' Day (NVD) 2026 was celebrated with great enthusiasm at Kulgam on Saturday, where a grand function was organised at the New Conference Hall of the Mini Secretariat.

Dedicated to voters, this year's National Voters' Day theme was "My India, My Vote – Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy." National Voters' Day is observed every year on January 25 since 2011 to commemorate the foundation day of the Election Commission of India. Addressing the gathering, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kulgam, Viqar

Ahmad Giri (JKAS) congratulated the people on the occasion and highlighted the significance of National Voters' Day. He emphasized that the right to vote empowers citizens to actively participate in nation-building and plays a vital role in strengthening democratic values. He also lauded the pivotal role played by Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and other election functionaries in ensuring a transparent, fair and robust electoral process. Speaking on the occasion, Deputy District Election Officer (Dy DEO), Bashir Ul Hassan (JKAS) said that every single vote holds immense importance in the formation of governments. He urged citizens to exercise their franchise

responsibly and to recognize the power vested in them through their right to vote.

On the occasion, best-performing officers and BLOs were felicitated with certificates and mementos in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the electoral process. The programme also featured captivating cultural performances, including a thought-provoking drama by local artists that highlighted the importance of voting and civic responsibility.

The event concluded with a pledge ceremony followed by a mass singing of the national song "Vande Mataram," reaffirming the collective commitment to uphold democratic ideals and active civic participation.

16th National Voters' Day Celebrated across Kashmir Division with enthusiasm

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR, JAN 25: Commemorating the foundation day of the Election Commission of India, established on 25th January 1950, the 16th National Voters Day (NVD) was today celebrated across all districts of Kashmir division with great enthusiasm and civic spirit.

The National Voters Day is observed annually on 25 January to create electoral awareness amongst citizens and encourage their active participation in the democratic process. The celebrations this year revolved around the theme "My India, My Vote", with the powerful tagline "Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy", underscoring the central role of voters in strengthening the democratic fabric of the nation.

Across the division, various awareness programmes, pledge ceremonies, and outreach activities were organized to highlight the importance of informed and ethical voting.

AT KULGAM: The 16th National Voters' Day was celebrated with enthusiasm at Kulgam today, where a grand function was held at the New Conference Hall of the Mini Secretariat.

Dedicated to voters, the National Voters' Day (NVD) 2026 theme is "My India, My Vote—Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy".

Since 2011, January 25 has been celebrated annually as National Voters' Day to commemorate the foundation day of the Election Commission of India.

Addressing the gathering, the ADC Kulgam Viqar Ahmad Giri, congratulated the people on the occasion and highlighted the significance of National Voters' Day.

He emphasized that the right to vote empowers citizens to exercise their democratic franchise for nation-building and strengthening democracy.

He also lauded the pivotal role played by Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and other election functionaries in ensuring a robust and transparent electoral process.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy District Election Officer (Dy DEO), Bashir Ul Hassan added that every single vote is vital in government formation and urged citizens to exercise their voting rights responsibly, realizing the power vested in them.

On the occasion, best-performing officers and BLOs were felicitated with certificates and mementos in recognition of their outstanding contributions.

The programme also featured captivating cultural performances by artists, who enthralled the audience through a thought-provoking drama highlighting the importance of voting.

During the function, a pledge ceremony and mass singing of "Vande Mataram," the national song, was also held.

AT KUPWARA: The 16th National Voters' Day was celebrated today with great zeal and enthusiasm at various locations in Kupwara district.

The main function was held at Town Hall, Kupwara, in the presence of Deputy Commissioner (District Election Officer) Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, and SSP Kupwara, Syed Al-Tahir Gilani.

Also present were ADC Kupwara, CEO Kupwara, Tehsildar Kupwara, election section officials and students.

This year, the theme of the event is "My India, My Vote" with the tagline, "Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy".

A video message from Chief Election Commissioner of India, Shri Gyanesh Kumar, was also screened during the event.

The Deputy Commissioner administered the Voters' Pledge to participants, including officers and students.

In his address, he highlighted the significance of voting in democracy and citizens' role in strengthening the nation's democratic fabric. He encouraged youth, particularly first-time voters, to actively participate in the electoral process.

ADC Kupwara and CEO/ Nodal officer SVEEP also emphasised the importance of National Voters' Day during the event.

Students from BHSS Kupwara presented a cultural programme highlighting the importance of voting in democracy.

An award ceremony was also held and appreciation certificates given to students and participants by the District Administration.

National Voters' Day was also marked in Handwara subdivision, presided over by ADC Handwara, Javed Naseem Masoodi, at Town Hall Handwara. SDM Lolab, Mudassar Ahmad, chaired an event at GDC Sogam. At Mini Secretariat Tangdar, Tehsildar Karnah, Mohammed Amin Bhat, led proceedings, stressing the event's significance.

Similar events were also held at AERO level and NVD pledge was administered.

AT SHOPIAN: District Administration Shopian today celebrated the 16th National Voters' Day with zeal and enthusiasm at the Meeting Hall, Mini Secretariat Shopian.

The programme was organized in line with the theme of National Voters' Day 2026, My India, My Vote.

The programme was presided over by the ADC Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, who was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

In his keynote address, the ADC highlighted voting as the cornerstone of democracy and stressed the need for active and informed participation of citizens, especially youth and first-time voters, in the democratic process.

He appreciated the sustained efforts of the Election Department, BLOs and field functionaries for their dedication in ensuring inclusive elections and urged all stakeholders to continue working towards the goal of No Voter to be Left Behind.

The event commenced with a welcome address by Dy. DEO Shopian, Shakoor Ahmad Dar, who highlighted the significance of National Voters' Day in creating electoral awareness among citizens.

He emphasized the role of the Election Department in ensuring free, fair and transparent elections and underlined the importance of voter education, particularly at the grassroots level.

SDM Zainapora, Bilal Ahmad, in his address, spoke on the importance of National Voters' Day in strengthening democratic values.

National Voters' Day Pledge was also administered during the programme, wherein all officers, officials and participants pledged to uphold democratic values, promote ethical voting and encourage greater participation in the electoral process.

A special highlight of the programme was the felicitation of first-time voters, recognizing their entry into the democratic framework and motivating them to actively participate in nation-building through informed voting.

BLOs were also felicitated on the occasion in recognition of their dedicated grassroots level role in voter registration, awareness generation and ensuring maximum electoral participation across the district.

Additionally, officials of the Election Department were also felicitated for their exemplary contribution towards smooth conduct of electoral activities, voter enrolment drives and implementation of SVEEP initiatives.

The programme was attended by Chief Education Officer Shopian, Bashir Ahmad Shah, all Tehsildars, DSWO and a large number of officials of the Election Department.

AT PULWAMA: District Administration Pulwama today organized a mega function at Government Degree College (Boys), Pulwama, to mark the 16th National Voters' Day, aimed at promoting electoral awareness, participation and strengthening democratic values among citizens, particularly youth and first-time voters. The event was celebrated under the theme "My India, My Vote", which symbolizes the Election Commission of India's commitment towards citizen-centric electoral processes and inclusive participation in democracy.

The programme commenced with the rendition of the National Anthem, setting a solemn and patriotic tone for the event.

Speaking on the occasion, District Election Officer (DEO), Dr. Basharat Qayoom, said that National Voters' Day is celebrated annually on January 25 since 2011 to commemorate the foundation day of the Election Commission of India, established on January 25, 1950. He said that this year's theme "My India, My Vote" reflects the Commission's sustained efforts to build a robust, inclusive and voter-friendly electoral system.

The DEO urged all eligible but unregistered citizens, particularly youth, to enroll themselves at the earliest and actively participate in the democratic process. While appreciating the dedicated efforts of Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and supervisors, the DEO said that the electoral roll is the backbone of the electoral process and that BLOs play a pivotal role in ensuring its effective management, accuracy and credibility.

Dr. Qayoom also commended the remarkable increase in voter turnout in Pulwama district during the preceding Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly elections, stating that it reflects growing democratic awareness and public trust in the electoral system.

The DEO further highlighted the importance of democratic values and called upon citizens, especially young voters, to exercise their franchise responsibly, emphasizing that informed electoral participation is essential for a vibrant democracy.

The Deputy District Election Officer, in his welcome address, highlighted key initiatives being undertaken by the Election Commission of India to improve electoral roll accuracy, enhance voter services and ensure greater transparency and efficiency in the electoral process.

The event featured a rich array of cultural performances, including folk songs, skits, Rouf, student speeches and traditional Ladisha, portraying the importance, power and responsibility of voting in a democratic



society.

Later, the DEO administered the Voters' Pledge, wherein participants pledged to vote freely and fairly, without fear, bias or discrimination based on religion, race, caste, community or language.

Besides, on the occasion, mementos and certificates were distributed among Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), Assistant EROs, PWD icon, young voter, first-time/future voter, senior citizen, election staff, District Level Master Trainers (DLMTs), supervisors, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) for their commendable performance in previous elections while Students who presented cultural performances were also felicitated.

Among others, the programme was attended by Senior Superintendent of Police, Pulwama, Tanushree; Commandant 183 BN CRPF; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama; Chief Education Officer, Pulwama; EROs, AEROs, civil society groups, students, youth and volunteer organisations such as NCC and NYCs, supervisors and BLOs.

AT BANDIPORA: The 16th National Voters' Day-2026 was celebrated with enthusiasm across Bandipora district under the theme "My India, My Vote," with the main function held at the Auditorium Hall of N.M. Higher Secondary School, Kaloosa.

The main event was presided over by Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, and attended by Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Shabir Ahmad Wani, Deputy District Election Officer, Er. Hilal Ahmad, Nodal Officer SVEEP, district and sectoral officers, youth, and students.

The programme commenced with the administration of the National Voters' Day Pledge, reaffirming collective commitment towards upholding democratic values and ensuring informed participation in the electoral process.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner described National Voters' Day as a celebration of democracy and an important platform to motivate youth and first-time voters to actively participate in elections. She appreciated the dedicated efforts of Booth Level Officers (BLOs), Anganwadi workers, and election staff in ensuring free, fair, and transparent electoral processes.

Speaking on the occasion, ACR Bandipora emphasized the role of electoral literacy in strengthening democracy and shared district-level statistics related to voter registration, electoral rolls, and election management, stressing the need for continuous awareness regarding voting rights and procedures. The event featured a series of awareness and cultural activities, including student speeches highlighting the importance of voting, a skit titled "My India, My Vote" presented by students of BHSS Bandipora, a patriotic song by Mohammad Iqbal Lone, and screening of a documentary showcasing the District Administration's initiatives on voter awareness, electoral literacy, and summary revision campaigns.

On the occasion, Electors Photo Identity Cards (EPICs) were distributed among newly registered voters, while mementos were presented to BLOs and officers in recognition of their commendable contribution to election-related duties.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Deputy Chief Education Officer, Dr. G.M. Pujoo highlighted the significance of National Voters' Day in nurturing informed, aware, and responsible citizens.

