

# TOP NEWS OF J&K

JAMMU, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2024

Daily Evening Newspaper



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## BRIEFLY

### LG Sinha pays tribute to "Sahibzades" on Veer Baal Diwas

JAMMU, Dec 26 (Agencies): Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday on the occasion of 'Veer Baal Diwas' paid respect to 'Sahibzades' and remembered their bravery and sacrifice. In a post on X, "On Veer Baal Diwas, I pay tribute to the Sahibzades. Their sacrifice inspires us to uphold the values of truth, righteousness & justice. Guru Gobind Singh Ji's teachings & strength of Mata Gujri Ji guide us on the path of compassion & service to humanity."

### Full Military honours accorded to 3 soldiers killed in J&K accident

BELAGAVI (Karnataka), Dec 26 (Agencies): Glowing tributes were paid on Thursday to three soldiers from Karnataka, who were killed in an accident in Jammu and Kashmir on December 24. Kundapura's Anoop Pujari (33), Mahesh Nagappa Marigond (25) from Bagalkote and Dayanand Thirakannavar (44) from Belagavi were among the five killed after their vehicle plunged into a gorge in Poonch district, Jammu and Kashmir.

They were from the 11 Maratha Light Infantry. Their bodies were flown to Belagavi on Thursday where they were given military honour at the Maratha Light Infantry Regimental Centre (MLIRC). Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who is in Belagavi, laid a wreath on the mortal remains of the soldiers and offered his tribute. The Chief Minister said he was "deeply pained" to learn about the deaths of three soldiers. He prayed for their soul to rest in peace.

### Land grab under ruse of development going on unabated in J&K: Iltija Mufti

SRINAGAR, Dec 26 (Agencies): Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader Iltija Mufti today expressed concern over acquisition of 5000 kanals of prime agricultural land for establishment of NIT campus in southern Pulwama.

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## Centre proposes coal law extension to Jammu and Kashmir

JAMMU, Dec 26 (Agencies): The Union Government has proposed amendments to the Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition and Development) Act-1957 to make it applicable to Jammu & Kashmir.

According to the draft bill, the amendment proposes to omit the words "except the State of Jammu and Kashmir." The Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition and Development) Amendment Bill, 2024, proposes to extend the law to Jammu & Kashmir, which was previously excluded.



Union Ministry of Coal has written to all states and Union Territories, inviting comments from the public and State Governments on the proposed amendments. Following the Union

Ministry's communique, the J&K's Department of Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs has written to Commissioner Secretary of the Mining Department to

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## Vice-President to visit Jammu on 27th Dec

### Top News Report

NEW DELHI, Dec 26: The Vice-President of India, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, will be on a single day tour of Jammu (Jammu & Kashmir) on 27th December, 2024.

During his visit, the Vice-President will preside as Chief Guest at the 10th convocation of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University at Matrika Auditorium SMVDU Campus.

Vice-President will also visit Mata Vaishno Devi Temple and Bhairon Baba Mandir.

## Ayan Sajad of Anantnag honored with Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar for his excellence in art, culture



ANANTNAG, Dec 26 (Agencies): Ayan Sajad, a young prodigy from Anantnag, Jammu and Kashmir, has achieved a remarkable milestone by being awarded the prestigious Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

2024 for his outstanding contributions in the field of Art and Culture.

The award considered one of the highest honors for children in India, recognizes extraordinary accomplishments in innovation,

social service, scholastic achievements, sports, bravery, and art.

Ayan's journey in the field of art and culture has been nothing short of inspiring. Ayan has already established himself as a beacon of creativity and dedication, captivating audiences with his exceptional talent. His work reflects not only his individual brilliance but also the vibrant cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir. Ayan's commitment to his craft and his ability to

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## Railways conducts trial run of electric engine on India's first cable-stayed rail bridge in J&K



NEW DELHI, Dec 26 (Agencies): Indian Railways has successfully carried out a trial run of a tower wagon on the Anji Khad Bridge, the country's first cable-stayed rail bridge, located in Jammu and Kashmir's

Reasi district. The achievement is a major step forward in enhancing railway connectivity in Jammu and Kashmir, with services expected to commence in January 2025. Railways Minister Ash-

wini Vaishnav shared a video of the trial run on the social media platform X, highlighting the progress of the crucial project.

"The trial run on the Anji Khad Bridge, a key component of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Link (USBRL) project, has been successfully completed," according to the Ministry of Railways.

Completed last month, the Anji Khad Bridge is an engineering marvel featuring a single pylon that rises 331 metres

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## Katra observes total shutdown on day 2 in protest against ropeway project

JAMMU, Dec 26 (Agencies): Protesting against the ropeway project, a 72-hour shutdown call given by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Sangarsh Samiti on Thursday entered the second day in Katra town of Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir.

All the stakeholders including pony owners, shopkeepers and other traders are protesting against the proposed ropeway project at Katra—the base camp of the Shri Mata Vaishno



Devi Shrine. The businesses in Katra town remained completely closed since morning on the second day of the 72-hours shutdown call.

On Wednesday, several people were detained by police during a protest.

Instead of finding the solution by holding

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## Kashmir reels under intense cold wave conditions across



SRINAGAR, Dec 26 (Agencies): Intense cold wave conditions prevailed across Kashmir as the minimum temperatures settled several

degrees below the freezing point, officials said on Thursday.

There is a possibility of light snowfall over the higher reaches on Friday

and Saturday as a Western Disturbance is set to impact the region, they said.

The night temperature dropped at most places in Kashmir as the valley continued to reel under freezing conditions. The fall in the mercury led to the freezing of water supply lines as a thin layer of ice covered the surface of several water bodies including the Dal Lake.

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## OMSA urges govt to halt recruitments till reservation policy is rationalised

SRINAGAR, Dec 26 (Agencies): The Open Merit Students Association (OMSA), leading the protest against the current reservation policy, on Thursday urged Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to facilitate the release of the minutes from their meeting held on Monday.

"Following our deliber-



ations with the Hon'ble Chief Minister, it was communicated to us that an official press release detailing the minutes of the meeting would be issued immediately. However, more than 48 hours have passed, and no such statement has been released so far," OMSA, said in a post

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# Chief Minister Omar Abdullah listens to people's grievances

## Engages with delegations, individuals at Raabita Public Outreach Office in Srinagar



### Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Dec 26: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday met several delegations and emphasized his government's commitment to addressing the challenges faced by various sectors of society. The Chief Minister stated this during his public outreach programme at Raabita office here, where scores of delegations and individuals from various parts of Kashmir presented their concerns and demands. The Chief Minister interacted with various stakeholders, including representatives

from education, artisan, labour, and healthcare sectors, who brought forth issues requiring immediate attention. Among the delegations, the J&K College Teachers Association urged the Chief Minister to consider the demand for enhancing the retirement age of college teachers in Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmiri Shawl Makers Welfare Foundation, comprising artisans from different areas, highlighted the challenges faced by the traditional shawl-making trade and sought the government's support in safeguarding their

livelihood. Similarly, a five-member delegation of Hot Mix Plant owners apprised the Chief Minister of the issues confronting their industry, requesting timely interventions. J&K Casual Labourers United Front, led by its State President, raised concerns regarding the welfare of casual labourers, while the Physiotherapists' deputation briefed the CM about sector-specific challenges that require redressal. Representatives from the Health Workers Welfare Association, led by their president, presented issues impacting

healthcare professionals, and the Employees Joint Action Committee (EJAC) emphasized the need to address employees' welfare comprehensively. A delegation of Saubhagya Contractors from Ganderbal and South Kashmir sought government support to address operational hurdles in the execution of projects under the Saubhagya scheme. The public outreach programme also saw numerous individuals meeting the Chief Minister, presenting grievances and suggestions for improvement on a number of issues

affecting them. The Chief Minister assured all deputations and individuals of a patient and responsive approach, emphasizing that their genuine concerns would be addressed on a priority basis. Also, a joint delegation of traders of different Bazar Committees of City Centre Lal Chowk and other areas called on the Chief Minister during the programme. The delegation apprised the Chief Minister about various issues of the trader's community of Lal Chowk, Hari Singh High Street, Poloview, Regal Chowk, Maisuma, Court Road and other areas of the City. They also submitted a memorandum of demands to the Chief Minister demanding development and revival of business and increased customer footfall in City Central Lal Chowk and other markets of Srinagar City. The Chief Minister assured the delegation of redressal of the genuine concerns and issues on priority.

# DFSS holds protest against inflation



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: Food inflation remained a significant concern throughout the year, with vegetable prices experiencing a particularly sharp surge. While retail inflation (CPI) saw a slight decline in November, dropping to 5.48% from 6.21% in October, and wholesale inflation (WPI) moderated to 1.89% from 2.36% during the same period, the cost of essential commodities continued to burden household budgets. The elevated food prices have significantly impacted consumer behavior, with households reducing discretionary spending. Retailers reported a slowdown in sales of electronics and home

appliances during the festive season, attributing the trend to consumers diverting a larger share of their income to groceries and other necessities. An EY report highlighted rising household debt due to increased borrowing through personal loans and credit cards, further limiting consumer spending. In response to the escalating vegetable prices, the workers of Dogra Front and Shiv Sena (DFSS), led by their president Ashok Gupta, staged a rally in Jammu city. The protest aimed to draw attention to the government's inaction in addressing the issue of high food prices. During the protest, Gupta criticized the political focus of the recent winter session

of Parliament, noting that the pressing issue of food inflation was not discussed even once. He highlighted the disparity between the low payments received by farmers and the massive profits earned by black marketeers. Gupta pointed to the Punjab government's practice of releasing daily price lists for vegetables and commodities, ensuring prices remain controlled. In contrast, the lack of such measures in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has led to inflated prices and unchecked profiteering. The protesters demanded the formation of a government price committee to regulate daily prices and curb black market activities. Such measures, they argued, would protect the common man from inflation and ensure fair compensation for farmers. Among the protesters were several prominent party members, including Bantu, Kalu, Nanku, Ashish, Naresh, Vikky, Sukhdev, Prem, and others, who expressed solidarity with the cause and called for immediate government intervention.

# JKFD employees protest over neglect by authorities



### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: Employees of the Jammu and Kashmir Forest Department (JKFD) staged a protest at the Forest Complex Dogra Hall in Jammu today, expressing their frustration over what they described as step motherly treatment by the authorities. The demonstration, organized by the All Jammu and Kashmir Non-Gazetted Forest Employees Association (NGFOA), drew employees from various districts, all united in highlighting several long-standing issues that have adversely impacted their welfare and working conditions. One of the major grievances raised was the prolonged delay in conducting Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs) in Jammu Prov-

ince. Employees lamented that the delay has unfairly deprived them of their rightful promotions, leaving many disillusioned about their career progression. This issue, they said, has persisted despite repeated assurances from the authorities. The reorganization of the Forest Department was another pressing concern. Despite numerous requests from the NGFOA, the matter remains unresolved, causing operational inefficiencies and hindering the department's overall effectiveness. Employees demanded immediate action to address this critical issue. Pay anomalies were also highlighted during the protest. Forest Guards, Revenue Patwaris, and Teachers were initially assigned the same grade

pay, but while the grades of Patwaris and Teachers have been revised upward over time, Forest Department employees have been left behind. Protesters described this disparity as unjust and called for immediate rectification. The frontline staff also raised concerns about their working conditions. Despite working 24/7 under tough and often dangerous circumstances, they have not been granted the right to two days' salary. Additionally, employees called for the introduction of a risk allowance, citing the life-threatening nature of their work. Over 140 Forest Department employees have tragically lost their lives while on duty, yet no risk allowance has been provided to recognize the hazards they face daily. Speaking at the pro-

test, key NGFOA leaders, including Rajinder Singh Parihar (President, J&K UT All J&K NGFOA), Gurcharan Singh (Provincial President, Jammu Province), and Ghulam Nabi War (General Secretary, J&K UT), criticized the indifferent attitude of the authorities. They emphasized the dedication and integrity with which Forest Department employees perform their duties, often going above and beyond their official responsibilities. However, they expressed disappointment that their contributions are routinely ignored, leaving them feeling like "bonded laborers." The NGFOA announced a two-day mass casual leave on December 27 and 28, 2024, urging employees to stage protests in their respective office complexes. They also called for continued demonstrations at the Forest Complex Dogra Hall, Jammu, to press for their legitimate rights. The association reaffirmed its commitment to fighting for justice and demanded immediate action from the authorities to resolve these long-standing issues.

# IIM Jammu strengthens holistic wellness initiative with launch of YourDOST services

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: In a landmark initiative aimed at fostering mental and emotional well-being, Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu under the leadership of Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, through Anandam: The Center for Happiness, launched YourDOST's counseling services on Dec 26, 2024 at Mandapam Auditorium. This step underscores Anandam's commitment to building a supportive environment that prioritizes holistic wellness for the IIM Jammu community. The session emphasized the importance of mental health and introduced the comprehensive suite of services provided by YourDOST. The event was graced by Chinmay Chadha, YourDOST. Present on the occasion were Dr. Mamta Tripathi, Chairperson, Anandam, IIM Jammu and



campus environment. The session began with an ice-breaking activity and discussions on stress management. Participants explored the significance of emotional wellness, the role of counseling, and common barriers to seeking mental health support. A detailed introduction to YourDOST services, including methods to access the platform and connect with experts, was provided. The event concluded with a Q&A session, where attendees actively engaged with experts, seeking clarity on mental health-related concerns. This partnership aligns with Anandam's vision of "enabling all to experience the perpetual and ultimate happiness within." With YourDOST's professional expertise, IIM Jammu aims to provide a safe, supportive space for individuals to navigate life's challenges, fostering resilience and mental wellness within the community. The event marks a significant milestone in IIM Jammu's journey towards enhancing the mental health landscape. The institute looks forward to continued engagement with YourDOST and to furthering its mission of holistic well-being for all.

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# National Statistics Office organizes regional training camp in Jammu

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: The National Statistics Office (NSO), Field Operations Division (FOD), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, conducted a four-day Regional Training Camp for the 80th Round National Sample Survey (NSS), Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), and Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) from December 23 to 26, 2024. The event was held at the Conference Hall of Hotel Country

Inn, Jammu, and was attended by officers and field staff from the NSO Regional Office, Jammu; Sub-Regional Office, Udhampur; and the Directorate of Economics & Statistics (DES), J&K Government. The first three days focused on the NSS 80th Round, including a modified PLFS schedule and the Household Social Consumption: Health survey, alongside a Comprehensive Modular Survey (CMS) on telecom. The Household Social Consumption: Health survey aims to collect data on mor-



bidity rates, utilization of healthcare services, and related expenditures across public and private sectors. The CMS on telecom addresses data gaps in telecom-related indicators and ICT skills, crucial for reporting global indices

and supporting national ministries. The camp began on December 23 with a ceremonial lamp-lighting and the National Anthem, presented by Senior Statistical Officer Sunil K. Khar. Deputy Director General P.