Meanwhile, National Voters' Day was also observed at Dak Banglow Sumbal, where Electoral Registration Officer, Murtaza Ahmad Sheikh emphasized achieving 100 percent EPIC coverage, transparent electoral registration, and enhanced voter participation. EPICs were distributed to newly enrolled voters, followed by administration of the Voters' Pledge.

Similarly, the day was celebrated at Sub Division Gurez under the leadership of SDM Gurez, Mukhtar Ahmad, focusing on voter awareness and democratic participation. Speakers highlighted the importance of every vote, especially among youth and first-time voters, and administered the Voters' Pledge to reaffirm commitment to democratic values.

AT GANDEBAL: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, who is also District Election Officer administered National Voters Day pledge to participants in a ceremony held here to commemorate 16th National Voters' Day (NVD).

Additional District Development Commissioner, Manzoor Ahmad; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Fahim Bihaqi; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, and other district and sectoral officers were present on the occasion.

Addressing the event, the DC emphasized the significance of National Voters' Day in encouraging and facilitating new voters to participate in the democratic process.

Referring to the 16th NVD theme, "My India, My Vote" with the tagline, "Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy," the DC said that India being the world's largest democracy, its strength lies in the active participation of its citizens. Voting is not only a fundamental right but also a constitutional duty and one must exercise one's vote with due care diligence.

He said it is heartening to witness the enthusiasm of new voters and young citizens who are already well aware of the importance of their vote. During elections, it is our collective responsibility to analyse issues carefully, make informed choices and exercise our franchise wisely, as responsible voting leads to stronger governance and better outcomes for society.

The DC said the Election Commission of India has consistently worked to strengthen electoral awareness and transparency through initiatives such as the SVEEP programme and latest technological interventions all of which have further enhanced accessibility, transparency and public trust in the electoral process.

He congratulated all Booth Level Officers and election staff for their dedicated efforts during Lok Sabha and Assembly Elections held in 2024 as well as the revision exercise in the past year.

He also lauded the efforts of the grassroots level staff for completing Electoral roll revision exercise with proper care and within timelines.

Assistant Commissioner Revenue reflected on the historical significance of National Voters' Day. He urged the youth to actively participate in the democratic process and use their voting power responsibly to contribute to societal progress.

The event also featured speeches by students, who underscored the importance of voting in a democracy. They encouraged the youth to recognize their role as architects of the nation's future and highlighted the transformative power of casting a vote. Later, a felicitation ceremony was also held during which DC felicitated the newly registered voters and handed over EPIC Cards to the new electors. He also felicitated students and BLOs and other election staff for their excellent performance throughout the year.

AT ANANTNAG: The Election Department Anantnag, in collaboration with various departments, celebrated the 16th National Voters' Day today at Government Degree College (GDC) Women's Anantnag.

This year the theme for National Voters' Day was "My India, My Vote" with a tagline of "Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy". Various speakers from different institutions highlighted the importance of voting and the electoral process, along with its legal implementation. They urged the public for mass participation in voting to elect governments focused on people's welfare.

On the occasion, colorful cultural programs on patriotism, electoral rights and local folk were presented by students.

The Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC), Sandeep Singh Bali, who was the Chief Guest for the function stressed the need for timely registration in the electoral list and mass participation in voting. He highlighted the constitutional importance of voting and its role in strengthening participatory democracy.

ACD, CMO, CAO, Deputy DEO, CEO, Deputy Planning Officer, faculty from the college, officials from various departments besides students and volunteers attended the function.

AT BARAMULLA: The 16th National Voters' Day was observed with enthusiasm in Baramulla under the theme "My India, My Vote." The programme aimed to promote electoral awareness and encourage informed participation in the democratic process, particularly among young and newly enrolled voters.

As part of the celebrations, a voters' awareness rally was flagged off by the Assistant Commissioner Revenue Baramulla, Arshad Ahmad Khan in the presence of the Deputy District Election Officer, Baramulla, Ab Rehman Bhat and Dy Chief Education Officer, Iftakhar Ahmad from the District Election Office, Baramulla. The rally culminated at Akber Chowk, Baramulla, with students from various schools and officials participating actively.

Later, the main function was organized at the Main Meeting Hall, DC Office Baramulla, which was attended by new voters, students, and officials. On the occasion, new EPIC cards were issued to newly registered electors.

During the programme, the Voters' Pledge was administered by the ACR to the newly enrolled voters, reaffirming their commitment to democratic values.

Earlier, quiz competitions, nukkad natak, painting, and other awareness activities were organized to sensitize students about the importance of voting.

Addressing the gathering, the Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR), Deputy District Election Officer (Dy DEO), and Deputy Chief Education Officer (Dy CEO) highlighted the significance of youth participation, voter awareness, and ethical voting in strengthening democracy.

Later, the ADC, ACR, Dy DEO, and Dy CEO distributed mementoes and certificates among the participants and winners of various competitions. The programme concluded with a felicitation ceremony.

BUDGAM: The 16th National Voters Day was today celebrated in Budgam to mark the foundation day of the Election Commission of India, established on 25th January 1950.

The theme of this year's National Voters day is My India, My vote. The main function was held at the Sheikh-ul Alam Hall Budgam which was chaired by the District Election Officer/Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-din Bhat.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC deliberated on the importance of celebrating the National Voters Day and said, the right to vote empowers citizens to exercise his/her franchise for nation building and for making the democracy strong. He said that this day provides us an opportunity to reach out to the new voters for enrolment in electoral rolls so that they are able to take part in the Democratic process. He said that every single vote is counted and is important for the government formation.

The Deputy Commissioner lauded the tireless efforts of all Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and other field functionaries for their dedicated work during the bye Assembly elections to 27-AC Budgam. He commended their unwavering commitment and zeal in ensuring a smooth and transparent electoral process. Their hard work played a pivotal role in strengthening democracy at the grassroots level, he said. The DC emphasised the importance of such dedication in upholding the elections and encouraged continued excellence in future endeavors. He highlighted the significance of the Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC) as a vital document for ensuring voter identity and participation in the democratic process. He also stressed the importance of the Voter Information Slip, which provides key details such as polling station information and facilitates a seamless voting experience. The DC encouraged all voters to utilize these tools effectively to uphold the sanctity of elections.

On the occasion, ADC Budgam, CPO Budgam, CEO Budgam, Dy. Election officer, Dysp Hq, Officers, DIO budgam, officials from police and District administration, BLOs, and all other participants took pledge to participate in the election process free and fairly and vowed to contribute in making the nation strong by using their franchise.

CEO Budgam, who is also nodal officer of the SVEEP addressed the audiences at the function. Speaking to participants, She said, "Right to vote is our constitutional right". One should actively participate in the process of elections by casting their votes, thereby strengthening democracy, he added.

Similar functions were also held at Town-hall Budgam, SDM offices, Tehsil Offices, PHE, Social welfare, District handicraft office, labour office, Chief Medical officers and all other offices of the District, where in Pledges were taken with regard to the celebration of 16th National Voters' Day.

On the occasion, painting and essay competitions were also held in almost all schools of District Budgam, in which huge number of student participants were enthusiastically seen participating to celebrate National voters day.

HT EDITORIAL

Swift Response Restores Normalcy After Snowfall in J&K

Moderate to heavy snowfall across Jammu and Kashmir once again tested the region's fragile infrastructure, disrupting road connectivity, power supply, water services, and daily life. Yet, the prompt and coordinated response by the administration ensured that the impact on citizens was minimised and essential services were restored in record time.

Even as snow blanketed highways, urban centres, and remote habitations, district administrations, utility departments, and disaster response teams were pressed into action. Snow clearance operations were launched without delay, priority routes were reopened, and efforts were intensified to restore electricity and water supply, particularly in vulnerable and snowbound areas.

The timely deployment of men and machinery reflected preparedness and an evolving institutional capacity to deal with seasonal challenges.

What stood out was the emphasis on coordination. Power Development, Public Health Engineering, Roads and Buildings, and municipal bodies worked in tandem, while real-time monitoring at the district and divisional levels ensured quick decision-making. Health facilities remained functional, emergency services were kept on high alert, and advisories helped citizens stay informed and safe during the inclement weather.

Such swift action not only alleviated public hardship but also reinforced confidence in governance during emergencies. In a region where winter disruptions are an annual reality, proactive planning and rapid execution are crucial. The administration's response this time underscores the importance of preparedness, accountability, and ground-level execution.

As Jammu and Kashmir continues to face harsh climatic conditions, sustained investment in resilient infrastructure, winter preparedness, and community awareness will be key. The recent snowfall episode serves as a reminder that while nature's challenges are inevitable, efficient governance can ensure that life returns to normal with minimal delay.

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Republic Day: Upholding Democracy, Responsible and National Pride

Reminding us of the values that guide our nation justice, liberty, equality and fraternity



■ SHOIAB MOHAMMAD BHAT

A decade ago, it was quite difficult to hold public celebrations in an open and peaceful atmosphere in the region. However, over the past ten years, clear changes have taken place, with proper security conditions enabling the public to celebrate the Republic Day, the Independence Day, the Constitution Day, the Tourism Day, the Sports Day, etc., with much satisfaction, hope, trust, and a sense of belonging to the nation. There has also been an increase in student participation, reflecting the prevailing sense of peace in the region.

Republic Day is celebrated every year on 26 January with pride and respect in India. On this day in 1950, the Constitution of India came into force, and the country became a democratic republic. Republic Day reminds us of the values that guide our nation justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity. These values form the foundation of Indian democracy and shape the rights and duties of every citizen.

The Constitution has bestowed upon the people equal rights and equal opportunities. It promises dignity, freedom, and participation in national life. Republic Day is a time for citizens to remember these promises and reflect upon how they are practised in daily life. It's a day to pledge honour to democratic ideals and renew our commitment to the principles that keep the nation united.

The Meaning of Republic Day

Republic Day marks the beginning of India's journey as a self-governed nation, with power vested in the hands

of its citizens. India had gained its freedom in 1947, but lacked a guiding set of laws around society at that time. The Constitution helped India in this need and set clear goals towards its citizens' equality and justice.

Similarly, the national parade in New Delhi is an indication of the evolution we have witnessed. It shows the power of the armed forces, as well as the culture and traditions of the various states. Through this celebration, the citizens are reminded of the value of having a democratic form of government.

Republic Day challenges us to look beyond common religious and political symbols and examine values such as whether we respect laws, fairness towards others, and willingness to contribute to building a better society.

Constitutional Values in Daily Life

The Constitution, as the highest law of the land, ensures that each individual enjoys equality before the law, freedom of speech, and the right to live with dignity. These rights allow people to think independently, to speak without fear, and to engage in all types of social and political activities.

Republic Day highlights the responsible use of these rights. Tolerance towards others, peaceful behaviour, and honesty in public life are essential elements of democracy. Citizens help protect democratic ideals through voting, community service, education, and public duty.

The Constitution also reminds citizens of their duties, which include respect for national symbols, protection of public property, promotion of harmony, and care for the environment. When rights are balanced with responsibilities, democracy becomes stronger and more meaningful.