Palanivel inaugurated the training, emphasizing the NSO's role in creating a robust statistical database for national and international use. He highlighted the significance of the ongoing surveys and urged public cooperation in

providing accurate data. Assistant Director R.K. Sharma welcomed the participants, providing an overview of NSO surveys, while Assistant Director Swaran Lal delivered a vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to the media and participants. The first two days were dedicated to discussions on concepts, definitions, technical terms, and schedules, with specific attention to data entry using CAPI (Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing) for the 80th Round. The third day focused on field training

and discussions on the revised sampling design and PLFS schedule, concluding with a feedback and quiz session to assess trainee understanding. The final day, December 26, was dedicated to the ASUSE survey. Practical training sessions in nearby areas of Jammu Town were conducted, followed by a feedback and quiz session in the afternoon. Training sessions were led by Assistant Director R.K. Sharma and Senior Statistical Officers Sunil K. Khar and P.S. Jamwal, with Sunil

K. Khar coordinating the entire program. The camp provided comprehensive insights into survey methodologies, equipping field staff with the necessary knowledge for accurate data collection. The program concluded with a vote of thanks by R.K. Sharma, acknowledging the contributions of all participants and coordinators. The training camp reinforced the NSO's commitment to enhancing data quality for informed policymaking and planning.

## EDITORIAL

Revitalizing  
Agriculture

Agriculture has been the backbone of Jammu and Kashmir's economy for centuries. The picturesque landscapes of the region, with its fertile plains, lush valleys, and abundant water resources, offer immense potential for agricultural growth. However, over the years, the agricultural sector has faced several challenges, ranging from climatic variations and outdated farming practices to socio-political instability and limited market access. To ensure the sustainable growth of agriculture and the overall economic prosperity of Jammu and Kashmir, a focused and comprehensive approach to revitalizing the sector is needed.

Jammu and Kashmir's agricultural sector faces a number of pressing challenges. One of the most significant issues is the region's dependence on traditional farming methods, which have remained largely unchanged for decades. Many farmers still rely on outdated tools and techniques, leading to low productivity and inefficiency. The use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides is also widespread, which has detrimental effects on soil health, water quality, and biodiversity.

Climatic conditions in Jammu and Kashmir are another challenge. The region is highly susceptible to unpredictable weather patterns, including droughts, floods, and erratic rainfall, which affect crop yields and cause significant damage to farmland. Additionally, the shifting patterns of snow-melt and glacial retreat due to climate change are impacting the water availability for irrigation, a vital resource for the state's agriculture.

Land fragmentation is also a growing issue in the region. As farms are passed down through generations, the average size of agricultural holdings has reduced, making it increasingly difficult for farmers to achieve economies of scale. This leads to lower profitability and discourages younger generations from pursuing farming as a livelihood. The youth often migrate to urban areas in search of better job opportunities, further exacerbating the labor shortage in rural agricultural areas.

Another critical challenge is the limited access to modern agricultural inputs, technologies, and credit. Farmers in Jammu and Kashmir often struggle to obtain quality seeds, advanced irrigation systems, and machinery, all of which are essential for improving productivity. Furthermore, access to financial services is restricted, and many farmers are unable to secure loans for investment in technology or infrastructure.

Despite these challenges, Jammu and Kashmir's agriculture sector holds vast untapped potential. With the right interventions, the region can emerge as a leader in sustainable and modern agricultural practices, driving economic growth and providing livelihoods to millions.

One of the first steps toward revitalizing agriculture is introducing modern farming practices. This includes promoting the use of high-yielding crop varieties, organic farming, and precision agriculture. By incorporating technology such as GPS-guided equipment, sensors, and drones, farmers can optimize irrigation, monitor soil health, and reduce wastage. These methods not only improve productivity but also reduce the environmental impact of agriculture.

Jammu and Kashmir's agricultural potential is closely tied to its water resources, particularly the rivers and streams that flow through the region. However, outdated irrigation practices, such as flood irrigation, often lead to water wastage and inefficient use of resources. Revitalizing agriculture requires the introduction of efficient irrigation systems, such as drip irrigation and sprinkler systems, which can conserve water and ensure its optimal use. Additionally, rainwater harvesting and the construction of water storage reservoirs can help address water shortages, particularly in drier months.

Addressing land fragmentation is critical for improving the productivity and profitability of farming. Encouraging land consolidation, where small landholdings are merged to form larger, more efficient farms, can help achieve economies of scale. The government can incentivize farmers to consolidate their land through financial support and legal frameworks. Moreover, the formation of farmer cooperatives can help farmers access shared resources, such as machinery, seeds, and fertilizers, at a lower cost. Cooperatives can also serve as a platform for marketing produce collectively, ensuring better prices and reducing the influence of middlemen.

Providing farmers with access to credit is essential for the growth of agriculture in Jammu and Kashmir. The government should facilitate easier access to agricultural loans, particularly for small and medium-scale farmers, through simplified procedures and lower interest rates. Additionally, partnerships with agricultural technology firms can introduce innovative tools and techniques to farmers. Extension services, which provide training and advice on modern farming practices, can be strengthened to ensure that farmers have the knowledge and skills required to adopt new technologies.

Diversifying crops and promoting agro-processing industries can reduce the dependence on traditional crops and create new income streams for farmers. Jammu and Kashmir has great potential for growing fruits, vegetables, and medicinal plants, which can be processed into value-added products. The government should support the establishment of agro-processing units, which can help farmers by providing better market access for their produce and creating employment opportunities in rural areas.

## Centenary birth anniversary of A.B.Vajpayee

By: Omkar Dattatray

It was exactly 100 years ago on December 25, 1924 that Atal Behari Vajpayee was born. Atal Ji was a seasoned politician, leader of masses, tallest statesman, a poet of repute, best orator and above all a good human being. Atal Ji can best be described as the Prime Minister who shaped the destiny of India and he was the moderate Hindutva icon and a great nationalist and a tall leader of the 21st century India and he will remain to inspire generations of Indian's. He was the statesman of India, Hindutva advocate and an icon of Bhartiya. His contribution in shaping the destiny of India will be written in golden letters in the history of the sub-continent. Vajpayee was a very popular leader and politician and even his opponents listened to his addresses with rapt attention irrespective of the political affiliations. It was often said of him by the opposition that Atal Ji was a right man but in the wrong party. As India commemorates the 100th birth anniversary of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, we celebrate the life and legacy of one of the nation's most beloved statesman and leader. A towering figure in Indian politics, Vajpayee was not just a leader of the masses but also a visionary who upheld the ideals of Hindutva while fostering inclusivity, secularism, unity in diversity and national pride. As Bharat approached the 100th birth anniversary of A.B.Vajpayee on 25th December 2024, it is a time to revisit the extraordinary life of a leader and politician who stood as a beacon of national pride, Hindutva, nationalism, cultural pride and a moderate leader who was loved equally by his supporters and opponents in political and public life. Vajpayee was not merely a statesman, he was an ideologue, poet, visionary and an institution in himself who firmly believed in the ideals of a strong and self-reliant Bharat rooted in its Sanatan values. Vajpayee was the true upholder of secularism and pluralism who was an example of Raj Dharma in politics and his vision of good governance transformed the Indian public life, boosted its economy as well as societal values. It was Vajpayee as the prime minister who laid the strong foundation of infrastructure which helped and catapulted

the economic, social, technological and cultural development of India. Through his unimpeachable leadership, Vajpayee nurtured secularism, democracy, humanity and above all his honesty inspired countless people. Born in Gwalior MP on December 25, 1924 into a family steeped in values and education, Vajpayee imbibed the essence of nationalism from an early age. His father, Krishna Bihari Vajpayee, a school teacher and a scholar, was instrumental in shaping Atal's intellectual and spiritual pursuits. He was influenced by the views of Savarkar and Jansung Ideologue Lt. Dr. Shyama Prasad and was an active member of RSS and he boasted of his Sangh credentials. Vajpayee was the great advocate, votary and epitome of good governance and stood for it throughout his career as the prime minister. The good governance Day or Sushasan diwas, is marked on December 25 every year in India to commemorate the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister A.B.Vajpayee. This day is observed to create awareness among the masses, especially among the young generation, about the accountability of government and administration. It promotes citizen-centric as well as efficient and transparent governance to improve service delivery. This year, India is observing the 100th birthday anniversary of Vajpayee. This day aims to promote awareness among citizens about government accountability and administration while also instilling "good governance" as a practice for Indian civil servants. It is observed to guarantee that the nation's citizens are treated equitably by the government and that they get a chance to avail themselves of the benefits of diverse government services. A poet-politician, Atal Ji was born on December 25, 1924, in Gwalior, MP, which is why good governance Day is celebrated every year in India on December 25, and in 2024, it was observed on Wednesday. Atal Ji, the first leader of the BJP, served as the India's Prime Minister three times, briefly in 1996, for 13 months in 1998 and 1999, and for full-time from 1999 to 2004. Vajpayee revolutionized and transformed infrastructure, agriculture, economy, public life and even politics and took many great steps and strides. Wednesday, December 25, marked the 100th birth anniversary of Atal Bihari

Vajpayee, a recipient of India's highest civilian honor, the Bharat Ratna, is celebrated for his outstanding political contributions, including his leadership in shaping India's post-independence political and economic landscape. President Droupadi Murmu, PM Narendra Modi and NDA cabinet members paid homage to former Prime Minister and BJP founding president Atal Ji at his memorial, "Sadaiv Atal," on his 100th birth anniversary. Vajpayee served as Prime Minister of India three times and played a pivotal role in elevating the BJP to national prominence, driving major political and economic reforms during his tenure, significantly shaping India's trajectory. Vajpayee served as India's external affairs minister in 1977 under Morarji Desai's Janata Party government. His diplomatic approach contributed to India's foreign policy during a turbulent time in the country's political history. First elected to Lok Sabha in 1957 from Balrampur, UP, Vajpayee became the only leader to win elections from six different constituencies across Uttar Pradesh, MP, New Delhi, and Gujarat solidifying his influence in Indian politics. Despite fluency in English, Vajpayee's speeches shone brightest in Hindi. Known as 'Shabdo Ka Jadugar', his oratory in Hindi is equally famous. Vajpayee became an activist of RSS at very young age and it instilled in him the principles of selfless service, cultural pride, and unwavering commitment to Bharat Mata. Even as a student, Vajpayee exhibited remarkable oratory and writing skills. His essays and speeches reflected his deep understanding of Hindutva, nationalism, and governance. His formative years in RSS and his association with stalwarts like Guru Golwalkar laid the foundation for his lifelong dedication to the cause of Hindutva and Bharat's resurgence. Vajpayee's entry into politics began with the formation of the Bharatiya Jan Sangh - BJS in 1951 under the leadership of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee. As a founding member, Vajpayee became the voice of a nationalist Bharat, tirelessly advocating for cultural and ideological unity. His speeches in parliament were a masterpiece in statesmanship, blending intellectual rigor with ideological conviction. These were a clarion call for India to reclaim its civilizational heritage while navigating modern challenges. His consistent advocacy for the

abolition of Article 370 and his vision for a united India underlined his unwavering commitment to cultural nationalism. In emergency of 1975, Vajpayee's unwavering commitment to democratic values and Hindutva were spectacular. As Prime Minister, Vajpayee exemplified the ideals of Hindutva through his bold decisions, whether it was defending India's borders, asserting its nuclear sovereignty and fostering economic independence. His tenure -1996, 1998-2004 was a testament to his vision of India as a global leader grounded in its cultural identity. The Pokhran -11 nuclear tests of 1998 were a defining moment in India's history. By making Bharat a declared nuclear weapons state, Vajpayee ensured that the nation could defend itself against any external threat. His statement, "It is not aggression but self-defense," reflected Hindutva's ethos of strength toughened with responsibility. Despite international sanctions, Vajpayee's diplomacy turned adversities into opportunities, strengthening India's global alliances while upholding its sovereignty. Vajpayee's economic policies, including the Golden Quadrilateral highway project and IT advancements were not just infrastructural milestones but expressions of his belief in a strong and self-reliant Bharat. He championed privatization and globalization, ensuring that Bharat's economy resonated with its civilizational values of enterprise and innovation. Vajpayee's humor was legendary and often disarmed critics. But alas! this multifaceted leader and statesman passed away at the age of 93 years on 18 August 2018 after a brief illness. Vajpayee will remain live in the memory of millions of Indian's for generations. The best tribute to this great man of masses and politician is to live up to his ideals and make him our ideal and role model. On his 100th Jayanti, let us rededicate ourselves to realizing his ideals and fulfilling his vision for India.

(The author is a  
columnist, social and KP  
activist)

## Winter Is Here: Skincare Essentials For Travellers



By: Shahnaz Husain

If you are fond of the cold weather, traveling during winter might be one of the ways to enjoy your favorite holiday destination.

Winter makes your skin really dry and travelling makes it tired. The situation is often worse for travelers, with cold weather bringing their own set of troubles.

Between the dry, cooler air, long travel, and all the changes in the schedule, diet, and environment,

it's important to pack products that will moisturize and repair your skin in order to keep you looking your best.

Packing beauty essentials for a winter vacation can be quite a hassle

Maintaining a healthy skincare routine becomes even more essential when you're on the move, and Here are the skincare essentials you'll need to deal with wintry weather if you're travelling.

When you are heading on a winter vacation ----stuffing a variety of sunscreen, Lip Balm, Moisturizers, and hair styl-

ing products into your suitcase will make your journey comfortable for your outwardly outlook and refreshing your vital organs.

Winter is harsh on your skin if you are travelling to snow bound areas / mountainous hills with family in winter vacation then your skin care regime is required to adapt to the changing seasons

Apart from passport, aadhar cards, tickets, credit cards, which are absolutely essential travel documents, you will need the means to make yourself attractive, while traveling. Even though it is hard to look fashionable.

Think about travel essentials and how to limit your grooming needs, so that you look pleasing and enjoy your trip. Traveling light is an advantage, so you need items that are compact and portable. Get yourself a spacious shoulder bag and two small, plastic lined cases, for your toilet and make-up. Your beauty aids should be within easy reach, so that you can freshen up your make-up and alight from your journey looking attractive and self-confident. Searching for a lipstick or comb in a cluttered handbag can really test your patience.

A short hairdo that you can just brush and arrange is good, while for long hair, take along a headband and hair clips, to keep your hair tidy. Remember to take a scarf over to protect your hair from over-exposure to the sun, as well as from wind and dust. You will need it if you are out motoring, boating or even walking by the seaside or hills.

The make-up items and clothes you carry depend on what your trip entails. If you are holidaying in a big city and expect to meet people, you will need a few good clothes and accessories, for dining out. Take a few in-between outfits that are neither too casual, nor too dressy. You will also need make-up cosmetics for the night. The lighting at night demands more colour, so include darker shades of lipstick, blush-on, eye-shadow and mascara. A hair-piece can provide instant glamour. Don't forget to take your perfume, one or two good accessories and a neutral evening purse that goes with your dressy outfits. These will help to add the finishing touches.

If you are on a sightseeing trip, or on a vacation by the sea or mountains, the emphasis will be on comfort. Casual wrinkle-free clothes, light weight shoes and sunglasses will be needed. On a vacation, one probably needs to carry more skin care cosmetics and fewer make-up aids. An anti-tan sunscreen or sun block would be good. The effects of sun exposure are greater by the waterside, or near snow, because water and snow are reflective surfaces. By the sea, avoid sun-exposure between noon and 3 p.m. Apply broad spectrum sunscreen when out in the sun, not only on the face, but on all exposed areas. Apply the sunscreen 20 minutes before going out. If you are out in the sun for more than an hour, re-apply the sunscreen. Use high SPF of 30 and above for sensitive skin.

Apart from sunscreen, you need skin and hair care essen-

tials, like cleanser, moisturizer, leave-on conditioner and hair serum. For your make-up, carry powder compact, eye-pencil, kaajal stick and lipsticks that are suitable for day wear. Perhaps, a lip gloss will do. By the beach, you need make up products that are "waterproof" or "long lasting" and provide a matte finish.

You will also need pressed powder (compact) and powder blush-on. Remember to take a few tissues. If you have oily skin, or the weather is hot and humid, pre-moistened tissues are what you need. Carry them in your handbag when you go out, to clean and refresh your skin. Apart from these, take a deodorant and talcum powder.

Travel adds a wonderful dimension to one's life and personality. It enriches our experience and broadens our outlook. Travel also means a time that is refreshing and renewing. There is nothing more enjoyable than getting away from everyday and unwind. If you have taken care of your travel needs, all you have to do is relax and enjoy!

(The author is  
international fame  
beauty expert and is  
called Herbal Queen of  
India)

## NSF celebrates 125th birth anniversary of Udhham Singh

### Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: National Secular Forum (NSF), organized a program in University Campus, and on the Birth anniversary of Udhham Singh who laid his life for the country. Amid slogans "Udhham Singh Amar Raha "Inqilaab Zindabad" "Bharat Mata ki jai", they paid tributes to Udhham Singh and garlanded the portrait of the son of soil.

Ankush Abrol Provincial Joint Secretary JKNC was the Chief Guest and Dr. Vikas Sharma Coordinator Jammu District and Zonal Secretary, JKNC presided over the function. TR Sharma (Retd KAS) was the guest of honour.

Speaking on the occa-

sion, Ankush Abrol appreciated the efforts of NSF members to come forward and organize these functions. He also said that the right tribute to Udhham Singh would be to launch the struggle for restoration of full status of Jammu and Kashmir State.

On this occasion, Dr Vikas Sharma said that we all should take oath not to sit silent and continue our endeavor to regain Jammu and Kashmir State. He said that J&K suffered immensely due to misadventures of the Centre.

Dr Sharma urged the youth to come together on a single platform to push for this demand.

TR Sharma threw light on the life of martyr Udhham Singh was

born 'Sher Singh', on 26 December 1899. Udhham Singh became involved in revolutionary politics and was deeply influenced by Bhagat Singh and his revolutionary group.

Vikshay Vashist State Secretary NSF, also spoke on the occasion. Gourav Partap Singh University Unit President delivered the welcome address; Abhishek Uppal Chairman Jammu District was delivering the vote of thanks.

Among those who were present on the occasion included, Roshan Sharma, Innam Nasser, Ashwani Sharma, Farhan Khan, Ajay Singh, Arun Sharma, Aditya Sharma, Ashaf Ahmed, and others.

## GDC Mahanpur faculty represents college at APCESS 2024-Kaifeng China

### Top News Report

MAHANPUR, Dec 26: The Principal of the Govt. Degree College Mahanpur Prof. (Dr.) Sangeeta Sudan has felicitated the Dr. Jogbinder Singh Soodan, Physical Director/PTI of GDC Mahanpur for bringing laurels to the college by participated as a Symposium Presenter in an 10th Asia Pacific

UNSDG-17, especially in relationship to goal # 3 Health and Well Being, # 4 Quality Education and #11 Sustainable Cities and Communities (Smart Cities).

Dr Soodan has presented a Paper as Symposium Speaker on the topic "Health Status, Topography, Playfields and Socio-economic Factor of Tribal Population of Jammu and



Conference APCESS 2024- Kaifeng.

Dr J S Soodan of GDC Mahanpur has represented the College under higher education department in the 10th APCESS 2024-Kaifeng China from 16-19 June 2024.

The 10th APCESS 2024 - Kaifeng was organized by the School of Physical Education, Henan University in a joint collaboration with Asian council for exercise and Sports Science (ACCESS) and Foundation for the Global Community Health (GCH).

The previous nine conferences were held in the following countries and regions: Seoul, Korea, Manila, Angeles city, Philippines, Hiroshima Japan, Kota Bharu, Malaysia, Shanghai, China, New Delhi (India) and Bangkok, Thailand.

The present conferences were attended by 300-700 participants from 28 countries. The theme of 10th APCESS2024-Kaifeng was "Active and Sustainable Community Living: The Global Partnerships through Physical Activity, Exercise and Health Science".

This international historic event has explored the cooperation of Interdisciplinary Approach for Promotion of Holistic Health with Linkage to

Kashmir- A Demographic Survey".

This is pertinent to mention that Dr J S Soodan, A Physical Director/PTI at Higher Education has also in his credit for organizing various Webinar Series during COVID-19 in joint collaboration with world renowned international organizations like ACCESS, ICSSPE, GCH (USA), UNSDG-17, NADA(India), WADA and Sports Authority of India.

Dr Soodan has previously worked as Sports Scientist at SAI NS NIS Patiala during CWG 2010 and Asian Games 2012 in the Department of Exercise Physiology from 2009-2014.

He has also Served as an Assistant Professor in Physical Education at Physical Education College under Punjabi University Patiala from 20014-2018.

Before his transfer to GDC Mahanpur, he has organized first-ever International Conference on "Health Fitness Yoga and Sports Science" in a joint collaboration with Foundation for Global Community Health (GCH), USA at GDC Kathua, in which the Founder President of GCH USA Prof. Dr. Ming Kai Chin was one of the key note speaker and more than 200 participants from all over India and abroad has actively participated.

## EO Waqf Abid Khan visits Ziyarat Sharief Waltengoo, inspects management

### Top News Report

KULGAM, Dec 26: Senior BJP leader and Executive officer (EO) Waqf Board Kulgam, Aabid Hussain Khan today visited Ziyarat Sharief Waltengoo of Kund belt in Kulgam district reviewed its progress.

He inspected the ongoing developmental work at Ziyarat shrief including the one of the large Masjid Shrief of south Kashmir located in the premises of ziyarat constructed by the Auqaf Committee. He monitored the ongoing work of all floors. He also met the Auqaf committee of the Ziyarat Sharief

expressed his satisfaction over the management of the shrine.

Talking to media, he said "I am very happy that the Auqaf committee has succeeded in creating a praiseworthy mechanism of accounting of donations at the shrine. The role of the Auqaf Management is satisfactory."

Local management will onwards operate the shrine properly in consultation with Executive officer Kulgam adding "they have received multiple complaints from kund valley about the management so it is our prime duty to monitor the ground situation.

He noticed their is nothing adverse related to management and complaints are baseless and the complaints are internal conflicts of local people, as the said shrine is already under JK Waqf Vide no. Jk032841 to Jk032844 in year 2018 Khivat no.90k,188 ,195,695/94", he said.

Auqaf committee Waltengoo and locals appreciated the decision of Executive Officer Aabid Hussain Khan and Khan assured that Auqaf committee Waltengoo authorised to look after the Ziyarat Sharief properly with his consultation.

## RED DROP organizes Blood Donation Camp at Kawa Institute Khanyar



### Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Dec 26: RED DROP, a unit of blood donors under the aegis of Kashmir Concern (Regd NGO), organized a blood donation camp at Kawa Institute Khanyar in collaboration with Blood Bank SMHS Hospital.

The camp witnessed an overwhelming response from donors across the valley, despite the chilly Kalan weather. MLA Hazrat

bal, Salman Ali Sagar, also donated blood and inspired many youth with his gesture.

Chairman RED DROP, Dr. Touseef Ahmed, expressed his gratitude to the donors, saying, "Despite the harsh weather conditions, our donors showed remarkable enthusiasm and commitment to the noble cause. We are thankful to each and every one of them for their selfless act."

Other dignitaries present at the event included

Manzoor Wangnoo, a renowned environmentalist, alongside HOD Community Medicine Dr Mohammad Saleem Khan. President RED DROP, Shabir Hussain Khan (Blood Man of Kashmir), and. Bilques Ara (Blood Woman of Kashmir) Prominent Social worker of Kashmir Syed Aijaz kashani also attended the blood donation camp at khanyar srinagar.

The blood donation camp is part of RED DROP's ongoing efforts to promote voluntary blood donation and address the shortage of blood in Kashmir. The organization has been working tirelessly to create awareness about the importance of blood donation and encourage people to come forward and donate.

## Heroic army team recovers civilian vehicle from 100-Ft Gorge in Tangdhar



### Top News Report

TANGDHAR, Dec 26: Demonstrating unparalleled bravery and expertise, the Indian Army's disaster relief team carried out a daring rescue operation to recover a civilian Sumo vehicle that had plunged into a 100-feet-deep gorge in the Upper Nachian area of Tangdhar.

This remarkable effort, conducted amidst extreme weather conditions and treacherous terrain, underscores the Army's dedication to safeguarding lives and property in emergen-

cies.

The incident occurred when the vehicle veered off the road, highlighting the risks of navigating steep and accident-prone routes. The Army's disaster relief team, known for their swift and efficient responses, immediately mobilized to the scene. Utilizing advanced rescue techniques and specialized equipment, the team meticulously worked to retrieve the vehicle without further damage.

The rescue effort has drawn widespread

praise from local authorities, residents, and civil society groups in Karnah. Leaders from various political parties also expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the Indian Army for their heroic intervention.

The Indian Army has once again demonstrated its unwavering commitment to serving the people, even in the most challenging situations. The public has been urged to exercise caution while traveling through accident-prone areas, especially during adverse weather conditions.

This operation highlights the Army's resolute dedication to protecting lives and property. As local leaders and residents continue to express their appreciation, the Indian Army remains steadfast in its role as a first responder in emergencies, ready to assist wherever needed.

## GDC Doda hosts program on Entrepreneurship and Startups



### Top News Report

DODA, Dec 26: Government Degree College (GDC) Doda organized a special program on "Entrepreneurship and Startups" in collaboration with Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship development Institute (JKEDI), Doda to inspire and guide students in exploring entrepreneurship as a viable career option under the supervision of Principal GDC Doda, Prof (Dr.) Javid Iqbal.

The event was graced by the presence of Shabir Majeed, District Nodal Officer for the

JKEDI, who attended as the resource person. During the program, Majeed delivered an insightful session, shedding light on the key features of the recently launched J&K Startup Policy 2024-27.

He emphasized the policy's role in fostering a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region and highlighted the various incentives, support mechanisms, and opportunities available for budding entrepreneurs.

The session was highly interactive, with enthusiastic participa-

tion from the students. They posed a range of questions, seeking clarity on the technical aspects of startups and guidance on pursuing entrepreneurship as a career.

Majeed addressed their queries comprehensively, offering practical insights and motivational advice to empower them to take their first steps in the entrepreneurial world.

Principal of GDC Doda, along with the faculty members, lauded the efforts of JKEDI and expressed gratitude to Majeed for his valuable contribution. The program concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Javid Iqbal Trambo, HoD Economics, leaving students inspired and better equipped to explore innovative business ventures.

This initiative reflects GDC Doda's commitment to fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship among its students, contributing to the broader development goals of the region.

## BSF's 26 Bn organizes Blood Donation Camp

### Top News Report

HANDWARA, Dec 26: In a commendable initiative towards public welfare, the Border Security Force's (BSF) 26 Battalion organized a blood donation camp in collaboration with the Associate Hospital GMC Handwara. The camp was held at the Battalion Headquarters in Handwara and witnessed enthusiastic participation from BSF personnel.

Over 22 BSF personnel stepped forward to donate blood during the camp, showcasing their unwavering commitment to saving lives and making a positive impact on society. Their gesture emphasized the ethos of the BSF as a force not just dedicated to securing the nation's borders but also to contributing meaningfully to humanitarian causes.

The event commenced with a formal inauguration by Shri SFP Vaiphei, the officiating Commandant of the 26 Battalion BSF, in the presence of senior officers and



healthcare professionals. Among the dignitaries present were 2IC Vijay Singh Gumhoria, Deputy Commandant Jaypal Bishnoi, Dr. Sumit (ACMO), Dr. Manzoor Ahmad (Assistant Professor, Blood Bank, GMC Handwara), and other officers and staff members from both the BSF and the District Hospital Handwara.

Speaking on the occasion, SFP Vaiphei emphasized the critical role of blood donation in saving lives, noting that a single unit of blood donated by an individ-

ual has the potential to save multiple lives. He praised the BSF volunteers for their selfless act of generosity and underscored the BSF's commitment to serving humanity in addition to its primary responsibility of guarding the nation's international borders.

"This initiative reflects the spirit of service that is deeply ingrained in the values of the BSF. Blood donation is a noble act, and I am proud of our personnel for stepping forward to contribute to such a vital cause," Shri Vifi remarked.

The medical experts present at the camp lauded the efforts of the BSF for organizing the event, highlighting the growing need for blood in healthcare facilities, particularly in emergencies and life-threatening situations. They stressed that events like these not only replenish local blood banks but also raise awareness about the importance of regular blood donation among the public.

The collaboration between the BSF and the Associate Hospital GMC Handwara was

seamless, with both teams ensuring the camp's smooth execution. The blood collected during the event will be used to address the needs of patients in the region, including those requiring blood transfusions during surgeries, accidents, or medical emergencies.

The camp is part of the BSF's larger commitment to social welfare and community engagement. Through such initiatives, the BSF continues to build bridges of trust and goodwill with local communities while actively addressing pressing societal needs.

The event concluded with heartfelt words of appreciation from the healthcare team and the BSF leadership. The success of the camp is seen as a motivation for similar initiatives in the future, fostering a spirit of unity and service among all stakeholders.