Republic Day in Jammu & Kashmir

Republic Day holds special signifi-

cance in Jammu & Kashmir, a region with a rich culture and a complex history. Celebration of national days in public spaces strengthens unity and democratic identity across the Union Territory.

Flaghoisting, cultural programmes, school functions and official programmes marked the Republic Day celebrations across the districts of Srinagar, Jammu, Baramulla, Anantnag, Kupwara, Budgam and Pulwama. In Srinagar, at Bakshi Stadium, people, school children, officials, and security forces gather to celebrate the day.

Such celebrations provide avenues for citizens to demonstrate national pride and civic responsibility. They build trust between institutions and citizens, making them feel that they are indeed part of the community.

Unity Through Culture

Music, poetry, dances, and art forms together hold significance in the celebrations of Republic Day in Jammu & Kashmir. Participating in local cultures during a series of national holidays fosters understanding and appreciation for one another. It fosters awareness of how unique local cultures exist within a unified community.

Culture also helps establish unity by facilitating individuals' emotional connection to democratic values and presenting a shared history to all citizens.

Role of Youth in Democracy

The youth have an important place in the celebrations of Republic Day. They take part in the parade, debate, speech, and cultural activities. All this helps them learn and understand the Constitution and the value of citizenship.

Journalism related to Republic Day encourages people to take an interest in studies, social affairs, and civic life. It also builds confidence and awareness of democratic ideas from a young age,

cultivating informed and active members of society. Youth involvement brings fresh ideas into national life, keeping democracy alive and relevant.

Development and Democratic Participation

Republic Day also emphasizes the relationship between democracy and development. A healthy democracy enables the people to express their needs, share ideas, and participate in decision-making.

In Jammu & Kashmir, progress in education, healthcare, roads, digitalization, and tourism continues daily. Such development gains significance when citizens remain informed and engaged. Public participation ensures accountability and ensures that policies truly serve the people.

Why Republic Day Matters Today

In today's world, Republic Day carries significance because it reminds people that true democracies are built on respect, dialogue, and peaceful collaboration. The day encourages reflection on the values of equality, justice, and unity and fosters a sense of shared responsibility and national harmony.

The strength of democracy grows when citizens follow constitutional values in everyday life, remain united towards common purposes, and work together towards common objectives. Republic Day reflects the democratic ideals and future of the nation. Celebrations across India, including Jammu & Kashmir, depict a nation united through its constitution.

These illustrate the progression of national identity through participation, respect, and cultural understanding. Inspirations like Republic Day carry forward the spirit to create an egalitarian, peaceful, and inclusive country like India.

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Beyond the Result: Redefining Success in an Exam-Obsessed World



■ DR VIJAY GARG

The moment you open an exam result, it feels like the universe is distilled into a single letter or a three-digit number. For many, this moment is heavy with the weight of expectations—from parents, teachers, and a society that often treats grades as the ultimate currency of worth.

But once the ink dries and the initial rush of adrenaline or disappointment fades, a vital truth remains: the result is a snapshot, not the whole story. ---

An exam measures how well you performed on a specific set of questions, on a specific day, under a specific set of conditions. It does not measure:

Your Character: Your kindness, resilience, or how you treat people when no one is watching.

Your Potential: The "wiggly" path of a career that might involve skills like leadership, empathy, or creativity—none of which are easily captured in a multiple-choice test.

Your Adaptability: Some of the world's most successful entrepreneurs and visionaries were "average" students who thrived because they knew how to navigate the real world, not just a syllabus.

We are often taught that there is only one "right" path: high grades lead to a top university, which leads to a prestigious job. In reality, success is rarely a straight line.

Alternative Routes: Apprenticeships, vocational training, and work experience often provide a faster and more practical route to high-level careers than a traditional degree.

The Gift of Failure: Missing a mark can be a "redirection" rather than a dead end. It forces a

pivot that might lead you to a field you are actually passionate about, rather than the one you felt obligated to pursue.

If you define yourself solely by your academic performance, your self-esteem will always be at the mercy of an evaluator. To move beyond the result, focus on building these three pillars:

Skills Over Scores: Focus on "durable skills" like problem-solving, emotional intelligence, and communication. These are the assets that actually land jobs and build businesses.

Growth Mindset: Use the result as data. If it wasn't what you hoped for, ask: "What can I learn from how I prepared?" rather than "What is wrong with me?"

Holistic Wellbeing: Your mental health is more valuable than any transcript. The stress of "fight or flight" during exams can linger; give yourself permission to rest, socialize, and reconnect with your hobbies.

Every year, millions of students wait anxiously for exam results, believing that a few numbers on a marksheet will define their intelligence, potential, and future. When results are good, there is celebration; when they are not, disappointment, fear, and self-doubt often take over. But the truth is simple and powerful: an exam result is not the final verdict of a student's life—it is just one milestone in a much longer journey.

Exams are designed to assess performance at a particular moment, under specific conditions. They measure how well a student recalls information, applies concepts, or manages time on a given day. What they do not measure are qualities that truly shape life—curiosity, creativity, resilience, emotional intelligence, ethics, leadership, and the ability to adapt. History and everyday life are full of examples of people who did not shine in exams but went on to achieve extraordinary success.

When students score lower than expected, the real challenge begins—not academic, but emotional. Society often labels such outcomes as "failure," forgetting that failure is not an end, but feedback. A disappointing result can become a

turning point, encouraging students to reflect, rethink strategies, discover new interests, or choose paths better aligned with their strengths. Many careers today value skills, innovation, and continuous learning far more than marks alone.

Parents and teachers play a crucial role in shaping how students view results. Supportive guidance helps students understand that effort matters more than outcome, and growth matters more than rank. Instead of asking, "How much did you score?" a more meaningful question is, "What did you learn, and what will you do next?" Such conversations build confidence and a growth mindset.

Looking beyond exam results also means recognizing diverse talents. Some students excel in arts, sports, entrepreneurship, communication, or technical skills that traditional exams fail to capture. In a rapidly changing world driven by technology and creativity, there are multiple paths to success, not just one defined by marks.

In the end, exams are important—but they are not everything. Life offers countless second chances, alternative routes, and opportunities to reinvent oneself. A result may open or close a door, but it never locks the entire building. What truly matters is the courage to move forward, the willingness to learn from setbacks, and the belief that one's worth is far greater than any score on a piece of paper.

Go beyond the result—because your future is bigger than an exam

Final Thought: You Are the Architect

A grade can open a door, but it cannot walk through it for you. Conversely, a poor grade might close one door, but it cannot stop you from building a new one. Your life is a long-term project, and no single exam has the power to define the finish line.

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."

Dr Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational columnist Eminent Educationist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab

Shamshad Kralawari

A Life in Language, Literature, and Public Service



■ SHAHNAWAZ NAZIR

Shamshad Kralawari is one of the most distinguished cultural figures of contemporary Kashmir—a poet, translator, broadcaster, literary critic, cultural thinker, and public intellectual whose life's work has been devoted to the preservation, enrichment, and dissemination of the Kashmiri language and its literary heritage. Over several decades, his contributions across literature, media, and public service have profoundly shaped Kashmiri cultural consciousness and strengthened the role of language as a carrier of memory, identity, and collective resilience.

Early Life and Intellectual Formation

Shamshad Kralawari was born in the village of Kralawari in Chadoora, Village of Masnavi Nigar Maqbool Shah Kralwari located in the Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir. He grew up in a modest yet intellectually vibrant household where books, learning, and thoughtful conversation were valued. This early environment nurtured in him a deep sensitivity to language—not merely as a tool of communication, but as a living repository of history, emotion, and cultural identity.

From a young age, Kralawari displayed a natural affinity for words and storytelling. His formative years coincided with a period in which Kashmiri society was negotiating modernity while striving to retain its cultural roots—an experience that would later become central to his literary and intellectual pursuits.

He completed his matriculation in 1973 from Government High School Zuhama, an institution established by the legendary Kashmiri poet Abdul Ahad Azad. The school's literary legacy left a lasting impression on him, reinforcing his inclination toward poetry, critical thought, and cultural engagement.

Kralawari pursued higher education at Amar Singh College, Srinagar, and later at the University of Kashmir, where he earned Master's degrees in Kashmiri and Persian. His academic journey continued at Aligarh Muslim University (Lucknow campus), where he completed Honours in Urdu. These multiple postgraduate qualifications reflect not only his scholarly discipline but also his extraordinary linguistic range, spanning classical, regional, and modern literary traditions.

Early Cultural Engagement and Theatrical Roots

Even during his student years, Shamshad Kralawari was actively immersed in Kashmir's cultural life. In the early 1970s, he joined the Maqbool Theatre

Club, where he participated in stage productions and honed his skills as a performer and storyteller. One of his most notable performances was in the play *Gulrez*, a role he performed more than twenty times—an experience that strengthened his command over dialogue, character, and emotional expression.

Remarkably, by the time he reached Class 10, Kralawari had already begun writing and staging his own plays. These early creative efforts foreshadowed his lifelong commitment to language, narrative form, and artistic expression, and they laid the groundwork for his later achievements in literature and broadcasting.

Broadcasting Career and Public Service

Shamshad Kralawari's association with broadcasting began as a dream in his teenage years. Drawn to the power of the spoken word and its reach, he aspired to speak on the radio—an ambition that soon became reality. In the mid-1970s, he began volunteering with Radio Kashmir and Yuvavani, contributing to programmes such as *Talks and Aund Poek* (Weekly City round up) features and *Tuhinz Pasand*. These early broadcasts allowed him to experiment with language, content, and audience engagement. After graduation he was empanelled as News reader both for Radio Kashmir Srinagar and Door Darshana Kandra Srinagar and his performance made him a household name.

In 1985, he formally joined erstwhile Radio Kashmir Srinagar now All India Radio (AIR) – as a permanent Announcer/Comper, 1987, as News reader Kashmiri, News Services Division All India Radio New Delhi, and returned back to Radio Kashmir Srinagar (AIR) in 1989 as Programme Executive through UPSC (Bach 1988). Over the course of a long and productive career, he headed more than thirteen departments and served with distinction as an able responsible officer and shared higher responsibilities when due to 1990 uprising in the Valley Kashmiri Pandit officers left the station, after rendering a meritorious services eventually becoming Head of the Commercial Broadcasting Service (FM 102.6 MHz).

Under his leadership, radio programming expanded beyond entertainment to become a space for cultural reflection, public awareness, and social responsibility. His widely acclaimed programmes—including *Baete Kath*, *Tuhinz chith search*, *Pragash*, *Sangarmal*, *Zuvan Pai*, *Hello Doctor*, *Rangha*, and *Vadi Ki Awaaz*, *Zoon Dab*, *Gaemi Bayan Hindi Khatri*, *Miyani zindagi Miyune Kar*, *Rai Trai*, *Sehri Programme* etc- skillfully blended culture, language, health, environment, and everyday concerns. These broadcasts resonated deeply with listeners and reinforced radio's role as a vital public institution in Kashmir.

The 2014 Kashmir Floods: Radio as a Lifeline

The September 2014 floods stand among the most devastating natural disasters in Kashmir's history. With communication networks crippled and vast areas submerged, the region faced a near-total collapse of information sys-



tems. In this moment of crisis, Shamshad Kralawari emerged as a symbol of resilience, courage, and public responsibility.

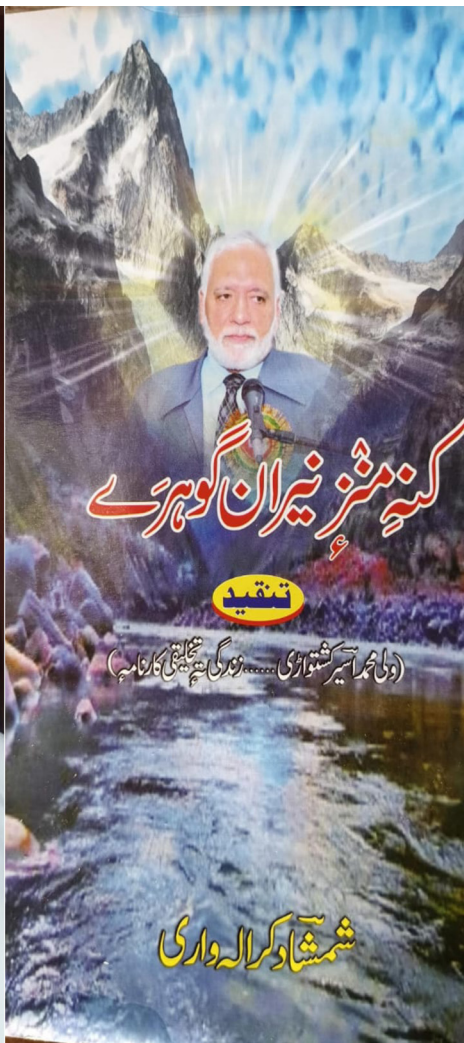
As studios and equipment at Radio Kashmir were inundated, Kralawari undertook an extraordinary journey—waded through food waters with immense personal hardship—to reach the Shankaracharya Hill transmitter site. There, with a microphone connected to it through a tiny tape makeshift studio without having any other resources available and initiated the "Kashmir Flood Helpline" on meters of the FM transmitter of Commercial Broadcasting service Radio Kashmir.

These broadcasts became a lifeline for thousands. They provided live updates, verified information, and emotional reassurance, while also enabling callers to reconnect with families and coordinate with relief agencies. At a time when official communication channels were largely inaccessible, his radio initiative helped counter rumours, guide rescue operations, and restore a sense of collective calm and solidarity.

Literary Work: Poetry and Creative Expression

Alongside his broadcasting career, Shamshad Kralawari has earned wide recognition as a poet of exceptional depth and sensitivity. His original Kashmiri poetry explores themes of folklore, memory, identity, symbolism, and the layered realities of personal and collective experience in Kashmir.

Notable poems such as "Wunal" ("The Fog") and "Zabervan", "Myune Bi" demonstrate his mastery of imagery and metaphor. These works weave togeth-



er oral tradition and philosophical reflection, capturing the emotional and cultural complexity of Kashmiri life. His poetry is widely admired for its lyrical elegance, intellectual subtlety, and ability to bridge tradition with contemporary sensibility.

Translation and Literary Scholarship

One of the defining pillars of Kralawari's legacy is his monumental contribution to translation, which he views as an act of cultural preservation rather than a purely linguistic exercise.

His most celebrated achievement in literature is the Kashmiri translation of Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, titled *Jurm ti Saza*. Begun in 1986 and completed in 2010, this work stands as the 171st translation of the Russian classic. It has been widely acclaimed for preserving the novel's psychological intensity and philosophical depth while rendering it in authentic Kashmiri idiom. The translation is currently under consideration for inclusion in the University of Kashmir's academic curriculum, reflecting its scholarly and pedagogical significance.

He further expanded Kashmiri's literary horizons by translating *The Brothers Karamazov* as *Bratheran Karmazov*, reinforcing his belief that world classics can—and must—find expression in regional languages to ensure their vitality and relevance.

In addition to translation, Kralwari has produced influential works of literary criticism, most notably *Kani Manze Neran Gowhary* – Tanqeed, a critical study praised

for its analytical rigor and engagement with Kashmir's literary history.

Advocacy for Language and Cultural Preservation

A steadfast advocate of the Kashmiri language, The most important work in translation is yet to hit the stalls and everyone is eagerly waiting for publication of that graceful work "Mehru Ramazan" the word by word Translation of The Holy Quran completed in 2017.

Shamshad Kralawari has consistently spoken out on the need for mother-tongue education, diverse literary Non-literary productions beyond poetry, and institutional support for Kashmiri in the digital age. He has publicly supported initiatives to integrate Kashmiri into platforms such as Microsoft and Google translation tools, recognizing their importance for linguistic survival and global accessibility.

He emphasizes pride in linguistic identity and the documentation of oral traditions as essential strategies to ensure that Kashmiri remains a living, evolving language for future generations.

Cultural Leadership and Public Influence

Beyond writing and broadcasting, Kralawari has played an active role in cultural institutions, literary forums, and public debates. He has moderated discussions, engaged with scholars and publishers, and contributed to shaping discourse on Kashmiri literary and cultural policy. His influence extends across generations, earning him deep respect among writers, academics, and cultural enthusiasts.

Recognition and Legacy

Shamshad Kralawari has received numerous honours, including felicitations at Aligarh Muslim University alongside leading literary figures, in recognition of his services to translation, research, and language promotion. Russian Cultural House in New Delhi in recognition of his interest in their classics call him "Dostoyevskiy of India". Yet his true legacy lies not in awards, but in enduring contributions:

- Life-saving broadcasting during times of crisis
- Transformative translations of world literature into Kashmiri
- Deep engagement with literary criticism and cultural history
- Unwavering advocacy for linguistic dignity and preservation

Conclusion

Shamshad Kralawari's life and work represent a rare synthesis of media leadership, literary excellence, and cultural stewardship. As a broadcaster, poet, translator, critic, and public intellectual, he has devoted decades to nurturing and safeguarding Kashmir's linguistic and cultural heritage. His voice—whether on the radio waves, in poetry, or through translated classics—continues to shape how Kashmir remembers its past, understands its present, and imagines its future.

Author | Columnist

Three Permanent Things in Life

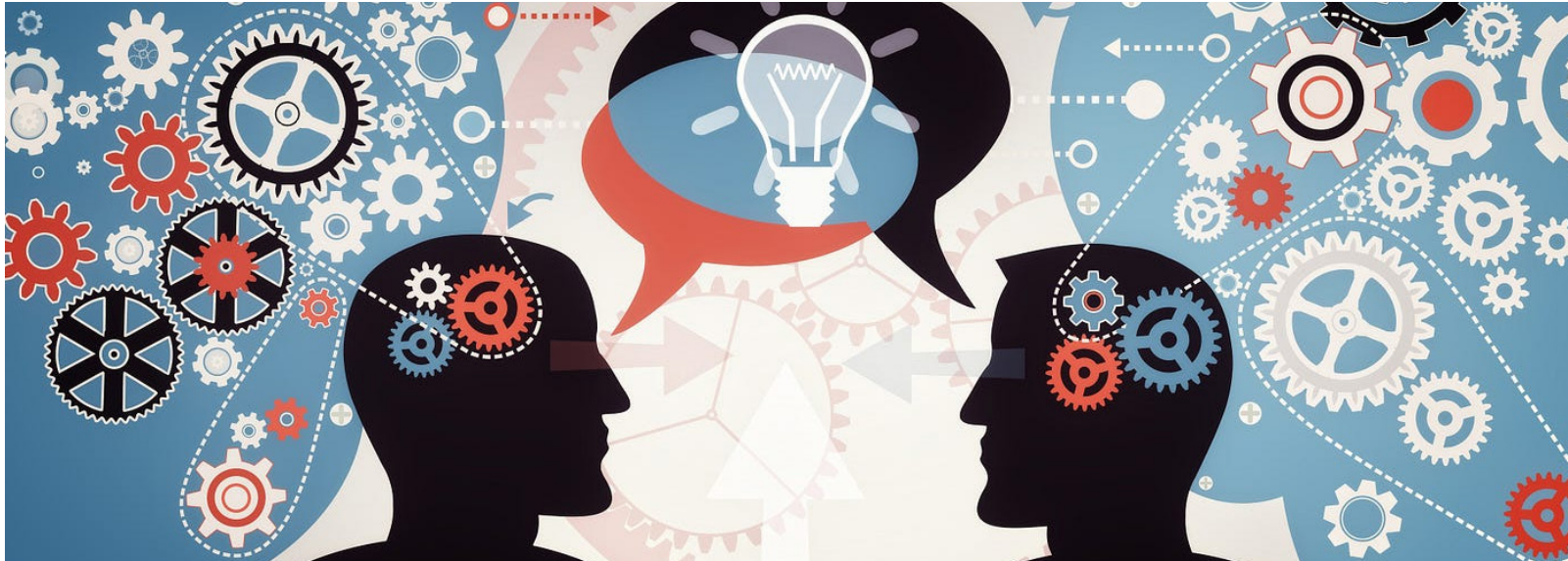


■ UMAR HASSAN

In life, there are three things that are permanent: pain, loneliness, and death.

First, let us talk about pain from a psychological point of view. According to me, pain is an unavoidable part of life. Most people fear pain, but I believe we should feel it instead. Pain should be scared of you, not the other way around. Accept pain rather than trying to escape or fight it, because acceptance makes you stronger.

The second permanent thing is loneliness. In simple words, loneliness



means being alone, but I see loneliness as a power. When you are alone, it is the best time to understand yourself deeply and work on becoming the

best version of yourself.

Now the question arises: how can we become the best version of ourselves in loneliness or silence?

My answer is simple. When you are alone, stay calm and sit quietly. Think about situations that may happen in the future. Do not compare

yourself with others. You can overcome loneliness not by making friends, but by talking to yourself. Even when you are in a room full of

people, observe everything quietly. While everyone is shouting or talking, silence can teach you more than noise.

The last permanent thing in life is death. In simple words, death is the end of physical life. But in Islam, death is not the end. Life is like a book in which everything is written your good deeds and your sins. After death, this book will be opened, and the Lord will reward you for your good actions and punish you for your sins.

Now the question is: what will you choose reward or punishment?

Of course, reward. To achieve that, discipline is necessary. Death cannot be avoided; it will come one day. Life is an examination, and it is in your hands whether you want to pass by preparing well or fail by ignoring it. Prepare yourself now so that after death, you may attain a better life but remember, discipline is the key.

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How To Make Children Health Conscious



■ MOOL RAJ

Nowadays, many parents are concerned about their children's health. A mother once told me that her son falls ill every few days despite taking great care of his diet. I asked what he usually eats. She said, "He doesn't eat home-cooked meals much. He prefers store-bought snacks, chips, and soft drinks." That's when I understood why he gets sick so often.