This blood donation camp stands as a shining example of the BSF's dedication to not only protecting the nation but also serving its people in times of need.

## Alvida 2024: Here is a look at celebs who shone in the world of cinema



From filmmaker Payal Kapadia's *All We Imagine As Light* obtaining two prestigious nominations at the 82nd Annual Golden Globe Awards to superstar Shah Rukh Khan receiving the Lifetime Achievement award, the Pardo alla Carriera at the 2024 Locarno Film Festival, the year solidified the global appeal of Indian cinema and actors. Filmmaker Payal Kapadia created history after being nominated in the Best Director (Motion Picture) and Best Motion Picture (Non-English language) categories. This marks the first time an Indian director has been nominated in this category. The movie has now been nominated for the Critics Choice Awards 2025. Extraordinary performance Anasuya Sengupta became

the first Indian actor to win the prestigious Best Actress award at the Cannes Film Festival. Anasuya delivered an extraordinary performance as Renuka in *The Shameless*, directed by Bulgarian filmmaker Konstantin Bojanov. This gripping film competed in the Un Certain Regard section of the 77th edition of the festival.

Alia debuts at Paris Fashion Week

Alia Bhatt made her debut at Paris Fashion Week dressed up in a metallic silver bustier that she paired with a black off-shoulder jumpsuit. Alia shared a series of pictures featuring Aishwarya Rai, Kendall Jenner and others.

SRK bags Lifetime Achievement Award  
Shah Rukh Khan was felic-

tated with the Lifetime Achievement Award, the Pardo alla Carriera at the 2024 Locarno Film Festival. He became the first Indian personality to bag this award.

One of his most iconic films, *Devdas*, directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali, was also screened during the festival. D. During a conversation with Giona A Nazzaro, the artistic director of the Locarno Film Festival, he discussed his career and achievements.

Ricky Kej eyes fourth Grammy Award

Indian musician Ricky Kej has been nominated for the 67th Grammy Awards. It is Kej's fourth nomination after the previous three wins. His album *Break of Dawn* would compete in the Best New Age, Ambient

or Chant Album category. The award ceremony will be held on February 2. The category also features Indian-origin sitarist Anoushka Shankar's album *Chapter II: How Dark It Is Before Dawn*.

The category includes Indian-origin artist Radhika Vekaria's spiritual album *Warriors Of Light*, and Chandrika Tandon's album *Triveni*, made with flautist Wouter Kellerman and cellist Eru Matsumoto.

Monga's Anuja nominated for Oscars

Guneet Monga's *Anuja* has been shortlisted in the Best Live-Action Short Film category. The film features actor Nagesh Bhonsle in a key role. The 97th Academy Awards will be held on March 3. This is Monga's third nomination at the Oscars.

## Gaurav Khanna and Tejasswi Prakash to feature on Celebrity MasterChef

In 2025, get ready for the ultimate culinary showdown on Sony Entertainment Television.

Masterchef India promises to be more exciting than ever this season, returning as *Celebrity Masterchef – Ab Unn Sabki Seeti Bajegi!* The charming Gaurav Khanna is making a sizzling comeback on television, trading in his romantic hero image for a chef's hat as he participates in *MasterChef*.

Gaurav's culinary journey began during his struggling bachelor days in Mumbai, where he discovered his passion for cooking.

Over time, he's mastered the art of 'Mughlai cuisine' and has even explored international flavours during his travels around the world.

He shared, "While I am not professionally trained, I have learned by watching my mother cook over the years, standing beside her in her kitchen, as she cooked my favourite dishes. I'm back to spice up your life, this time with a pinch of salt, a dash of sugar, and a whole lot of heart."

Joining him is Tejasswi Prakash, who is ready to experiment, innovate and surprise you with her culinary creations. "Reality TV has taught me how to be fearless and authentic, but cooking on national television is a whole new level of challenge."

I truly believe that food is all about love, so I've decided to put my heart and culinary skills together for this show."



## Arjun Kapoor falls victim to online scam, warns fans

Bollywood actor Arjun Kapoor recently took to his social media to warn his fans about an online scam involving someone impersonating his manager.

The actor shared a post on Instagram, cautioning his followers about a fake account that had been reaching out to people, claiming to offer opportunities to connect with him.

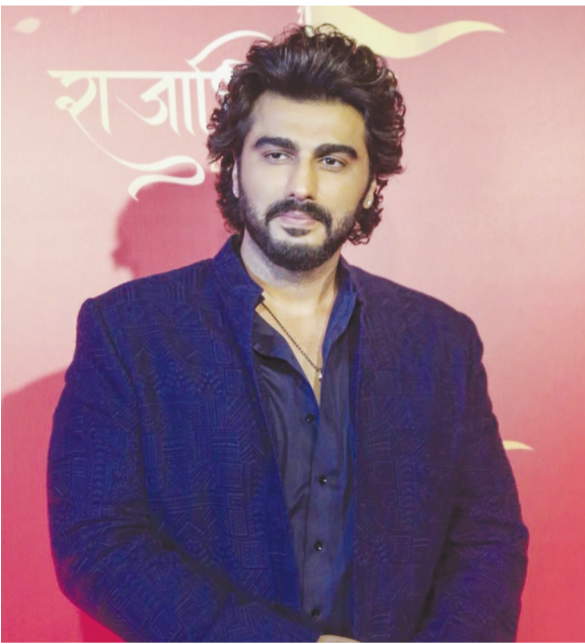
The scammer had been targeting unsuspecting fans, using the actor's name to build credibility and trick people into sharing personal information or clicking on malicious links.

Arjun shared a post that read, "It's come to my attention that a random account is reaching out to people claiming to be my manager and offering oppor-

tunities to connect with me. Please know that these messages are not legitimate, and I have no association with them. I would never anyone to click on links or share personal details Through such means.

Please don't fall for these scams-stay safe and alert.

If you come across such messages. Kindly report the account immediately. Have a safe and merry Christmas."



## When B-town celebrities spread cheer on Christmas



Priyanka's 'naughty' stocking

Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas on Wednesday took to Instagram Stories to share a photo of her personalised Christmas stocking. The stocking, adorned with her name at the top, was filled with treats wrapped in stylish black netting. Beside hers, fans noticed another stocking belonging to her daughter, Malti Marie. Adding a playful twist to the post, Priyanka joked about the contents, writing, "This stocking stuffing is definitely giving naughty,

not nice..."

Zayed in Dubai  
Actor Zayed Khan, who is the son of actor Sanjay Khan, celebrated Christmas Eve in Dubai with his family and said it was the best one he has had. Zayed took to Instagram, where he shared a string of pictures of his brother, sister, wife and children. "Merry Christmas people, from our family to yours..."

Sonakshi amidst koalas

Star couple Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal are celebrating Christmas in Australia amidst kangaroos and koalas.

Sonakshi took to her Instagram Stories, where she posted pictures of the cuddly animals. In one image, the couple is seen posing for a selfie with kangaroos in the backdrop. Sonakshi wrote: "Kangaroooooo." She then shared a picture of a koala resting on a tree and wrote: "Cutie koala." In the last image in the stories section was the couple lovingly posing next to a Christmas tree.

Genelia-Riteish have fun

Power couple Riteish Deshmukh and Genelia D'Souza celebrated

Christmas in a unique way by enjoying a special 'Christmas ki chai.' On Instagram, Genelia shared a funny reel featuring herself and Riteish. In the caption, she wrote, "Christmas ki chai @riteishd." The hilarious video shows Genelia telling her husband, "Baby, I made this tea with a lot of love. Tell me, how is it?" After taking a sip, Riteish pulls a funny face, but when Genelia playfully slaps him, his reaction changes completely.

Shilpa's Punjabi spirit  
Shilpa Shetty and Raj Kundra celebrated

Christmas in true Punjabi style. He shared a fun moment of himself performing Bhangra in the chilly temperatures, showcasing his vibrant spirit and love for tradition. On Wednesday, Raj took to Instagram and posted a video featuring him, his wife Shilpa and their kids. In the clip, the family is seen enjoying the Christmas festive time with Santa Claus. Sharing this fun-filled video, he wrote, "Born into a Punjabi family, Christmas has always been a beautiful blend of traditions—laughter, love, and togetherness."

## Amia Kunwar's Punjabi book Imroznama is a peep into a surreal world that Imroz and Amrita Pritam inhabited

Amrita to sadiyon baad paida hoti hai, Imroz to kabhi hoga hi nahi, says Amia Kunwar, in Chandigarh to promote her book *Imroznama*, which is her tribute to Imroz on his first death anniversary. While Amia has translated numerous books of Amrita Pritam and has also written about her, she had also penned some articles on Imroz earlier.

Exactly one year back, when she travelled to Delhi from Mumbai, after his last rites, she was troubled by what was being said about him. "People had no idea about who he was and were writing such things that I decided to bring the real Imroz, the artist, to light. Thus, began the journey of *Imroznama*." The 280-page book took about nine months to write.

Written in Punjabi, Amia is translating it

into Hindi and its English translation would be done by journalist-author Nirupama Dutt. Is the book about Imroz or is it another Amrita-Imroz love story? "I tried making it about Imroz but when Imroz is there, Amrita to aa hi jaati hai. The book has poems written by him about Amrita." Remembering him as a darvish, Amia says, "He was an easy, honest, caring man. I seldom saw him angry. A man with limited means, he lived like a fakir."

She recalls an incident when Imroz got Rs 21,000 as an award for his first book. "He bought flowers for Rs 5,000, three kurtas and gave the rest for kitchen expenses. I asked him, 'Couldn't you have saved some', and he said, 'pholon ki khushboo aa rahi hai na'." Understanding Amrita-Imroz love is not for the



lesser mortals. Amia calls it do jism, ek rooh. "Amrita has had her share of troubled life, but when Imroz came to her life he shielded her from unwanted people and

attention." Amia also mentions how Imroz took care of Amrita during her last days. "For about two years, his sheets were blank, colours went dry as he

devoted all his time to tend her."

Amia recalls how she got her name from Amrita. "On the accidental discovery that my friends and husband call me Amia, Amrita was like 'There are 20 Amarjits; Amia is such a beautiful name. But Kaur doesn't go with it, so let's go with Amia Kunwar.'"

In Amrita, Amia sees a maa, an elder sister, a companion beyond the bonds that are defined. She recalls how once that she was bedridden and Imroz landed up with 150 books to her house. "Maa (Amrita) ne bhajjiyan hain," he said. "My book is about a man who loved unconditionally. As people waited for him to leave Amrita, he continued to love her, even beyond her death. *Imroznama* is a peep into a surreal world they inhabited," she signs off.

## Nani-starrer 'Hit: The Third Case' to release in May



Crime thriller "Hit: The Third Case", starring Telugu cinema star Nani, is set to be released in theatres on

May 1, 2025.

Directed by Sailesh Kolanu, the upcoming film is the sequel to Adivi Sesh's "Hit: The

Second Case" which released in 2022.

Nani shared a new still of the film, reportedly set in Kashmir, on his official X page.

"Merry Christmas to each one of you #HIT3," the actor captioned the poster in which he can be seen holding the reins of a black horse set against the backdrop of a snow-capped landscape.

"Hit: The Third Case" is produced by Wall Poster Cinema and Unanimous Productions. It also stars Srinidhi Shetty of "KGF" franchise fame.

The first film in the franchise, "Hit: The First Case" was released in 2020 with Vishwak Sen in the lead.

A Hindi remake of the movie of the same name, directed by Kolanu, was released in 2022 starring Rajkumar Rao.

## PM Modi calls for equipping youth with skills in emerging technologies

In a celebratory ceremony for Veer Bal Diwas, Modi underscored the need to acquaint the youth with AI and machine learning industries

NEW DELHI, Dec 26 (Agencies): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday highlighted the "critical" role of the youth in the nation's progress and called for adopting a futuristic approach to equip them with skills in emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning.

Speaking at an event held on Veer Bal Diwas, Modi underscored the need to adapt to rapid changes and challenges across various fields, emphasising the government's "youth-centric" policies.

"This era has moved beyond machines to machine learning. AI is taking centre stage,



and we can see its application replacing conventional software. It is essential to make our youth future ready to tackle these challenges," he said, asserting that the government is committed to supporting young talent and fostering

their self-confidence.

In a ceremony celebrating Veer Bal Diwas, Modi remembered the "unparalleled" sacrifice of Guru Gobind Singh's sons, the Sahibzadas, who chose "unwavering courage and faith over submission to the Mughal Empire's oppression".

"More than 300 years ago, on December 26, the Sahibzadas, despite their tender age, displayed unparalleled bravery and sacrificed their lives. They rejected every temptation and endured unimaginable torture, showing that for them, the nation's cause was supreme," he said, urging youths to draw inspiration from their legacy.

## 'Shameful, condemnable': Rahul slams police action against protesting BPSC candidates in Patna



NEW DELHI, Dec 26 (Agencies): Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi Thursday condemned the police action on protesting Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) candidates in Patna and claimed that the NDA government is "resorting to lathi-charging students" to hide its own failures.

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also slammed the BJP over the police action, saying the ruling party's only vision is to save its chair and whoever demands employment is oppressed.

In a post in Hindi on X, Rahul Gandhi said, "I had said in Parliament that in the same way that Eklavya's thumb was cut off, the thumbs of the youth were being chopped off by paper leaks." "The latest example of this is Bihar. BPSC candidates are raising their voice against the paper leak and demanding cancellation of the exam. But to hide its failure, the NDA government is instead resorting to lathi-charge on the students," the former Congress chief said.

"This is extremely shameful and condemnable. Playing with the future of students will not be tolerated. We are with them and will fight to get them justice," he said.

Chaos erupted during a protest in Patna on Wednesday over the alleged leak of a question paper of the December 13 combined preliminary exam conducted by BPSC, prompting the police to baton charge job aspirants.

Job seekers claimed that several protesters were injured during the police action but a senior officer denied the charge.

"Lathi charge on youths who had their hands folded is the height of cruelty. In BJP rule, youths demanding employment are beaten with sticks. Be it UP, Bihar or Madhya Pradesh - if youths raise their voice, they are brutally beaten," Priyanka Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on her WhatsApp channel.

"It is the government's job to think about the future of the youth of the world's youngest country and make poli-

cies for it. But the BJP only has the vision of saving its chair," she said.

Whoever demands employment is oppressed, the Congress MP added.

The Congress had condemned the police action on job aspirants, while Independent MP from Purnea Rajesh Ranjan alias Pappu Yadav called for a Bihar bandh on January 1, 2025, if the December 13 combined preliminary examination is not cancelled.

The police registered a case against protesters in connection with Wednesday's incident. The protesters claimed that several job seekers were injured in the baton charge, which the police denied.

Video clips of the police action against job aspirants went viral on social media with some showing personnel chasing and beating up protesters, including women.