In today's world, where junk food and fast food have become a lifestyle, keeping children healthy has become a real challenge. Most children prefer processed foods over nutritious meals. The main reason is that they are not aware of what's good or bad for their health. Parents must play a vital role in this matter. They need to teach their children the importance of health and nutrition — how eating right can make them stronger, more energetic, and happier.

A healthy child not only performs better in school but also becomes a more confident and active individual. However, to develop healthy habits in children, parents themselves must be role models. If parents eat unhealthy foods and lead sedentary lives, children will naturally follow the same pattern.

Below are a few simple but effective ways to help children become health-conscious:

Awareness

Parents should help children understand what health means and why it is important. Tell them that eating nutritious foods, exercising regularly, and maintaining hygiene are the keys to good health. Explain in simple words what kind of foods are



healthy and which ones are harmful. For example, compare junk food to "junk code" in computers — it may look fancy but slows down the system. Likewise, junk food weakens the body. Parents can make short, fun lessons or activities to make this concept easier for children to grasp.

Physical Activity

Children should be encouraged to engage in regular physical activity. Running, cycling, swimming, and outdoor games are essential for their physical and mental development. Sadly, children nowadays spend too much time on mobile phones, computers, and TV screens. Parents must set limits on screen time and encourage outdoor play. Schools should also promote sports as a necessary part of the routine. Parents should play with their children and make exercise a family habit.

Healthy Eating Habits

When children eat their meals with family, they learn social behavior and good

eating manners. Parents should avoid feeding them while watching TV or using gadgets. Homemade food should be made appealing — pack colorful and nutritious lunches, use creative presentation, and involve children in meal preparation. This not only makes them interested in food but also teaches them the importance of healthy eating.

Sleep

Children need proper sleep. Lack of sleep affects their growth, weakens their immune system, and harms their mental health. Overuse of gadgets is one of the main reasons for sleep deprivation. Parents should establish a fixed bedtime routine and ensure that children sleep on time.

Personal Hygiene

To stay healthy, children must maintain personal hygiene. Teach them to bathe daily, brush their teeth twice a day, and wash their hands before and after eating. Cleanliness should be taught not as a chore but as a good habit and a sign of discipline.

Bonding

Children learn best when they feel emotionally connected to their parents. When parents spend quality time with their children, they listen more and accept guidance more readily. Eat together, talk to them about their day, and praise them when they make healthy choices. Such positive reinforcement strengthens their emotional and physical health.

Water

Encourage children to drink enough water every day. Many children prefer soft drinks, which are harmful. Parents should make it a rule to drink water frequently and carry their own water bottles to school. Teach them that water keeps the body clean and active.

Appreciation

When children make healthy choices, appreciate them. Praise motivates them to continue good habits. For example, if your child eats vegetables instead of chips, tell them you're proud of them. Positive

encouragement helps children build lasting healthy habits.

Parental Attention

Parents should show happiness when their children eat food. However, don't force them to eat, as that will make them resist more. Encourage them to eat by setting an example — if parents eat the same food with enthusiasm, children are likely to imitate them and eat happily as well.

Parents' Habits

Parents' habits greatly influence their children. If parents have a habit of eating breakfast and dinner together, it will automatically build the same habit in children. When parents skip meals due to work or lack of time, children often adopt the same unhealthy behavior. Parents should regularly have meals together so that children develop a balanced eating pattern.

Keep Children Away from Advertisements

Children are heavily influenced by advertisements promoting unhealthy snacks and junk food. Parents should try to keep children away from such advertisements as much as possible. Encourage them to watch children's programs that are ad-free.

Lunch Box

Mothers should prepare lunch boxes filled with nutritious and appealing items. If the lunch box includes something new or colorful, children are more likely to eat it. A well-prepared lunch box ensures that children get the required nutrition and maintain good health. Foods containing Omega-3 fatty acids and Vitamin C are essential for brain function and memory.

The Need for Social Skills

Along with healthy eating habits, it is equally important for children to develop social skills. These skills help them interact confidently in school and other settings. Children should be taught how to eat politely, share food, and respect others at the dining table.

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LG Ladakh reaffirms vision to make Ladakh India's Winter Sports Capital

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

LEH, JAN 25: The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, held an engaging interaction session with participants of the ongoing 6th Khelo India Winter Games 2026 at the Indoor Hall, NDS Stadium today, fostering meaningful exchanges on sports development, cultural integration, and youth empowerment. At the beginning of the session, players from Jammu & Kashmir, Chandigarh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Maharashtra commended improved facilities and warm hospitality compared to previous years, thanking UT Administration and officials for making their stay in Ladakh memorable. They also praised the modern state-of-the-art ice

hockey rink at Ladakh. They emphasised Khelo India transcended geographical barriers and shared suggestions for elevating future Games standards. The Lt Governor highlighted that UT Administration had made every effort to ensure participants returned home with cherished Ladakh experiences. He emphasised sports as a powerful medium for sharing diverse cultures and languages, describing it as one of India's greatest strengths. Praising Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision, he noted Khelo India provided a national platform for talent showcase, with UT Administration and Sports Authority of India ensuring world-class facilities for the participants. He shared plans for year-round tourism and sporting events,



linking sports growth with Ladakh's tourism boom, and announced the upcoming modern ice hockey stadium in Kar-

gil to further bolster winter sports infrastructure.

The Lt Governor invited teams from other states for winter sports training camps

at Ladakh and reaffirmed commitment to continuous facility improvements, positioning

Ladakh as India's premier winter sports hub. He urged participants to champion drug awareness among youth, stating sports keeps youth away from substance abuse, and called for their active role in achieving Viksit Bharat 2047 resolve. Chief Secretary Shri Ashish Kundra noted significant sports infrastructure enhancements in Ladakh. He invited players from Chandigarh and Haryana for training and proposed establishing a Centre of Excellence for winter sports training in Ladakh to attract national talent. Among those present during the interactive session were Administrative Secretary Smt Bhanu Prabha, Administrative Secretary Youth Services & Sports Shri Moses Kunzang, and senior officials from SAI and Ladakh.

IITians, Nagrota Celebrates Republic Day at Vridh Ashram, Ambphalla

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, JAN 25: Iitians, Nagrota presented a heart-warming cultural programme on the eve of Republic Day with the inmates of the Home for the Aged and Infirm (Vridh Ashram), Jammu and reaffirmed their enduring commitment to the dignity, happiness, and emotional well-being of senior citizens. The celebration at Vridh Ashram, Ambphalla was marked by the participation of 33 students from IIT Jammu (Kritash Club), who visited the Home as part of their social outreach initiative. Led by Mr. Aditya Pratap Singh, Head Student, the students spread joy and positivity amongst the residents of the Home. Mr. Sonu Patidar and Mr. Surjeet captivated the residents of Vridh Ashram with melodious singing, while Ms. Ujjwal delivered a soulful per-



formance that deeply moved the elderly inmates. The premises of Vridh Ashram resonated with warmth, applause, and emotional bonding. The inmates of Vridh Ashram, Ambphalla actively participated in the programme, showcasing their talents with great enthusiasm. Senior residents Rajinder Singh, Rajput (Chhattisgarh), Ashok Kumar, Shiv Kumar, and Shakuntla Devi enthralled the gathering with poetry, songs, and dance performances, reflecting the vibrant spirit nurtured at Vridh Ashram. The programme at Vridh Ashram was graced by Dr. Arti Sharma, Mr. Pankaj Sharma, Sh. Narinder Singh from Higher Secondary School, Jullaka Mohalla, Jammu, along with Mr. Pankaj Jain, Mr. Sudhir Jain, and their family members, who appreciated the noble mission of Vridh Ashram, Ambphalla. Members of the Vridh Ashram Managing Committee and volunteers, including Dr. Dinesh Gupta, Secretary, Sh. Sat Pal Sharma and Sr. Rajinder Singh, Members Managing Committee, and Mr. Raghav Gupta, Volunteer, were also present and lauded the collective efforts that made the Republic Day celebrations at Vridh Ashram truly memorable. The management of the Home for the Aged and Infirm (Vridh Ashram), Ambphalla, Jammu expressed heartfelt gratitude to the visiting students and guests for sharing their time, compassion, and joy with the senior residents.

Col Mahan attends Mann Ki Baat Programme at Plakh, urges youth to stay connected with national initiatives

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

BASHOLI, JAN 25: Chairman District Development Council (DDC) Kathua, Col Mahan Singh (Retd), today attended the 130th episode of Mann Ki Baat, the monthly radio programme of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at a well-organised gathering held at Village Thnoon in Plakh. The programme was organised by Yash Badial, District General Secretary, Kisan Morcha, along with local youth at the residence of renowned social activist Capt Kishor Sharma. Besides Col Mahan Singh, several prominent personalities including Anju Saad, Capt (Retd) Ram Rattan, Shewinder Singh, Hansraj, Karan Singh, and many others were present on the occasion. Interacting with the participants after the broadcast, Col



Mahan Singh appreciated the vision and grassroots approach of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in directly connecting with people across the country through Mann Ki Baat. He said that the programme highlights inspiring

achievements of citizens from different sectors and motivates people to contribute positively towards society. Col Mahan Singh stated, "Mann Ki Baat is a unique platform through which the Prime

Minister shares ideas, experiences, and success stories of common people. It encourages every citizen to become an active partner in nation-building and strengthens the spirit of collective responsibility."

He appealed to the community, especially the youth, to regularly listen to the programme to stay informed and motivated. He added that being connected with the Prime Minister's vision helps people understand national priorities and encourages them to work for social development and national progress. Later, Col Mahan Singh also dedicated a 25 KV electricity transformer to the people of the neighbouring Mohalla Patti, fulfilling a long-pending demand of the area. He said that improved power infrastructure will provide relief to residents and support local development. The local residents expressed gratitude to Col Mahan Singh for addressing their issues and for his continued efforts towards grassroots development in the region.