PTI could not verify the authenticity of the video clips.

Protesters were seen raising slogans against the BPSC officials and demanding the cancellation of the December 13 combined preliminary exam.

The job aspirants have been demanding the cancellation of the preliminary examination of the BPSC and have requested the commission to announce a fresh date for the test at the earliest.

## Eye on key BMC polls, Uddhav begins exercise to review position of Sena (UBT) in Mumbai

MUMBAI, Dec 26 (Agencies): Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday started a three-day exercise to assess his party's position in Mumbai, where civic polls are likely to be held next year, one of his close aides said.

After the split in the Bal Thackeray-founded Shiv Sena in 2022, the recently concluded assembly elections were seen as a litmus test for Uddhav's party, which is a constituent of the opposition bloc Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA).

However, the MVA performed disastrously winning only 46, includ-

ing 20 by Sena (UBT), of the state's 288 assembly seats. Of the 36 assembly seats in Mumbai, Sena (UBT) contested in 21 constituencies and won 10.

Sena (UBT) leader Anil Parab said, "Uddhav ji is taking stock of the poll preparedness of Sena (UBT) in all 227 municipal wards of Mumbai. The deliberations will go on for three days." Local body elections, including in Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), could be held in March-April 2025 if the Supreme Court gives its verdict over the "OBC (Other Backward Class) quota" in January.

Following the setback

in the state polls, the Sena (UBT) is keen to retain the BMC, which is among Asia's richest civic bodies. The corporation's last budget outlay stood at nearly Rs 60,000 crore, higher than some states in the country.

The five-year term of most municipal corporations, including the BMC, and many other local bodies in the state expired in 2022.

In December 2021, the Supreme Court had ruled that reservation for OBCs in local bodies would not be allowed unless the government fulfilled the triple test laid down in the apex court's 2010 order. It had ruled



that until the triple test criteria was fulfilled, OBC seats would be re-notified as general category seats.

The triple test required the state government to set up a dedicated commission to gather data on the backwardness

of OBCs in every local body, to specify the proportion of reservation in each local body in light of the commission's recommendations, and ensure that such reservation does not exceed the overall 50 per cent quota ceiling.

## Man stabs girlfriend to death in Assam, attempts suicide: police

GUWAHATI, Dec 26 (Agencies): A woman was stabbed to death by her boyfriend, who then attempted suicide, in Guwahati on Thursday morning, police said.

The accused, who stabbed himself, is undergoing treatment and will soon be arrested, the police added.

The attack on the woman, Mousumi Gogoi, took place outside her residence in Late Gate area, and was captured on CCTV.

According to Director General of Police (DGP) GP Singh, Gogoi was



waiting for a vehicle she had booked through an app-based service when the accused, Bhupen Das, arrived in his car and stabbed her before fleeing the spot. The woman was

rushed to a nearby hospital, where she succumbed to injuries.

Mr Singh said that Das was later apprehended from near the Housing complex area. "He has self-stabbed himself and is being admitted to the hospital," he said in a post on X.

Police sources said Gogoi had earlier filed a complaint against the man at Pan Bazar Police Station, alleging threat to her life.

A case has been registered and further probe is underway, the sources said.

## Over 70 hours on, rescue efforts continue for girl trapped in borewell in Rajasthan

JAIPUR, Dec 26 (Agencies): Three-year-old Chetna has been stuck inside a narrow 150 feet deep borewell for over 70 hours as the rescue operations were still underway on Thursday to save the girl.

Worried about her daughter's condition, Dholi Devi has not eaten anything since the tragic accident on Monday.

Chetna fell into the borewell while playing in the agriculture farm of her father in Badiyali Dhani under Sarund police station of Kotputli-Behror district.

With each passing moment, the hope for the girl being well is diminishing as the rescue team was not able to supply any food or water to Chetna.

Dholi Devi and others are constantly praying for the well being of Chetna amid the non-stop rescue operation by NDRF and SDRF teams, assisted by the local police



and administration.

Initially, efforts were made to pull the girl out of the borewell with the help of a ring but all attempts failed.

After two days of repeated attempts that fetched no results, a piling was brought to the spot on Wednesday morning and a pit parallel to the borewell was dug.

"... Now a horizontal tunnel will be made through which the experts will reach the girl," Sarund SHO Mohammad Imran said.

He said all possible efforts were made to pull out the girl but all hard work went in vain as the borewell is narrow and the technique could not deliver results.

A team of doctors with an ambulance are at the spot.

"The rescue operation is likely to conclude today," the SHO said.

Kotputli-Behror District Collector Kalpana Agarwal reached the village late Wednesday night to take stock of the situation.

She said that the rescue operation had been constantly going on. A lot of preparations had to be done to bring the piling machine to the farm.

Two weeks ago, a five year old boy fell into a borewell in Dausa district and the rescue operation lasted over 55 hours.

However, the boy had lost the battle for life by that time he was taken out.

## Middle-aged couple in Andhra dies by suicide over son's decision to marry transgender

NANDYAL, Dec 26 (Agencies): A middle-aged couple allegedly died by suicide in Nandyal district after their 24-year-old son expressed his desire to marry a transgender person.

According to Nandyal sub-divisional police officer P Srinivas Reddy, Subba Rayudu (45) and Saraswati (38) took their lives after conflicts over their son, Sunil Kumar associating with the local transgender community for the past three years.

Kumar had been in a relationship with a transgender person for three years and was adamant about not marrying a woman.



He insisted on staying with the transgender person, leading to frequent quarrels with his parents.

Kumar had previously attempted suicide over the matter, police said on Thursday.

Further investigation revealed that Kumar had spent Rs 1.5 lakh belonging to the trans-

genders, prompting them to demand the amount from his parents and cause nuisance. The public insults directed at his parents by members of the transgender community compounded their distress and drove them to take the extreme step, they said.

An investigation is on.

## 45-year-old farmer beaten to death over land dispute in UP's Bareilly

BAREILLY, Dec 26 (Agencies): A 45-year-old farmer was allegedly beaten to death over an old land dispute in the Fatehgaj area here, police said on Thursday.

The incident occurred on Wednesday night when Ahilkar, a resident of village Vandiya Khurd, was on his way to deliver food to his son at a field, said Fatehgaj police station in-charge Inspector Santosh Kumar.

At that time, some villagers stopped Ahilkar, hurled abuses at him and allegedly beat him with sticks before attacking him with

sharp weapons, Kumar said.

The farmer was taken to Faridpur Community Health Centre and given first aid, Kumar said.

He was later referred to a private hospital in Bareilly city, where he died during treatment.

The inspector added that the body has been sent for a post-mortem. According to the police, the incident stemmed from an old land dispute.

Based on a complaint from the deceased's relatives, a case has been registered against four individuals and an investigation is ongoing.

## MBBS student from Assam dies by suicide at AIIMS-Bhubaneswar

BHUBANESWAR, Dec 26 (Agencies): A second-year MBBS student allegedly died by suicide at AIIMS-Bhubaneswar, police said on Thursday.

The body of Ratnesh Kumar Mishra (21), a resident of Dibrugarh in Assam, was found hanging from the ceiling fan in his hostel room on Wednesday, they said.

Police suspect that financial crisis in his family led Mishra to take his life.

Before hanging himself, he sent an audio message to his younger brother, requesting their father not to sell their land.

He also asked his brother to become a doctor but stay in

Assam. In the note found in his room, Mishra said nobody was responsible for his death, according to police.

His second-year examination was supposed to start on Thursday, and he returned to the campus from home after a 10-day vacation on Tuesday. His father had accompanied him back to Bhubaneswar this time.

Mishra was supposed to visit the temple town of Puri on Wednesday along with his father, who was staying at a hotel outside the campus.

The father told reporters that he spoke to Mishra in the morning, but could not reach him

on his mobile later. As repeated calls went unanswered, he rushed to his hostel and found the door locked from inside.

With no response even after repeated bangings, the father along with some students broke into the room to find the body of Mishra.

He was immediately taken to the Emergency Room of the hospital, where he was declared dead, police said.

AIIMS-Bhubaneswar Director Ashutosh Biswas visited the hostel room later in the day.

A case of unnatural death was registered at the Khandagiri police station, and an investigation was started, police said.

## S. Korean opposition submits motion to impeach the country's acting president

SEOUL, Dec 26 (Agencies): South Korea's main opposition party submitted a motion on Thursday to impeach the country's acting leader over his reluctance to fill three Constitutional Court vacancies ahead of the court's review of rebellion charges against impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol stemming from his short-lived martial law decree on Dec. 3.

The court appointments have stalled amid an intensifying dispute between the liberal opposition and Yoon's conservative party, and the potential impeachment of Prime Minister Han Duck-soo may deepen the political paralysis that has halted high-level diplomacy and rattled financial markets.

The opposition-controlled National Assembly also passed motions calling for the appointment of three Constitutional Court justices as the court prepares to start deliberations on whether to dismiss or reinstate Yoon. The vote came shortly after Han reiterated in a televised statement that he wouldn't appoint the justices without bipartisan consent.

National Assembly Speaker Woo Won Shik urged Han to swiftly appoint the justices, saying that his calls for bipartisan consent essentially amounted to a refusal and "infringes on the National Assembly's right to select Constitutional Court justices."

Yoon's People Power Party, whose members mostly boycotted the National Assembly vote, argued that Han shouldn't exercise presidential authority to appoint the proposed justices while Yoon has yet to be formally removed from office.

The main opposition Democratic Party has accused the conservatives of undermining the court process to save Yoon's presidency, and its



motion to impeach Han could go to a floor vote as early as Friday. The Democrats' floor leader, Park Chan-dae, said Han's comments showed "he lacks both the qualifications to serve as the acting leader and the will to uphold the Constitution."

Yoon's presidential powers were suspended after the National Assembly voted to impeach him on Dec. 14 over an attempted power grab that lasted only hours but has triggered weeks of political turmoil that has shaken one of Asia's most robust democracies.

To formally end Yoon's presidency, at least six justices on the nine-member Constitutional Court must vote in favor. Three seats remain vacant following retirements and a full bench could make conviction more likely.

The court, which is to hold a pretrial hearing in Yoon's case on Friday, has said it believes the acting president can exercise the right to appoint justices.

Three of the court's nine justices are directly appointed by the president. Three are nominated by the head of the Supreme Court and three by the National Assembly, and they are then formally appointed by the president in what is widely considered a procedural matter.

The three seats that are currently open are to be nominated by lawmakers. South Korea's Constitution states that the National Assembly "selects" three spots on the court rather than recommends, suggesting that the presidential appointments for these spots are a formality rather than a substantive authority, according to some legal experts.

"The consistent spirit reflected in our Constitution and laws is that an acting president should focus on maintaining stability in governance to help the country overcome crisis while refraining from exercising significant powers exclusive to the president, including appointments to constitutional institutions," Han said. "I will withhold the appointment of Constitutional Court justices until the ruling and opposition parties submit an agreed-upon proposal."

Han has also clashed with the Democrats over his vetoes of controversial agricultural bills endorsed by the opposition and refusal to approve bills calling for independent investigations of Yoon and corruption allegations involving his wife, Kim Keon Hee.

If Han is impeached, Choi Sang-mok, the country's deputy prime minister and finance minister, is next in line. The impeachment vote

against Han could face legal ambiguities. Most South Korean officials can be impeached with a simple majority of the National Assembly, but impeaching presidents requires two-thirds. The rival parties differ on which standard should apply to an acting president. The Democratic Party controls 170 of the National Assembly's 300 seats, so it would need support from members of other parties including Yoon's own to get a two-thirds majority.

While focusing on defending himself in the Constitutional Court, Yoon has dodged several requests by law enforcement authorities to appear for questioning over rebellion charges and also blocked searches of his office. The Corruption Investigation Office for High-Ranking Officials, which is leading a joint investigation with police and military authorities of Yoon, summoned him for questioning this Sunday after he ignored a request to appear on Christmas Day. The office plans to question Yoon on charges of abuse of authority and orchestrating a rebellion.

Authorities have already arrested Yoon's defense minister, police chief and several other military commanders involved in the attempt to implement martial law, which harkened back to the days of authoritarian leaders the country hasn't seen since the 1980s.

In a news conference in Seoul, Yoo Seung Soo, lawyer for former Defense Minister Kim Yong Hyun, repeated Yoon's claim that his martial law decree was to "sound alarm against ... political abuse" by an opposition that has bogged down his agenda, and did not amount to a rebellion.

## Prayers and tears mark 20 years since the Indian Ocean tsunami that killed some 230,000 people



BANDA ACEH, Dec 26 (Agencies): People started gathering in prayer on Thursday and visiting the mass graves in Indonesia's Aceh province to mark 20 years since the massive Indian Ocean tsunami, one of modern history's worst natural disasters.

Many openly wept at the mass grave in Ulee Lheue village, where more than 14,000 unidentified and unclaimed tsunami victims are buried. It is one of several mass graves in Banda Aceh, the capital of Indonesia's northernmost province. It was one of the areas worst-hit by the earthquake and tsunami, along with the district of Aceh Besar.

A powerful 9.1-magnitude earthquake off the coast of the Indonesian island of Sumatra on Dec. 26, 2004, triggered a tsunami that killed around 230,000 people across a dozen countries, reaching as far as East Africa. Some 1.7 million people were displaced, mostly in the four worst-affected countries: Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand.

More than 170,000 people died in Indonesia alone. Even though 20 years have passed, the grief remains and survivors still remember their loved ones, lost to the giant waves that flattened buildings in most of the coastal areas of Aceh — all the way to the city

of Banda Aceh.

The infrastructure in Aceh has been rebuilt and is now more resilient than it was before the tsunami struck. Early warning systems have been installed in coastal areas to alert residents of potential tsunamis, providing crucial time to seek safety.

The rebuilding efforts were made possible by the support of international donors and organizations, who contributed significant funds to help the region recover. Schools, hospitals, and essential infrastructure that were destroyed by the disaster have been reconstructed with enhanced strength and durability, ensuring better preparedness for future challenges.

The tsunami also claimed the lives of over 8,000 people in Thailand, including many who remain missing, leaving a deep scar on the nation's history. Nearly 400 bodies remain unidentified and unclaimed.

## Japan Airlines hit by cyber attack, flights delayed

TOKYO, Dec 26 (Agencies): Japan Airlines (JAL) said on Thursday it was hit by a cyber attack that caused delays to some domestic and international flights.

The attack began at 7.24 am and affected the company's internal and external systems, JAL said.

The company said it temporarily shut down a router that was causing system malfunctions and also suspended ticket sales for flights departing on Thursday.