Pathania Highlights VBG-RAMG as A Revolutionary Employment Initiative Aimed at Rural Employment

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR, JAN 25: A detailed sensitization programme on the newly introduced government scheme VBG-RAMG, envisioned as an employment-oriented initiative in place of MGNREGA, was organised in Mandal Majalta. The programme was chaired by Ranbir Singh Pathania, MLA Udhampur East, who was the main speaker on the occasion. Addressing the gathering, Ranbir Singh Pathania informed that VBG-RAMG is a progressive step by the government aimed at ensuring sustainable livelihood opportunities, with special focus on women, vulnerable sections, and marginalised groups. He explained that the scheme has been designed to go beyond traditional wage employment by promoting dignity of labour, social



security, and inclusive participation, while simultaneously addressing issues related to gender-based vulnerabilities. The MLA emphasised that proper awareness at the grassroots level is essential for effective implementation of the scheme. He urged Mandal-level functionaries and community representatives to ensure that the benefits of VBG-RAMG reach the deserving households, particularly those earlier dependent on MGNREGA. He also highlighted the

importance of transparency, social accountability, and community monitoring to make the scheme successful. Speaking on the broader social impact, Pathania stated that VBG-RAMG is not only an employment scheme but also a tool for social sensitization, aimed at reducing inequalities and empowering weaker sections through meaningful work opportunities. He assured full cooperation from his office in addressing implementation challenges and facilitating

coordination between departments. Prominent among those who remained present were Mohinder Singh, Mandal Pradhan, Capt. Gopal Singh, Gopal Sharma, Kewal Singh, Balbir, Shokat Ali, Devi Dass, Santosi Devi, and Deepa Rani. The participants appreciated the initiative and stressed the need for regular awareness programmes to ensure smooth transition and wider acceptance of the new scheme. The programme concluded with an interactive session, during which participants raised queries related to registration, eligibility, and execution under VBG-RAMG. A collective resolve was taken to actively disseminate information about the scheme and work towards its effective implementation for strengthening livelihoods and social equity at the grassroots level.

AICC Member highlights public issues, urges Legislators to raise people's concerns in Assembly

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU, JAN 25: Senior Congress leader and AICC Member Shamsher Chand today addressed a public meeting, urging citizens to actively participate in the upcoming Republic Day celebrations while drawing attention to pressing public issues affecting the people. The meeting emphasized the need for constructive engagement between the public and their representatives, highlighting the importance of raising local and regional concerns in legislative forums to ensure government accountability. During the meeting, Shamsher Chand stressed that elected representatives, whether part of the government or in opposition, must use the Assembly session effectively to bring attention to issues affecting ordinary citizens. He underlined the need for active discussion on critical matters such as infrastructure development, healthcare access, employment generation, education, and basic civic amenities. The senior leader emphasized that highlighting these issues in the Assembly is essential for policy reforms and timely interventions that directly impact the lives of people. Shamsher Chand also urged the public to participate in Republic Day celebrations in large numbers, describing the occasion as a symbol of national unity, patriotism, and democratic values. He appealed to citizens to not only celebrate the day but also use it as a platform to engage with their representatives and ensure their voices are heard on matters of public importance. The senior Congress leader highlighted several ongoing public concerns, including inadequate road and transport facilities, inconsistent electricity and water supply, rising healthcare challenges, and unemployment. He urged the government to prioritize the resolution of these issues and called upon legislators to actively raise these matters during Assembly debates. Concluding his address, Shamsher Chand reiterated that active public participation and vigilant legislative scrutiny are crucial for strengthening democracy. He appealed to legislators and citizens alike to work together to ensure that development reaches every corner of the region, and that public grievances are effectively addressed.

Lt. Governor felicitates DC Reasi for exemplary election management

■ HT NEWS NETWORK

REASI, JAN 25: The Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha today felicitated the Deputy Commissioner and District Election Officer (DEO) Reasi, Nidhi Malik, with an Appreciation Award during the 16th National Voters' Day celebrations held at the Convention Centre,

Jammu. The award was conferred in recognition of her exemplary election management, meticulous planning, voter-friendly initiatives and the transparent and efficient conduct of the electoral process in District Reasi. The District Election Officer Reasi dedicated the award to the collective efforts of all line departments, election machin-

ery, security agencies and stakeholders who worked under her leadership to enhance voter participation and uphold the sanctity of the electoral process, despite logistical and geographical challenges. The DEO also appreciated the cooperation extended by political parties, candidates, media and voters.



Delhi Govt announces special remission for prisoners on R- Day

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JAN 25: The Delhi government has decided to grant Special Government Remission (reduction in a convict's prison sentence) to eligible convicts on the occasion of Republic Day.

According to Delhi Home Minister Ashish Sood, the remission is going to be for the convicts sentenced by courts of criminal jurisdiction in Delhi and are lodged in the Central Jails in the national capital, or outside Delhi, who are undergoing sentence as on January 26, 2026. However, this is going to be based on prescribed conditions.

According to an order, "The remission is being granted in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 473 of the

Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023 (corresponding to Section 432 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973), read with Ministry of Home Affairs Notification No. U-11011/2/74-UTL (i) dated 20.03.1974."

Sood has said that the scale of remission is that the prisoners above the age of 65 years, and women prisoners awarded sentence of over 10 years, will likely get 90 days remission; for sentences above five years up to 10 years, the period will be 60 days remission; sentences above one year up to five years, will get 30 days remission; and those inmates with sentence up to one year, will get twenty days.

He added that in case of all other prisoners, who have been awarded sentence above 10



years, they will be given 60 days remission; for five years sentence, up to 10 years to get

remission of 45 days, and above one year sentence or up to five years, it will be 30 days, and sentence up to one year, 15 days remission.

Notably, the minister has clarified that the special remission shall be in addition to the remission already admissible under the Delhi Prison Rules, 2018, and those convicts who are on parole, or furlough as on January 26, 2026 shall be eligible, provided no misconduct has been reported during the given period.

He has also stated that this remission will only be granted to those convicts who have not been punished for any jail offence during the last one year duration.

There are some categories of convicts who will not be given this remission, including

those who have been awarded death sentence, or whose death sentence has been commuted to life imprisonment.

Also, civil prisoners, those imprisoned for evasion of government dues, convicted under the NDPS Act, POCSO Act, Official Secrets Act, or for espionage-related offences, will be kept away from this relief.

Those prisoners convicted by court-martial, for contempt of court, or for offences against women, convicted under the Negotiable Instruments Act and other specified civil offences, and the cases falling under the "Exception" categories as notified by the Ministry of Home Affairs, including offences related to subjects enumerated in List-I of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, will also not get the remission. UNI

Market valuation of nine of the top 10 firms falls by Rs 2.51 lakh crore

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JAN 25: The combined market valuation of nine of the top-10 most valued firms slumped by Rs 2.51 lakh crore last week. Reliance Industries took the biggest hit. The market valuation of Reliance Industries tumbled by Rs 96,960.17 crore to Rs 18,75,533.04 crore.

Reliance Industries remained the most valued firm, followed by HDFC Bank, TCS, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever and Larsen & Toubro. ICICI Bank's valuation eroded by Rs 48,644.99 crore to Rs 9,60,825.29 crore while the valuation of HDFC Bank tanked Rs 22,923.02 crore to Rs 14,09,611.89 crore.

Bharti Airtel valuation diminished by Rs 17,533.97 crore to Rs 11,32,010.46 crore and that of Larsen & Toubro tanked Rs 15,248.32 crore to Rs 5,15,161.91 crore.



Market capitalisation (Mcap) of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) dropped by Rs 16,588.93 crore to Rs 11,43,623.19 crore while Infosys dived by Rs 7,810.77 crore to Rs 6,94,078.82 crore.

Bajaj Finance' valuation declined by Rs 14,093.93 crore to Rs 5,77,353.23 crore and that of State Bank of India edged lower by Rs 11,907.5 crore to Rs 9,50,199.77 crore.

However, Mcap of Hindustan Unilever climbed by Rs 12,311.86 crore to Rs 5,66,733.16 crore. Stock market on Friday failed to build on the previous session's strong rebound and ended lower in a volatile session amid selling across sectors.

At close, the Sensex was down 769.67 points or 0.94 per cent at 81,537.70, and the Nifty was down 241.25 points or 0.95 per cent at 25,048.65. BSE midcap index fell 1.5 per cent and small cap index down over 2 per cent. UNI

President Murmu emphasises voting as vital expression of democracy at 16th National Voters' Day

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JAN 25: President Droupadi Murmu, addressing the 16th National Voters' Day celebrations, underscored the profound significance of voting, calling it "not merely a political expression, but a reflection of citizens' faith in the democratic process of elections." The event, held annually on January 25 to mark the foundation of the Election Commission of India, highlights voter awareness and participation in the world's largest democracy.

Speaking to a gathering of election officials, young voters, and dignitaries, President Murmu praised the inclusive nature of Indian democracy. "The strength of our democracy lies not only in the sheer size of voters but also in the depth of the democratic spirit. Even the oldest voters, differently-abled voters, and those living in remote

areas exercise their right to vote," she noted. She commended the Election Commission for its continuous efforts to ensure that "no voter is left behind," citing numerous programmes that have increased electoral awareness across the country.

President Murmu highlighted this year's theme, "My India, My Vote: Indian Citizen at the heart of Indian Democracy," as a powerful reminder of the essential role each voter plays.

She said, "Voting is a means for citizens to express their aspirations and gives concrete expression to our constitutional ideals of political and social justice and equality." Emphasising the constitutional principle of 'One Person, One Vote', she applauded the faith the nation's founders placed in the wisdom of the common people and praised Indian voters for vindicating that faith, earning global respect for



India's democratic system.

The President also called on

citizens to exercise their voting rights with responsibility and awareness, free from "temptation, ignorance, misinformation, propaganda, and prejudice."

Addressing young voters in particular, she congratulated them on receiving their voter identity cards and declared that "today's voters are the architects of India's future." She expressed confidence that the youth will contribute meaningfully to nation-building through their active participation in elections.

Since its inception in 2011, National Voters' Day has played a critical role in celebrating the democratic right to vote and encouraging electoral participation. This year's Voters' Day, graced by the President herself, reinforces the foundational democratic spirit that continues to unite India's diverse population in the exercise of their electoral franchise. UNI

Made-in-India training aircraft by pvt sector to be reality by year end

■ AJEET JHA

NEW DELHI, JAN 25: Country's first indigenously manufactured pilot training aircraft, the Diamond DA40, built by private sector, is expected to become a reality by December this year. The DA40 aircrafts are being manufactured by Shakti Aircraft Industries Private Limited (SAIPL), a joint venture between India's Shakti Group and Austria's Diamond Aircraft Industries.

The company began supplying these aircrafts to Indian customers in Mar 2025, but these were not manufactured in the country yet.

In response to the questionnaire sent via email, the company told UNI, it had started construction of assembly line at Tirupur, Tamil Nadu. All production tools have arrived, and "we expect to get CAR 21 certification by mid-2026".

This certification, necessary for manufacturing an aircraft in India, will be issued by DGCA. CAR 21 is a certification of aircraft as well as related products and parts.

SAIPL has planned a 450 cr CapEx for this project in phase 1. "We expect final assembly to kick off from mid-2026 with deliveries during the last quarter of the calendar year 2026," the company said.

Asked about prospects of exporting from India, the company replied affirmatively. It said, "SAIPL will be selling the DA40 NG across the Indian subcontinent and we also will be exporting components to the global Diamond supply chain in the near future."

The Diamond DA40 NG is a four-seater single-engine aircraft.

With India's aviation sector growing at a fast pace, and a requirement of 20,000 pilots projected over next

10 years, company expects to capture a good part of training aircraft demand.

"We currently have 35 FTOs (flight training organisations) and the government intends to double this number in the next 10 years to ensure enough pilots are trained and certified. Therefore, being the only Indian made trainer aircraft and other major competitors facing limited delivery slot issues, we foresee healthy numbers to sustain the venture," the SAIPL said in its response regarding mid to long term prospects for these machines.