ANA Holdings, Japan's other major air carrier, saw no signs of an attack on its



systems, a spokesperson said. Earlier this week, American Airlines briefly grounded all flights for an hour, disrupting travel for thousands on Christmas Eve, due to a technical glitch involving its network hardware.

## At least 10 killed in Israeli strikes on Gaza, medics say

GAZA STRIP, Dec 26 (Agencies): At least 10 people were killed and more than a dozen wounded in Israeli strikes on Gaza early on Thursday, medics with the Gaza health authorities said.

Five people were killed and 20 wounded in an Israeli airstrike on a house in Gaza City's Zeitoun neighborhood, the medics reported. They warned the deaths could rise as many remained trapped under the rubble.

In a separate incident, five journalists were killed when their vehicle was struck in the vicinity of Al-Awda



hospital in Nuseirat in central Gaza, the enclave's health authorities said. The journalists worked for the Al-Quds Al-Youm television channel.

Palestinian media and local reporters said the vehicle was marked as a media van and was used by journalists to report from

inside the hospital and Nuseirat camp.

There was no immediate Israeli comment on the reported strikes.

On Wednesday, Palestinian group Hamas and Israel traded blame over their failure to conclude a ceasefire agreement despite progress reported by both sides in past days.

## Former Presidential candidate in Taiwan, Ko Wen-je, indicted for corruption

TAIPEI, Dec 26 (Agencies): Prosecutors in Taiwan indicted former presidential candidate and Taiwan People's Party founder Ko Wen-je on corruption charges Thursday, accusing him of taking bribes during his time as mayor of the island's capital.

Ko, a former mayor of Taipei, is accused of accepting bribes related to a real estate development during his time in office, according to the prosecutors' statement. He's also accused of embezzling political donations.

If convicted on all charges, he faces a



possible 28.5 years in jail.

Core to the case is a development owned by Core Pacific City group in Taipei. Prosecutors say Ko allowed the company to evade city

building regulations in exchange for bribes.

"The defendant, Ko, violated his vow as a mayor to not accept bribes, and abide by our national laws. Instead, Ko intended to help the

group obtain billions of dollars in illegal benefits, while collecting millions in bribes," said Kao Yi-shu, the lead prosecutor, while unveiling the charges Thursday.

Ko has previously denied the allegations of bribery and corruption.

Ko, a former doctor, burst onto the political scene to win Taipei's 2014 mayoral race. He served two terms from 2014 to 2022.

Ko founded the TPP in 2019 as an alternative to the two-party system, promising a break from politics as usual.

He ran for President this year. Despite fin-

ishing third, he attracted attention for his appeal to young voters. Taiwan's politics is mostly dominated by two main political parties, the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) and the Democratic Progressive Party.

Ko's Taiwan People's Party, while small, is allied with the Kuomintang in Taiwan's legislature and helped it pass three laws last week that critics say have paralyzed the Constitutional Court and will weaken Taiwan President Lai Ching-te's ability to carry out his political agenda.

## Russia ready for consultations with Trump on Ukraine: Lavrov



MOSCOW, Dec 26 (Agencies): Russia is ready to hold consultations with the administration of US President-elect Donald Trump on Ukraine and hopes the White House will study the root causes of the conflict, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Thursday. "I very much hope that Trump's administration, including [Trump's special envoy to Ukraine and Russia Keith] Kellogg, will get to the root causes of the conflict. We are always ready for consultations," Lavrov told a press conference for Russian and foreign media.

## Fans confront Khalistani group desecrating Indian flag during Australia game

MELBOURNE, Dec 26 (Agencies): The first day of the Boxing Day Test match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) between India and Australia on Thursday saw heated action not only on the field but off it as well as Indian fans confronted Khalistan supporters outside the stadium over chanting anti-India slogans and allegedly desecrating the national flag.

A pro-Khalistan group gathered outside the stadium on Thursday morning. The group was seen waving Khalistani flags, shouting slogans against India and desecrating the Indian flag. In a video being widely circulated



across social media, the Khalistani radicals can be seen wrapping the Indian flag into a football and playing with it. A few Indian fans came forward to protest and things took a heated turn before the Victoria police sprang to action and drove the disruptive elements away.

When asked about the confrontation, one Indian fan at the MCG

told news agency agency, "Who is Khalistani? I don't know who is a Khalistani. I am a proud Sikh."

"...I don't think any limelight should be given to them...Whatever they do, I think it's not worth it. They are just 5-10 people who have been born and brought up here. They have never been to Punjab and

doing this nonsense agenda for themselves. Let's just not give any limelight to them," another Indian cricket fan told agency outside the MCG.

Pro-Khalistani groups have targeted Indians and have tried to sabotage events across the US, Canada and the UK over the past two years. Last month, a group of Khalistani supporters barged into a temple in Canada's Brampton, attacking Hindu devotees. Last year, India's High Commission in London came under attack when India's flag was replaced with the Khalistani flag.

## Syria forces carry out operation against pro-Assad 'militias', reports state media



DAMASCUS, Dec 26 (Agencies): Syria's security forces launched an operation on Thursday against pro-Assad "militias" in the western province of Tartus, state news agency SANA reported, a day after deadly clashes with gunmen affiliated with the former government.

The operation had already succeeded in "neutralising a certain number" of armed men loyal to toppled president Bashar al-Assad, SANA said. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor has reported several arrests in connection with Wednesday's clashes.



# Adani Foundation funded Rs 70 Lakh to Aryans Group Brand Ambassador Amir Hussain Lone for his Dream Cricket Academy

## Top News Report



JAMMU, Dec 26: Adani Foundation has funded Rs 70 lakh for Aryans Group of Colleges, Rajpura, Near Chandigarh's brand ambassador Amir Hussain Lone for his dream cricket academy for needy and deserving youth of Jammu & Kashmir.

Today, Amir visited Aryans Group of Colleges and interacted with Aryans students and thanked Aryans management for support and blessings to his dream cricket academy.

A special function was organised in Aryans where major strength of students Jammu & Kashmir and other states students Participated.

The event was presided over by Dr. Anshu Kataria, Chairman, Aryans Group. The program started with lamp lighting by Amir followed by cake cutting ceremony. Later he played

cricket with Aryans students as well.

Amir thanked Adani Foundation for this generous support under corporate social responsibility. He said I have faced a lot of challenges while becoming a successful Cricketer but I want that my younger brothers and sisters from JK and other parts of Country must not face such hardship because of lack of Funds. I will spend entire money for establishing Amir Cricket Academy, which will

not charge a single penny from any cricket aspirants, and the academy would work in all types of weather.

Dr. Anshu Kataria said that we are proud Amir Hussain Lone, who is Brand Ambassador of Aryans Group, his journey is an inspiration not only for India but for the entire world. For all his hard work and Aryans Group decided and announced him Brand Ambassador of Aryans.

It is to be mentioned that Preeti Adani, chairman of

the Adani Foundation, said to Lone that "I am glad to know that you are putting your best efforts and commitment towards building a dedicated cricket facility in your village in Anantnag. I have been briefed that the facility will help budding cricketers in the region, including specially abled sportsmen. It is indeed a commendable endeavor, She said that Gautam Adani was touched by Lone's "courage and indomitable spirit." An

said that he was personally inspired by the way he navigated his challenges in order to succeed. "Adani Group, as always, is standing alongside you in your inspiring journey and yet again making a humble contribution in fulfilling your dreams."

Amir Hussain Lone is brand ambassador of Aryans Group and is pursuing higher education at Aryans. God of Cricket, Sachin Tendulkar has invited Amir Hussain to play first ball of Indian Street Premier League (ISPL) & also introduced him with many Bollywood stars. Virat Kohli, Harbhajan Singh, Navjot Sidhu, Ashish Chopra, Ajay Jadeja have also appreciated his passion for cricket on their social media platforms. The cricketer has a unique playing style. He bowls using his legs and bats using his shoulder and neck.

# Shub International School hosts annual celebration "Namisha"



## Top News Report

JAMMU Dec 26: Shub International School celebrated its much-awaited Annual Delight Celebration, "Namisha," on December 25, 2025, in Akhnoor, Jammu. The event was a grand showcase of the students' exceptional talents and dedication, making it a memorable day for all attendees.

The celebration began with an inaugural ceremony led by the Chief Guest, Arun Gupta, SSP CID Jammu, who lit the ceremonial lamp. This was followed by a mesmerizing Ganesh Vandana performance by Class 7 students. Esteemed dignitaries, including Dr. Rakesh Bharti, Assistant Professor at the Government College of Education, graced the occasion as the Guest of Honor. Other notable guests included Kunwar Shakti Singh, founder of the Press Club of Akhnoor; Vikas Gupta, Vice Presi-

dent of the Olympic Association of Jammu and Kashmir; Sunny Nanda, General Secretary of the J&K Sports Speed Ball Association; Ranvir Singh, District Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee Member; Tariq Ahmed, Hon. SHO Akhnoor; and Rtn. Dr. Sushil Jagotra, President of the Rotary Club Akhnoor.

The program commenced with a warm Swagatham presented by Class 7 students to welcome the guests. The event was skillfully hosted by students Avleen Kaur, Amithi Sharma, and Viraj, under the guidance of Miss Gurepreet Kour. Their coordination ensured an engaging and seamless flow of activities throughout the celebration.

The event featured an array of captivating performances. A delightful mobile dance by Class 2 students charmed the audience, while joyful Christmas carols and a Christmas

dance added festive cheer. A motivational act inspired attendees with its uplifting message, and energetic Bollywood dance performances highlighted the students' coordination and creativity. The instrumental music group captivated the audience with their musical talents, while a French act demonstrated the linguistic skills of students from various classes. Additionally, a martial arts display showcased the students' discipline, agility, and strength.

The grand finale brought the entire school together for a spectacular musical performance that received thunderous applause. The celebration also included a prize distribution ceremony, recognizing students' academic achievements.

Principal Shipa Mahajan addressed the gathering, highlighting the school's academic progress and thanking the guests, students, teachers, and staff for their efforts in making the event a success. She praised the students' dedication and emphasized the school's commitment to holistic education.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Annu Sharma, Academic Manager, who expressed gratitude to everyone involved in the success of Namisha 2025. The celebration was a testament to Shub International School's dedication to fostering academic excellence, creativity, and character development among its students.

# PSPS GCW Gandhi Nagar celebrates National Mathematic Day



## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: Department of Mathematics, Padam Shri Padma Sachdev Govt. College for Women, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu celebrated National Mathematics Day. The celebration commenced with the rendition of the iconic song "Zero Diya Bharat Ne" sung by Anu and Rajni Devi of semester 5.

Dr. S.P. Saraswat, Principal of the College was the Chief Guest of the event. He encouraged the students to cultivate interest and passion towards the subject.

Dr. Renu Anand, HoD, Department of Mathematics and convener of

the event formally welcomed the guests and shared insights into the extraordinary achievements of legendary Mathematician Srinivas Ramanujan.

Dr. Shally Gupta, HOD, Mathematics and Dr. Kamaljeet Kour from MAM College Jammu, Dr Rawan Kumar and Dr. Yash Paul from GCW Gandhi Nagar were the Jury members for the various events.

They enlightened the students about the life and work of the great mathematician Srinivas Ramanujan and also about the role of Mathematics in the development of India.

About 100 students attended the event, with 30 students participating

enthusiastically in various activities, including a poster-making competition and a mathematics quiz held on 23-12-2024, followed by a poetry recitation competition on December 24-12-2024.

The events showcased the creativity and knowledge of the participants, celebrating the beauty of mathematics in diverse forms. Ms. Anchal and Ms. Rashmeen compered the event. A formal vote of thanks was presented by Kanan.

The organizing committee included Dr. Anshu Sharma and Dr. Sonali Sharma from the Department of Mathematics. Dr. Rupinder Kour, Dr. Jyoti Dutt, Prof. Anupama Sharma, Dr. Pooja Charak and Dr. Jagmeet Kour also graced the event.

The celebration of National Mathematics Day not only honored the legacy of Srinivas Ramanujan but also inspired students to explore the endless possibilities that mathematics offers in shaping a progressive and innovative future for India.

# GDC Marh celebrates Dogri Manyata Diwas

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: Government Degree College Marh celebrated 21 years of Dogri Manyata Diwas today, under the leadership of the college Principal, Dr. Rakesh Kumar Koul. The event was meticulously organized by Dr. Sheetal Sharma HOD, Department of Dogri.

Principal Dr. Rakesh Kumar Koul was the chief guest of the occasion expressed his appreciation for the dedication and enthusiasm of the Department of Dogri and emphasized the importance of preserving and passing on Dogra culture to future generations.

He further captivated the audience by delivering his speech in Dogri, a highlight of the program that resonated with all present. In his speech, he appreciated the personalities who fought hard for the recognition of Dogri language since 1933 and because of their efforts Dogri was inducted in 8th schedule of Indian Constitution on December 22, 2003, which is considered as the luckiest day for all Dogras.

As part of the celebrations, students dressed in traditional attires and displayed a variety of traditional Dogra cuisines and food items prepared by them through stalls and served in local eco-friendly pattals and duns which contained Quare, Suchhiyaan, Khamirah, Meyri, Chilla, Malpua, Chana-di-

dal, Ambal, Rice, Kimb, Kachaloo, Sund, Madra, Aasra, Alsi-de-laddu, Gajar-da-halwa which were well-received and tasted by faculty and staff alike. A total of 7 stalls managed by 14 students were displayed comprising 17 local food items.

The stall competition was judged by panel faculty members (Prof. Asha Kumari, HOD Geography, Prof. Sachin Kumar Bhagat, HOD Pol. Science and Dr. Priya Sharma, HOD Economics) and the winners (1st position-Laxmi Sharma of Semester I, 2nd position-Kashish Sharma of Semester V and 3rd position-sangeeta and sweety kaith of Semester-III) were recognized for their outstanding contributions by presenting certificates of appreciation. The celebration also witnessed folk dance by students and faculty.

In her closing remarks, Dr. Sheetal Sharma extended heartfelt gratitude to the entire faculty and Principal for their unwavering support.

She pledged to continue her efforts in promoting the Dogri language and Dogra culture, with a commitment to elevating them to new heights in the years to come.

The event not only showcased the rich cultural heritage of Jammu but also reinforced the importance of preserving and celebrating regional traditions for future generations.

# Dimple demands Alliance Govt to nominate on Jammu Dogra for RS seat

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: In a press statement today, Sunil Dimple, President of Mission Statehood Jammu Kashmir, called upon the alliance government to nominate a Jammu Dogra for the Rajya Sabha (RS) seat, emphasizing the contribution of those who have fought for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood after August 5, 2019.

Dimple pointed out that despite uniting all political parties on one platform for the cause of Jammu and Kashmir, the assembly elections had led to divisions among the parties due to vested interests.

Dimple further demanded that the alliance government, led by Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah, immediately nominate four members for the Rajya Sabha seats, with at least one from Jammu, as Jammu districts currently lack representation in the alliance government. He

criticized the government for compromising on all issues with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at the center and reiterated the mission for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir as a Dogra state with its special status.

Addressing the Prime Minister, Dimple questioned why the business rules for Jammu and Kashmir have not been restored, especially in light of the ongoing drafting of the rules by the Ministry of Home Affairs. He also raised concerns over the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Speaker, Abdul Rahim Rather, who has formed a nine-member panel to draft the business rules, asking whether the rules being applied would be those from the Ministry of Home Affairs or the Speaker's panel.

In his statement, Dimple also urged Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to nominate five members to the Legislative Assembly, including two women, two

Kashmiri Pandits, and one West Pakistani refugee, to ensure inclusive representation. He also called on the Chief Election Commissioner and the Jammu and Kashmir government to hold Urban Local Bodies (ULB) and Panchayat elections immediately to restore full democracy and provide representation at the grassroots level.

Additionally, Dimple demanded that Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah stop their Member of Parliament, Aga Rouhulla, from pursuing the baseless demand for the revocation of reservations, which he believes would harm the interests of the region's marginalized communities.

Dimple reiterated his call for the alliance government to nominate a Jammu Dogra for the Rajya Sabha seat, recognizing the struggles of those who have worked tirelessly for Jammu and Kashmir's statehood and unity post-2019.

## FROM PAGE 3

# Centre proposes coal law extension to Jammu and Kashmir

submit their comments on the matter directly to the Union Coal Ministry.

According to the Geology and Mining Department of J&K, the Union Territory has coal reserves of 9.5 million tonnes. The primary coal reserves are located in Kalakote, Jangalgali, Metka, Ladha, Chinka, Dhansal, Swalkote, Chakar, Dandil, Mohogala, San-gar-Marg, and Kura. The Kalakote coal mines are estimated to have a usable reserve of roughly 5.4 million tonnes up to a depth of about 300 metres, according to the Geological Survey of India.

# Ayan Sajad of Anantnag honored with Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar for his excellence in art, culture

bring stories and traditions to life through his art have earned him widespread recognition and admiration.

The award ceremony, held at New Delhi, was a proud moment for Ayan, his family and the people of Jammu and Kashmir. In the presence of distinguished dignitaries and fellow awardees, Ayan received the honor from the President of India, who praised the young achievers for their contribution to the nation's progress.

# OMSA urges govt to halt recruitments till

# reservation policy is rationalised

on X.

"We respectfully urge the Hon'ble Chief Minister to facilitate the release of this press statement at the earliest. This will provide much-needed clarity to the concerned students, aspirants, and youth regarding the matters discussed during the meeting, including the assurances provided."

They said the press release is essential to address the immediate actionable items as discussed with the CM and to reaffirm the commitment to resolving both the broader rationalisation issue itself and related concerns within six months from the date of the formation of the committee.

The students association also said that continuing recruitment under the current system would unfairly disadvantage open merit candidates. "We strongly urge the government to halt all recruitment processes until the review is completed and the reservation policy is rationalized, ensuring fairness and preventing further discrimination," they added.

"We hope for prompt action on this matter to ease the concerns of all stakeholders."

# Railways conducts trial run of electric engine on India's first cable-stayed rail bridge in J&K

above the riverbed. It is supported by 48 cables on its lateral and central spans and stretches 473.25 metres in total length. The viaduct measures 120 metres, while the

# central embankment spans 94.25 metres.

This is the second-highest railway bridge in India after the Chenab Bridge, which is the highest in the world at a record 359 metres above the riverbed. Both bridges are part of the ambitious USBRL project aimed at increasing connectivity in Jammu and Kashmir.

The USBRL project stretches across 272 kilometres, of which 255 kilometres have already been completed. The remaining portion between Katra and Reasi is expected to be completed by the end of this month.

The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) is a 272 km railway project that connects Jammu and Kashmir to the rest of India. It is considered one of the most challenging railway projects in the Indian subcontinent.

The project will reduce travel time between Srinagar and Jammu from six hours to 3.5 hours. The railway projects have been constructed after overcoming natural challenges such as extreme temperatures, major earthquake zones, and inhospitable terrain.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to flag off the Vande Bharat train to provide a fast link for passengers travelling between Kashmir and Delhi in January 2025.

# Katra observes total shutdown on day 2 in protest against ropeway project

deliberation, the protestors alleged that the government was derailing the issue and forcing them to come on the roads.

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board

# Kashmir reels under intense cold wave conditions across

last month, announced plans to install the ropeway to facilitate access to the temple for senior citizens, children, and others who find it challenging to trek the 13-km-long path to the cave shrine.

The proposed Rs 250-crore project aims to connect Tarakote Marg to Sanji Chhat, which leads to the shrine.

The pilgrims however, faced difficulties in view of total shutdown in Katra town.

Srinagar recorded a low of minus 7 degrees Celsius on Wednesday night, slightly up from the previous night's minus 7.3 degrees Celsius, the meteorological department said.

Gulmarg, a tourist resort town known for skiing activities in north Kashmir, recorded a minimum temperature of minus 6 degrees Celsius, up from minus 6.6 degrees Celsius the previous night.

Pahalgam, the base camp for the annual Amarnath Yatra in south Kashmir, registered a minimum temperature of minus 8.6 degrees Celsius, slightly down from the previous night's minus 8.4 degrees Celsius, it said.

Qazigund, the gateway town to Kashmir, logged a minimum temperature of minus 7 degrees Celsius, while Konibal, a hamlet in the Pampore area, was the coldest recorded place in the valley at minus 9 degrees Celsius, it said.

Kupwara, in north Kashmir, registered a low of minus 6.7 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag, in south Kashmir, was minus 5.5 degrees Celsius.

The meteorological department has said an active Western Disturbance is set to

# impact Jammu and Kashmir from Friday afternoon to Saturday afternoon.

Under the influence of the system, there is a possibility of light snowfall over the higher reaches towards late afternoon of Friday till the forenoon the next day, the Met Office said.

While the weather would stay mainly dry on December 29, 30, and 31, light snowfall is possible at isolated places in Kashmir from January 1-4.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan' – considered the harshest period of winter – which started on December 21.

During the 40 days of Chillai-Kalan, the chances of snowfall are most frequent and maximum and the temperature drops considerably.

It will end on January 30 next year, but the cold wave would continue. The 40 days are followed by a 20-day 'Chillai-Khur'd' (small cold) and a 10-day 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold).

**Land grab under ruse of development going on unabated in J&K: Iltija Mufti**

While criticizing the government, she said if education was such a priority why did they introduce lopsided reservation earlier. "GOIs project to continue grabbing land in Kashmir under the ruse of 'development' in J&K continues unabated. Pray tell what's the need to seize 5000 kanals of prime agricultural land in Pulwama to establish a NIT? If education was such a priority why did they introduce lopsided reservation in the first place?," Iltija in a post on X said.

## All J&K POJK 1947 SIF thanks PM for declaring Safar-e-Shahadat Week as a National Week

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: The All J&K POJK 1947 Sharnarhi Intellectual Forum convened an emergency meeting of its core committee under the leadership of President Advocate Amrik Singh. The meeting was joined by S. Surjit Singh, Secretary of the Forum, along with other prominent members.

At the outset, the Forum extended its gratitude to the Union Government and, in particular, to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for declaring the Safar-e-Shahadat Week as

a National Week. This week honors the unparalleled martyrdom of the Chhote Sahibzade of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, who, at a juvenile age, made the ultimate sacrifice against cruelty and forcible religious conversion. The Forum highlighted that this historic act of shaheedi set a world record in the annals of history.

Forum President Advocate Amrik Singh expressed his appreciation for Prime Minister Modi's initiative, stating that it reflects a positive and empathetic approach toward the Sikh community, which has always stood for the unity and integrity of the

nation.

Advocate Singh also criticized the Congress-led governments of the past 75 years, alleging that they deliberately ignored the extraordinary martyrdom of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji's family and the Chhote Sahibzade. He described this neglect as a sign of misplaced sympathy for foreign invaders.

The Forum further elaborated on the pivotal role played by the Sikh Gurus and their blessings in resisting mass religious conversions during the Mughal era. Their sacrifices ensured the preservation of Hin-

duism and upheld the nation's cultural and spiritual integrity.

The Forum also expressed its gratitude to the BJP Government for including historical accounts of Sikh Gurus in the school and college curriculum, describing this as an appreciable and fact-based step toward educating future generations.

Prominent members who attended the meeting included Kuldeep Singh (Vice President), Paramjit Singh (Ex-Corporator), Sucha Singh (Corporator), Avtar Singh (Member, DGPC Jammu), Paramjit Singh

Shingari, Kuldeep Singh Kuku, Harbhajan Singh, Nasib Singh, Prof. K.D. Singh, Jagjit Singh, Khazan Singh, Manjit Singh, Gurdeep Singh Ripal, Bhajan Singh, Amandeep Singh, Avtar Singh (Ex-Pilot), Surjit Singh Kud, Prehlad Singh, H.S. Sudan (Retd. Group Captain), Bhupinder Singh and Jasbir Singh.

The Forum reaffirmed its commitment to upholding the legacy of the Sikh Gurus and pledged to continue advocating for initiatives that preserve and promote the community's rich heritage and contributions to the nation.

## CTTIK appeals LG Sinha for constructive dialogue

Top News Report

KATRA, Dec 26: The Chamber of Tourism Trade and Industry Katra (CTTIK) earnestly appealed to the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to initiate dialogue with stakeholders regarding the proposed ropeway project from Tarakat to Sanjichatt.

President CTTIK, Raj Kumar Padha strongly condemned the recent arrest of members of the Vaishno Devi Sangarsh Samiti, who were peacefully expressing their concerns through a procession.

Such actions by the district administration are deeply regrettable and counterproductive

in maintaining harmony in the region, he said.

CTTIK appealed to the district administration, Shrine Board authorities, Board Members, and Chairman of the Shrine Board Manoj Sinha to take immediate steps to release the arrested individuals.

It is crucial to uphold democratic principles and respect the sentiments of those involved.

Furthermore, CTTIK urged the authorities to engage in meaningful discussions with all relevant stakeholders to address and resolve the pressing issues amicably.

This collaborative approach will pave the way for progress while

preserving the sanctity and smooth functioning of the pilgrimage.

President Raj Kumar Padha also reminded the government agencies of their paramount responsibility to facilitate and enhance services for visiting pilgrims. The ongoing agitation is hindering these services, and swift resolution is imperative to restore normalcy and ensure a positive experience for all pilgrims.

CTTIK remains committed to supporting initiatives that promote the development and welfare of the region and its pilgrims while fostering a spirit of unity and cooperation among all stakeholders.

## Demolition drive held, illegal structures demolished in Zangulpora

Top News Report

KULGAM, Dec 26: Illegal constructions unabated at Zangulpora area in south Kashmir's Kulgam district, acting promptly upon a specific information regarding the illegal construction.

On the directions of Tehsildar Phaloo A team of revenue Department led by Naib Tehsildar along with revenue and police carried out a demolition drive in Zangulpora village in phaloo tehsil and demolished various structures which were raised illegally on section 4 land.

Tehsildar Phaloo told Top News JK correspondent Gh Nabi Khanday that nobody



is allowed to raise any structure without permission from the competent authority. These violators were informed time to time not to raise structures illegally and now officials were being forced to act tough.

"We demolished all these structures in area and in other parts, such structures will be dismantled as well. People are requested to refrain from such practices otherwise we are ready for the loss," he said.

## Senior Citizens Club Ramnagar celebrates Rising Day

Top News Report

RAMNAGAR, Dec 26: The Senior Citizens Club Ramnagar celebrated its Rising Day with great enthusiasm, marking a significant milestone in the allocation of land near the Dak Bungalow for the establishment of an Old Age Home.

This facility is envisioned to serve as a haven for elderly individuals, orphans, widows, and children, offering them shelter and care in the years to come.

The event was inaugurated by Mahadeep Singh Jamwal, Retired



SSP and District President of the Senior Citizens Club Udhampur, in the presence of Raj Guru, General Secretary of the Club.

During the ceremony,

Tehsil President Unit Ramnagar Shiv Dev Singh shared the journey of perseverance and dedication that led to the acquisition of this prestigious site, emphasizing its importance for the underprivileged sections of society.

The program was attended by around 100 individuals, including community leaders and

well-wishers. Thakur Dass, Retired ZEO, and Ram Swaroop delivered speeches highlighting the pivotal role of the Senior Citizens Club in advocating for and addressing the needs of society's vulnerable members.

## Maj Gen AS Bevli visits NTA Nagrota to oversee preparations for Republic Day Camp 2025

Top News Report

NAGROTA, Dec 26: Maj Gen AS Bevli, VSM, Additional Director General (ADG), NCC Jammu Kashmir & Ladakh (JK&L) Directorate, visited National Training Area (NTA) Nagrota as part of the Full Dress Rehearsals (FDR) for the Republic Day Camp (RDC) 2025. The visit aimed to assess the preparation of the cadets and ensure the smooth execution of upcoming national events.

The visit began with a ceremonial Guard of Honour, highlighting the discipline and dedication of the cadets under the guidance of the Directorate. Maj Gen Bevli proceeded to the Flag Area, where he was briefed on the cre-



ative and informative display prepared by the cadets, themed "Voice of Youth of JK&L." This display reflected the dynamic and forward-thinking nature of the region's youth.

The ADG then witnessed the PM Rally and Kartavya Path drill, engaging with the cadets and commending their exceptional

precision, discipline, and enthusiasm. He also observed a display of innovative ideas and technologies developed by the cadets, which were highly praised for their creativity and ingenuity.

A vibrant cultural program followed, featuring a Group Song and Group Dance, culminating in a captivating

ballet titled "Echoes of the Valley: Journey Through Time."

The performance, celebrating the rich cultural heritage of Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh left the audience spellbound and underscored the immense talent and creativity of the cadets.

In recognition of outstanding performances, Maj Gen Bevli presented

gifts to selected cadets and instructional staff, acknowledging their hard work and dedication to train the Contingent.

The visit concluded with Maj Gen Bevli interacting with the cadets and their parents. He emphasized the importance of continued excellence and commended the cadets for their determination and commitment. His words left the cadets motivated and proud to represent the NCC JK&L Directorate on the national stage during RDC 2025.

The visit served as an inspiring moment for both the cadets and the entire staff, reinforcing the spirit of unity, discipline, and excellence that defines the NCC's mission.