SAIPL will showcase its DA40 NG, DA42, and DA62 aircrafts during Wings India 2026 at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad this month. In addition to pilot training, these aircrafts may be used for multi-purpose missions as well, the company clarified. UNI

ED uncovers money laundering in fatal Goa nightclub case

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JAN 25: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Panaji Zonal Office stated on Sunday that it recently conducted search operations at nine premises in Goa, New Delhi, and Gurugram, including those belonging to the Sarpanch and Secretary of the Arpora-Nagao Panchayat. The searches are part of an ongoing money-laundering investigation against Saurabh Luthra and others.

The probe pertains to alleged money-laundering activities linked to the owners of the nightclub "Birch by Romeo Lane" in Arpora, Goa, where a tragic fire on December 6, 2025, resulted in 25 fatalities. The ED initiated its investigation based on two FIRs registered by the Goa Police, which cite scheduled offences under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The searches uncovered serious statutory compliance irregularities, including the procurement of licences using forged documents and the continued operation of commercial activities despite lacking mandatory approvals from competent authorities.

During the searches, it was revealed that the entity operating Birch by Romeo Lane generated approximately Rs 22 crore in revenue during the 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years. This revenue is prima facie suspected to constitute proceeds of crime, as the club was operating without necessary statutory licences and on the basis of forged No Objection Certificates and licences from various departments. Evidence of foreign remittances routed through group entities was also unearthed, and possible legal contraventions are being examined.

Further investigation revealed that crores of rupees generated from the illegal operation of the establishment were diverted to personal bank accounts of individuals as well as to accounts of other group entities. Various incriminating documents and digital devices were recovered and seized. Additionally, bank accounts of persons and entities suspected of holding proceeds of crime have been frozen under PMLA provisions.

The investigation is also examining any possible corruption angle and the subsequent laundering of proceeds of crime by other involved persons, two of whom were recently arrested by the Goa Police. Further investigation is on. UNI

Constitution has been a guiding beacon of justice, equality, and dignity: Delhi CM

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, JAN 25: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Sunday said that the Constitution is the conscience of the country, and for the past 77 years, it has been guiding the nation as a beacon of justice, equality, and dignity. Wishing the residents of the city for the national event in advance, Gupta said that the Republic Day is a celebration of the country's sovereignty and democratic values, while she also paid rich tributes to Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar and his team for laying the foundation of country's democracy, being the architect of the constitution.

On the occasion of the state celebrations of the 77th Republic Day held on Sunday, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta urged the residents of the national

capital to fulfill collective duty towards the city and the country so that efforts towards a 'developed Delhi' gains momentum.

"Let us pledge that we all collectively work towards developing our country and the city into a more green, prosperous and a better developed place," the CM said. On the occasion of the state governments' celebrations on account of the Republic Day, the Chief Minister inspected the parade at Chhatrasal Stadium, and hoisted the national flag.

Police personnel, who excelled in their respective fields, were honoured on the occasion.

In her address, the CM emphasised that the Republic Day inspires everyone to pursue inclusive development of the nation, and also adherence to constitutional norms.

"Active participation in na-



tion-building is the true essence of Republic Day," CM added, urging people to come forward and together resolve to build a strong and developed national capital.

Gupta in her address stressed on the 'Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas' vision of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and enumerated various welfare initiatives taken by her government in the past

eleven months for the marginalised sections of the society.

CM said that the government has provided a fund of Rs 700 crore for the slum areas, through which development works are being carried out in the areas where people belonging to the marginalised, and weaker sections live, and the effort is to provide them with amenities to

live a life of dignity.

She said that over 50,000 people are being provided healthy food at the government's 'Atal Canteens' on a daily basis at a nominal price, and the government aims to expand it to one lakh people per day, with a clear objective that no one in the city goes to sleep with empty stomach.

Gupta also stated that the government has constituted the 'Gig Worker Welfare Board,' with an aim to bring unorganised gig workers under the ambit of social and health security.

The CM said that the government has earmarked Rs 30,000 cr in 2025-26 for infrastructure like good roads, better public transport, clean water, and modern civic amenities for the people in the city, which is more than double compared to the previous year. UNI



Man killed in 3rd Minnesota shooting by federal agents identified as U.S. citizen

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

LOS ANGELES, JAN 25: Authorities confirmed Saturday that the man shot dead by U.S. federal agents earlier in the morning in Minneapolis, Minnesota was a U.S. citizen.

Minneapolis police chief Brian O'Hara said at a news conference that the victim was a 37-year-old white male and a resident of Minneapolis.

"We believe he is an American citizen," O'Hara said.

He said the man was a lawful gun owner with a permit to carry.

The police chief urged people to "remain peaceful." "We recognize that there is a lot of anger and a lot of questions around what has happened," he said.

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey said he had watched a video that appeared to show "more than six masked agents pummeling one of our constituents and shooting him to death."

"How many more lives need to be lost before this administration realizes that a political and partisan narrative is not as im-



portant as American values?" asked the mayor at a news conference.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said in a state-

ment that "as DHS law enforcement officers were conducting a targeted operation in Minneapolis against an illegal alien

wanted for violent assault, an individual approached US Border Patrol officers with a 9 mm semi-automatic handgun."

"The officers attempted to disarm the suspect but the armed suspect violently resisted," said the statement. "Fearing for his

life and the lives and safety of fellow officers, an agent fired defensive shots."

Witnesses were quoted as saying by local media that the man was struck multiple times in the chest before being transported to a nearby hospital.

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz said on X that he "just spoke with the White House after another horrific shooting by federal agents this morning."

"Minnesota has had it. This is sickening," said the governor. "The President must end this operation. Pull the thousands of violent, untrained officers out of Minnesota. Now."

Following the fatal shooting, Walz authorized the activation of the Minnesota National Guard to assist local law enforcement at the request of the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office.

"The state has the personnel to keep people safe -- federal agents must not obstruct our ability to do so," said Walz.

This incident marks the third shooting involving federal law enforcement officers in the city this month. The first occurred on Jan. 7, when a 37-year-old U.S. citizen, Renee Good, was fatally shot by a federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent. On Jan. 14, an ICE agent shot a Venezuelan national in the leg during an attempted arrest, according to the DHS. UNI

US threatens Canada with 100pc tariff

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

New Delhi/Washington, Jan 25: US President Donald Trump on Saturday threatened to slap Canada with a 100 per cent tariff if it went ahead with its trade deal with China.

The US President sees the trade deal between Canada and China as a way for China to route its exports to America through Canada.

"China will eat Canada alive, completely devour it, including the destruction of their businesses, social fabric, and general way of life," Trump wrote



on Truth Social.

Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney had recently visited Beijing and agreed to an initial trade agreement which would reduce tariffs in Chinese electric cars sold to Canada in return for China agreeing to lower barriers for Canadian farm products.

The imposition of such high tariffs on Canadian products would potentially disrupt US supply chains including defence production chains as traditionally the two countries feed into each other's supply systems making parts and accessories for each other's products. UNI

Japan's opposition parties criticize PM Takaichi's lower house dissolution

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

TOKYO, JAN 25: Leaders of multiple Japanese opposition parties slammed Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's dissolution of the lower house on Friday as lacking "justification."

Japan's House of Representatives was formally dissolved on Friday, marking the first dissolution at the start of a regular parliamentary session in 60 years.

Friday marked the opening day of Japan's ordinary Diet session, during which a key task is to deliberate and approve an initial budget for fiscal 2026 starting in April. The dissolution could significantly delay the budget review process.

Yoshihiko Noda, co-leader of the new main opposition party Centrist Reform Alliance, said he feels "no justification" for the dissolution, given Japan is currently facing a mountain of pressing issues, Kyodo News reported.

Yuichiro Tamaki, head of the Democratic Party for the People, said it was "extremely regrettable that this has become a dissolution that puts the economy second," the report said.

Tomoko Tamura, chair of the Japanese Communist Party, pointed out that rising prices have pushed people's livelihoods into difficulty. She criticized Takaichi for avoiding open and fair debates before the public and instead choosing to dissolve the lower house.

Mizuho Fukushima, leader of Japan's Social Democratic Party, said that those who dissolve the House of Representatives solely for personal interests and act unilaterally will also govern politics in a self-serving and arbitrary manner.

According to TBS Television, following the dissolution of the lower house, the Japanese government convened an extraordinary cabinet meeting and decided to issue the official notice for the House of Representatives election on Jan. 27, with voting scheduled for February 8. UNI

Iran condemns European Parliament's "meddlesome, irresponsible" resolution

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

TEHRAN, JAN. 25: Iran's Foreign Ministry on Friday denounced a European Parliament resolution criticizing Tehran over human rights violations during recent unrest, calling it "meddlesome and irresponsible."

The European Parliament on Thursday expressed "full solidarity" with Iranians, accused the government of rights violations, and called for the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps to be designated a terrorist organization.

In a statement, Iran said the resolution contained "false and incorrect" claims and lacked moral authority, citing the EU's support for sanctions, compliance with US embargoes, and alleged complicity with Israel in military actions.

"Through supporting the imposition of cruel sanctions and obeying the US illegal embargoes

on Iran and complicity with Israel in the June military aggression against the country," the European Parliament failed to have any moral eligibility to preach about human rights, it said. Iran is obligated to protect its citizens' security, public order, and national sovereignty against any terrorist act or foreign threat and intervention, and will take reciprocal actions in response to any "illegal and interventionist" decision or stance regarding its armed and security forces, it added.

Protests began on December 28, 2025 in several Iranian cities over the sharp depreciation of the Rial. The Iranian government has expressed its willingness to address economic grievances but has also warned against violence, vandalism and unrest. Initially peaceful, the protests gradually escalated into violence, leading to casualties and damage to public property, mosques, government buildings



and banks, especially on Jan. 8-9, for which Tehran has blamed the United States and Israel.

Recently, US President Donald Trump said that Iran is under close surveillance and a "massive fleet" is being deployed to the Gulf region, amid escalating tensions over

Tehran's nuclear programme.

Speaking to reporters on board Air Force One en route from the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, to Joint Base Andrews near Washington, Trump warned Iran against further provocations. "I said, if you hang those people,

you're going to be hit harder than you've ever been hit. It will make what we did to your Iran nuclear look like peanuts," he said.

Trump added that a significant naval presence was heading to the region but suggested military action might not be necessary. "Maybe we won't have to use it... we have a lot of ships going that direction, just in case. We'll see what happens," he said.

US media reported that the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier and its strike group were diverted from manoeuvres in the South China Sea to West Asia last week, Al Jazeera reported.

Trump, speaking to CNBC on Wednesday, said he hoped further U.S. military action could be avoided but stressed that Washington would respond if Tehran resumed its nuclear programme. "If they do it, it's going to happen again," he said. UNI

Trump slams Canada over Greenland 'Golden Dome', warns Beijing could 'eat them up'

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, JAN 25: US President Donald Trump on Friday criticised Canada for rejecting his proposed "Golden Dome" missile defence project over Greenland, warning that Beijing could "eat them up" as Canada deepens trade ties with China.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump wrote, "Canada is against The Golden Dome being built over Greenland, even though The Golden Dome would protect

Canada. Instead, they voted in favour of doing business with China, which will 'eat them up' within the first year!"

Trump's remarks came amid increasing tensions between Washington and Ottawa following Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney's address at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, where he called for a "fading rules-based order" and announced a new USD 7 billion trade deal with China, including tariff reductions on Chinese electric vehicles and increased access for Canadian farm

products. Calling out Canada's Prime Minister Carney by his first name, Trump said during his speech at Davos, "Canada lives because of the United States. Remember that, Mark, the next time you make your statements."

He added that Canada "gets a lot of freebies" from the US, and that "they should be grateful" for US security protections. The Canadian government defended its trade decisions, citing the need to diversify partnerships and strengthen economic resilience amid a "divided and uncertain world. UNI

US shooting kills Indian woman and three family members

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

ATLANTA, JAN 25: An Indian woman among four was killed in a shooting incident in the US state of Georgia that officials say is linked to an alleged family dispute.

The shooting occurred early on Friday morning in Lawrenceville, Gwinnett County, local media reported. Three children were inside the home at the time of the incident but were not reported among the fatalities.

Gwinnett County Police are investigating the incident as a domestic-related shooting that left four adults dead at a residence in Lawrenceville, while three children survived by hiding and alerting authorities, Fox 5 Atlanta reported.

Police responded to a "shots fired" call around 2:30 am at a home in the 1000 block of Brook Ivy Court. On arrival, officers found

four adults inside the residence with fatal gunshot wounds, local media reported.

The victims were identified as Kumar's wife, Meemu Dogra, 43, of Atlanta, and Gourav Kumar, 33, Nidhi Chander, 37, and Harish Chander, 38, all of Lawrenceville.

The Indian mission in Atlanta confirmed the deaths and said authorities had arrested a suspect and that all possible assistance was being offered to the bereaved families.

The suspect was identified as Vijay Kumar, 51, of Atlanta. He has been charged with four counts of aggravated assault, four counts of felony murder, four counts of malice murder, one count of cruelty to children in the first degree, and two counts of cruelty to children in the third degree, as per Fox 5 Atlanta.

According to investigators,



an argument allegedly began between Kumar and Dogra at their Atlanta home, after which they travelled with their 12-year-old child to the Brook Ivy Court residence, where the other three victims, relatives of the couple, lived along with two other children aged seven and ten.

Authorities confirmed that three children were present inside the home at the time of the shooting. The children hid in a closet to protect themselves, and one of them managed to call 911, enabling police to reach the scene quickly. The children were unharmed and were later taken into the care of

a family member.

Police said officers arrived while the suspect's vehicle was still parked in the driveway. K-9 units were deployed and tracked the suspect to a nearby woodland, where he was apprehended without incident.

Reacting to the incident, the Consulate General of India in Atlanta expressed grief over the loss of lives.

"We are deeply grieved by a tragic shooting incident linked to an alleged family dispute, in which an Indian national was among the victims. The alleged shooter has been arrested, and all possible assistance is being extended to the bereaved family," the Consulate General said in a post on X.

Police said the motive behind the argument and the exact sequence of events leading up to the shooting remain under investigation. UNI

3 Australians charged after drugs found in luggage at Sydney Airport

■ UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

SYDNEY, JAN. 25: Australian authorities have charged three men over an alleged attempt to smuggle 42 kg of illicit drugs into the country from Thailand. The Australian Federal Police (AFP) and Australian Border Force said in a joint statement on Saturday that the three men were intercepted by officers on arrival at Sydney Airport on flight from Thailand on Friday.



A subsequent search of their luggage allegedly located individually-wrapped bricks containing a white substance, testing of which returned a positive result for methamphetamine and heroin. AFP officers seized 34 kg of heroin and 8 kg of methamphetamine and arrested the three men, all aged 22 from southeast Melbourne, and charged them each with one count of importing a commercial quantity of a border-controlled drug and possessing a commercial quantity of a border-controlled drug.

Both offenses carry maximum penalties of life imprisonment. According to authorities, the seized volume of heroin had an estimated street value of about 17 million Australian dollars (about 11.7 million U.S. dollars) and the methamphetamine had a value of 7.4 million Australian dollars. (1 Australian dollar equals 0.69 U.S. dollars). UNI





Mhatre, Ambrish shine; Parmar lifts Japan to first World Cup

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

WINDHOEK: RS Ambrish's four-wicket haul and captain Ayush Mhatre's rapid 53 helped India beat New Zealand in the final group stage fixture of the Under-19 World Cup, taking them to the top of Group B with an unbeaten record after three matches. After electing to field, India quickly had New Zealand in trouble in the powerplay: Ambrish took out Hugo Bogue and Aryan Mann, while Henil Patel had Aryan Mann nicking behind, to leave New Zealand reeling at 17 for 3 when the rain arrived.

After a stop-and-start delay, the innings was reduced to 37 overs. Still, New Zealand did not last the distance. They were reduced to 22 for 5, then 69 for 7. It was only a 53-run partnership for the eighth wicket, between Callum Samson (37*) and Selwin Sanjay (28), that provided late resistance for their side. After Sanjay was dismissed, the last of Ambrish's four victims, Henil returned to clean up the tail.

In response, India opener Aaraon George fell in the second over. Once Mhatre and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi were at the crease, however, they changed gears to smash 76 runs in just 6.3 overs. Sooryavanshi hit two fours and three sixes during his 23-ball 40, before a stunning catch by Mason Clarke at mid-off sent him back.

Mhatre ensured there were no further hiccups in the small chase: he smashed six sixes, along with two fours, to kill the chase and bring up his half-century off just 24 balls. He was taken out by Sanjay, but just a few overs later, Vedant Trivedi knocked off the winning runs, sealing a

win for India.

An all-round performance from Nihar Parmar - who took 4 for 30 to bowl out Tanzania for 131, then score an unbeaten 53 from the top of the order - headlined Japan's first win at a World Cup. The two teams were meeting in a play-off for the 15th and 16th spots. The result means Tanzania end their tournament with the wooden spoon.

After winning the toss and electing to bat first, opener Acrey Hugo gave Tanzania a steady start. He lost his partner Karim Kiseto in the second over, but forged a 79-run partnership with Ayaan Shariff. Hugo's 55 and Shariff's 40 would end up being the highest scores of the innings. They fell at 81 for 2, and 118 for 3 respectively. From there, Tanzania collapsed, losing their last seven wickets for just 13 runs. Nikhil Pol's 3 for 23 complemented Parmar as they ran through Tanzania's middle order.

In response, Japan were steady at the top: Parmar and Taylor Waugh stitched a 122-run partnership for the opening wicket, batting out 27 overs to almost single-handedly take Japan to a historic win. Waugh was eventually run out just short of a half-century, on 47, but No. 3 Hugo Tani-Kelly walked out and hit a four, then a six, in quick succession to finish the contest.

This was Tanzania's first appearance at a World Cup at any level. While they finish winless, Japan end the tournament on a relative high, capturing their own maiden victory in their second appearance at the tournament. In 2020, they had made their own Under-19 World Cup debut, and lost the same 16th place play-off contest to Nigeria.



Sunrisers chase third SA20 title, Capitals their first as familiar foes meet in final

FIRDOSE MOONDA

GOEBERHA: The fourth final of the SA20 is a repeat of the first when Sunrisers Eastern Cape played Pretoria Capitals on a reserve day in Johannesburg to begin a remarkable run of success in this competition. There has not been an SA20 final that Sunrisers have not played in and they've won two out of three. History favours them heavily when it comes to crunch games, especially as their opposition have walked a different path.

After finishing as losing finalists in season one, Capitals did not make the playoffs in seasons two and three, and so, changed almost everything about their make-up for season four. Remarkably, for a team based on the Highveld, Capitals' new coaching staff of Sourav Ganguly and Shaun Pollock appointed a spin-bowling captain in Keshav Maharaj and he has led from the front.



Not only is he Capitals' leading wicket-taker but he has an economy rate of 6.62 - little over a run a ball from the 222 he has delivered. Only five other bowlers have been more miserly this season and none of them have bowled more than 18 overs.

Maharaj has led a batting line-up bookended by big hitters from the Caribbean and both Shai Hope and Sherfane Rutherford have contributed and are in the top five leading run-scorers of the competition. With Dewald Brevis beginning to find his touch and an attack that is led by South African international Lungi Ngidi and Lizaad Williams, Capitals have capitalised on a good auction and could become just third team to win the SA20.

Sunrisers, who could not complete a three-peat last year, will stand in their way. Theirs is an outfit built on a strong local player base, which was enhanced with the acquisition of Anrich Nortje at the auction, and smart international picks. In Adi Birrell, they have a respected coach, who knows how to bring the best out of his players. Quinton de Kock has blossomed under Birrell and leads the run charts while Nortje is the second-highest wicket-taker and needs four to finish first. Their foreign signings include 21-year old James Coles, who played an important hand in qualifier 2, Chris Green and Lewis Gregory. Combined, they have enough excitement and experience to lift the trophy for the third time.

ESPNCricinfo

Pratika Rawal and Vaishnavi Sharma get India Test call-ups for Australia tour

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

MUMBAI: Pratika Rawal, who hasn't played any cricket since a breakout performance during India's title-winning campaign at the ODI World Cup, is among seven players in line for their Test debut in just over a month's time. India face Australia at the WACA on March 6 and have picked a squad that is made up of several up-and-coming players, including 20-year-old left-arm spinner Vaishnavi Sharma.

Rawal was the fourth-highest run-getter at the 2025 Women's ODI World Cup with a tally of 308 in six innings. She injured her ankle and missed the knockout matches, but prior to that she hit two fifty-plus scores - one of them against Australia - and formed an excellent opening partnership with Smriti Mandhana. Vaishnavi, who only broke into international cricket in December last year, has caught the Indian team management's attention with her keenness to flight the ball even in white-ball



cricket where there is a danger of getting hit. Over the last year or so, Australian conditions, in men's Tests, has been averse to spin bowling.

India have gone in for plenty of seam-bowling options, though only Renuka Singh is capped at Test level. She'll be backed up by Kranti Gaud, who has now earned a place in India's squads across formats, Amanjot Kaur and Sayali Satghare.

Harmanpreet Kaur leads the 15-member contingent with Mandhana as her deputy. Both

of them have a lot of experience playing in Australia having been part of the Women's Big Bash League for several years. Jemimah Rodrigues can call upon that as well, and her stellar hundred that knocked Australia out of the ODI World Cup.

Most of the batting unit remains the same as when India played their last Test match, against South Africa in June 2024. Uma Chetry is the back-up wicketkeeper to Richa Ghosh across formats on the tour with G Kamalini now ruled out.

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