## NCC Directorate JKL felicitates Cadets, ANOs for outstanding achievements



Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: NCC Directorate Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh hosted a special felicitation ceremony today to honour several distinguished cadets and ANOs for their outstanding achievements. Lt Ira Vermani of 2 J&K Girls Bn, Jammu was recognized for her exceptional performance in the PRCN Course SW-111, receiving the Rolling Trophy, alongwith Cer-

gotten Face of the Guardians of the Valley: Rashtriya Rifles, Indian Army", honouring the sacrifices of soldiers.

SUO Dhruv Sharma of 2 J&K Bn NCC, Jammu who returned from the Youth Exchange Program (YEP) in Bhutan, was commended for his selection as one of the 12 cadets chosen by the DG NCC from all 17 Directorates Pan India. Additionally, 10 SD and 10 SW cadets who had attended the Special National Integration Camp, Wokha (Nagaland) shared their experiences, reflecting the importance of National integration and leadership.

The ADG felicitated the Cadets and ANOs recognizing their exemplary contributions and leadership qualities, which will further inspire the youth of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh.

## J&K Police flags off group of students for 25th Rashtra Katha Shivir

Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: The flag-off ceremony for the 25th Rashtra Katha Shivir Yatra was organized by Zonal Police Headquarters Jammu at the Officers Mess, Gulshan Ground, Jammu. The event was held under the able guidance and directions of ADGP Jammu, Shri Anand Jain, IPS.

The event marked the departure of 70 students from the Jammu zone,

accompanied by 05 caretakers, to participate in the 25th Rashtra Katha Shivir in Rajkot, Gujarat, scheduled from December 28, 2024, to January 5, 2025.

The 25th Rashtra Katha Shivir, being organized by Shri Vedic Mission Trust, at Rajkot Gujarat, is designed to foster critical life skills and inspire the youth through motivational sessions.

The Zonal Police Headquarters Jammu

has made comprehensive arrangements for the students, including all boarding and lodging facilities.

Additionally, each participant was provided with a customized kit containing clothing and other essentials to ensure their comfort and convenience during the program.

Addressing the participants, DIG JSK Range Shiv Kumar, congratulated them and extended his best



wishes for their journey. He also emphasized the importance of the tour in promoting national integration, social and religious harmony, and personal development. He encouraged the students to embrace this unique opportunity to learn and grow while building lasting memories.

The DIG JSK range also highlighted the importance of fostering a sense of nationalism and appreciating the

diversity and richness of the country.

The initiative received widespread appreciation from parents and the students, who expressed their gratitude to J&K Police for organizing this enriching program.

Irshad H. Rather, SP Hqra, Jammu; Rabinder Singh, Dy. SP DAR, DPL Jammu; Narinder Singh, ADO ZPHQ Jammu, and other officers were present at the occasion.

## Bumrah keeps battle alive; Australia score 311/6 after impressive Konstas debut

The Indian spearhead didn't let the hosts completely walk away with the game which they threatened to do at one stage as Bumrah now has 24 wickets in the series.

MELBOURNE, Dec 26 (Agencies): Jasprit Bumrah's knack of coming up with magic deliveries in crunch situations kept India alive after Australia's top-order, headlined by teen debutant Sam Konstas' stroke-filled half-century, guided the hosts to 311 for 6 on the opening day of the fourth Test here on Thursday.

If Konstas' audacious 60 off 65 balls enthralled the near sell-out crowd of over 80,000 at the MCG during a humid morning session, Bumrah's (3/75 in 21 overs) deception of length to dismiss Travis Head (0) also had its takers as chants of 'Boom, Boom, Booooomraaaaaah' reverberated through the stands.

Coming into the Test with back-to-back hundreds, Head couldn't judge the length of a Bumrah delivery that was pitched slightly fuller than what the batter expected. He shouldered his arms trusting the bounce but the 66.2 overs old Kookaburra nipped back to clip the off-ball.

In the next over, he removed an out-of-form Mitchell Marsh (4), having got Usman Khawaja (57 off 121 balls) with the half-tracker in the post-lunch session.

The first two sessions, however, belonged to Australia with senior players Khawaja, Marnus Labuschagne (72 off 145 balls) and Steve Smith (68 batting, 111 balls) scoring half-centuries.

The final session was all about Bumrah magic.

The Indian spearhead didn't let the hosts completely walk away with the game which they threatened to do at one stage. He now



has 24 wickets in the series.

With Mohammed Siraj (0/69 in 15 overs) off-colour, Bumrah didn't have much support save off-spinner Washington Sundar (1/37 in 12 overs), who bowled a containing line.

Akash Deep (1/59 in 19 overs) though got Alex Carey with the second new ball at the fag end of the day.

Even Ravindra Jadeja (1/54 in 14 overs) leaked runs despite getting Konstas out and Nitish Reddy, the batting all-rounder, was only used before the second new ball was taken.

Sam Jams at the G

The morning was owned by the precocious 19-year-old from New South Wales. Konstas didn't show any nerves during his scintillating knock, which comprised of two sixes off Bumrah.

He also didn't mind a good scrap with India's superstar Virat Kohli, whose shoulder brush with the 19-year-old led to a brief confrontation.

In fact, Bumrah was hit for a six for the first time in a Test since Cameron Green hit him for one back in 2021. The gap between Konstas' first six, which

was a lap scoop, and the one that Green hit three years ago was 4000 legal Test match deliveries.

After a conventional lap scoop for maximum, Konstas also hit a reverse lap scoop towards third man for another boundary. The second six was pummelled over mid-on.

The way he attacked the Indian bowling with gusto gave his veteran opening partner Khawaja a chance to get back to form with a patient half-century. But Khawaja would be really annoyed with himself as he couldn't time a pull shot off a Bumrah half-tracker, which went straight into KL Rahul's hands in the post-lunch session. The duo added 89 runs in such quick time that Labuschagne and last match's centurion Smith didn't need to show any urgency.

For Konstas, it all began with a few play and misses off Bumrah's opening over but as soon as the teenager got his first couple of runs, things changed dramatically.

The fearlessness of youth stood out on the big stage as Konstas pulled off the lap scoop against Bumrah before smash-

ing him over mid-on for another maximum.

The fans and experts alike were forced to think the last time Bumrah (1/50 in 15 overs) was hit for two sixes in his first spell of a Test match.

They couldn't because it never happened in a first spell. The stump mic caught Bumrah saying "Beginner's Luck" but Konstas seemed to have enough wares to answer his probing queries. And it was laced with a lot of spunk as he got into a verbal duel with Kohli after their shoulders brushed while crossing each other. He often shuffled towards leg-stump to make room and on one occasion, crunched Bumrah past cover.

Mohammed Siraj was welcomed into the attack with a loud round of boos as he sledged the youngster due to his unconventional hitting style.

In all, Konstas hit six fours apart from the two maximums.

Only Akash bowled a good channel among the pacers as Siraj was guilty of going too full or too short.

As Australia scored at more than a fair clip, skipper Rohit Sharma had to introduce Ravindra Jadeja (1/33 in 11 overs) in the 16th over to at least stem the flow of runs before it went out of hand. The decision did pay dividends as the seasoned spinner got an arm ball to skid through with the angle to trap Konstas in front.

Khawaja and Labuschagne then added 65 for the second wicket with the Pakistan-born opener hitting Akash for a couple of boundaries to complete his first fifty of the series.

## Kohli, Konstas involved in heated exchange; debutant says Indian star accidentally bumped into him



MELBOURNE, Dec 26 (Agencies): Virat Kohli and Australian youngster Sam Konstas were on Thursday involved in a physical altercation as tempers flared on the first day of the fourth Test here but the 19-year-old home debutant played down the incident, saying the Indian superstar accidentally bumped into him.

The brief showdown took place after the completion of the 10th over of the Australian innings when the players were crossing over.

Kohli and Konstas bumped shoulders while moving across the pitch.

Both players quickly turned around to glance at each other and engage in a heated exchange of words with Konstas' teammate Usman Khawaja stepping in to separate them.

The on-field umpires also had a word with the two.

Speaking to reporters after stumps, Konstas said Kohli bumped into him and it wasn't delib-

erate.

"Virat Kohli accidentally bumped into me, that's cricket and can happen with tension," said the teenager.

"I think the emotions got to both of us," Konstas had told 'Channel 7' during the second session. I didn't quite realise, I was doing my gloves, then a little shoulder charge, but it happens in cricket," he added.

Konstas, who was batting on 27 at the time, went on to hit Jasprit Bumrah for two boundaries and a six in the next over. The 19-year-old scored a stunning fifty on debut before Ravindra Jadeja trapped him leg before wicket. Konstas might have dismissed it as routine but former Australian skipper Ricky Ponting blamed Kohli for instigating the exchange.

Oz media says Kohli could face disciplinary action

Konstas might have dismissed it as routine but former Australian skipper Ricky Ponting blamed Kohli for instigating the exchange.

He went to the extent of saying that Kohli could face disciplinary action for it.

"Have a look where Virat walks. Virat's walked one whole pitch over to his right and instigated that confrontation. No doubt in my mind whatsoever," Ponting said on Channel 7 while watching the replay of the incident.

"I have no doubt that the umpires and the referee will have a good look at that. Fielders should be nowhere near the batsman at that stage. It looked to me that Konstas looked up really late, wouldn't even know anyone is in front of him. That man on-screen there (Kohli) might have a few questions to answer," Ponting added.

Match referee Andy Pycroft is certain to review the incident, according to a report in cricket.com.au.

The ICC's Code of Conduct states that "any form of inappropriate physical contact is prohibited in cricket. Without limitation, players will breach this regulation if they deliberately, recklessly and/or negligently walk or run into or shoulder another player or umpire".

A Level 1 offence would likely mean a match fee fine. However, Level 2 offences carry a penalty of three to four demerit points. Four demerit points would lead to a suspension of one Test.

## India pacer Shikha Pandey signs for Canterbury Magicians for New Zealand Super Smash

CANTERBURY, Dec 26 (Agencies): Indian fast bowler Shikha Pandey is set to play for Canterbury Magicians in the Women's Super Smash after signing a deal with them. On Thursday, December 26, Canterbury dropped in a statement where they confirmed the signing of the 35-year-old.

"Indian cricketer, Shikha Pandey is SIGNED with our Canterbury Magicians for our 2024/25 Super Smash campaign! We are super excited to see her in action over the next while; this is something you won't want to miss out on seeing!" Canterbury wrote.

Pandey also showed her excitement and wrote, "Massively excited".

The Magicians are scheduled to start their campaign on Friday, December 27 against Otago Sparks at the Molyneux Park in Alexandra.

Shikha Pandey shining in WBBL Earlier this year, Pandey made her present felt while playing for the Brisbane Heat in the Women's Big Bash League (WBBL). In 12 matches, the right-arm fast bowler picked up 12 wickets at an economy rate of 6.90 with her



best figures of 2/14. On the back of her spells, the Heat finished second in the points table after the league stage with 14 points thanks to wins in seven out of 10 matches.

The Heat also made their way through to the final where the Melbourne Renegades beat them by seven runs (DLS Method) at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Earlier this year, Pandey also plied her trade for the Trinbago Knight Riders in the Women's Caribbean Premier League (WCPL). Jemimah Rodrigues was also a part of the team while Jhulan Goswami was TKR's mentor.

In three Tests, 55 ODIs and 62 T20Is for India, Pandey picked up 122 wickets with two four-wicket hauls to her name.

## Dropping of Shubman Gill in Boxing Day Test baffles fans, experts

MELBOURNE, Dec 26 (Agencies): Shubman Gill fans were in for a shock on Thursday morning when the classy right-hand batter was dropped from the Boxing Day Test in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy on Thursday.

Skipper Rohit Sharma confirmed at the toss that Gill would miss out on, with all-rounder Washington Sundar making it to the playing XI.

The 25-year-old has struggled on this tour with scores of 1, 28 and 31 in the series at an average of 20. The Punjab opener missed the series opener in Perth due to a finger injury.

Gill's exclusion can be explained on three



counts: team's unsettled batting order, skipper choosing an allrounder instead of a specialist batsman to suit the playing conditions, and Gill's inability to get big scores.

He had posted 45 and 35\* in the last Boxing Day Test India played at the MCG in 2020.

Gill's top score in the last five away Tests is

36.

Gill, who has an average of 38.76 in eight matches Down Under, has struggled to get big scores in the series but so have the big guns. He currently has the second best strike rate after KL Rahul in the Indian team on the tour.

The visitors chose to go in with allrounder Washington Sundar on

a tricky Melbourne pitch with Nitish Reddy and Akash Deep holding on to their places in the side.

The Indian team management decision meant that the team plays with five designated batters and six bowling options, including two tweakers, in the series for the first time.

The dropping of Gill, who averages 35.76 in 31 Tests, from the playing XI became a matter of discussion among the Indian fans, commentators and experts.

Former India batter Sanjay Manjrekar posted on X, "Strange selection of the playing XI.

On a non-turning pitch, the change made

neither strengthens the bowling much nor the batting. Gill dropped, is harsh!"

Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar said, "Dropping Gill is baffling. He's the kind of player who can win you matches even when out of form."

Former India allrounder Irfan Pathan said. "If I were part of the Indian dressing room, I would have told Gautam Gambhir to continue with Gill.

He hasn't done anything wrong and has the second best strike rate after KL Rahul. He was phenomenal with the bat in the last Test series. He played well over here. I would have liked to see the same playing XI."

## 13-year wait for World Cup ends before rare loss at home triggers transition talk

NEW DELHI, Dec 26 (Agencies): The monkey was finally off India's back in a roller-coaster 2024 when the financial giants of international cricket ended a 13-year wait for a world title, lost a rare Test series at home and dealt with transition triggered by both expected and unexpected retirements by the stalwarts of the game.

There was plenty of action over the last 12 months that kept the loyal Indian fan interested.

World Cup triumph; T20 farewell to Rohit and Kohli

The Indian cricket team and its unparalleled fan base were desperate

for an ICC trophy after repeatedly faltering in the knock-out stages over the past decade, most recently in the ODI World Cup final at home last year.

The trophy finally came home after Rohit Sharma and Co. played a near perfect tournament to become the T20 World Cup champions in the USA and the Caribbean.

India's clarity of thought throughout the one-month long event was remarkable and with a little bit of luck on their side, especially in the final at Barbados, they were able to go the distance.

On undercooked pitches in New York, they

were pace heavy before unleashing their trump card Kuldeep Yadav from the Super 8 stage of the tournament.

India picked as many as four spinners in the squad but played three in Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel and Kuldeep.

With Jadeja not getting to do much with both bat and ball, Axar came of age in the competition producing match-winning performances with both and ball.

The pace duo of Jasprit Bumrah and Arshdeep Singh also played their part to perfection, collecting 15 and 17 wickets respectively.

In the batting department, Rohit led from the front with a fear-

less approach that demoralised opposition attacks. His opening partner Kohli was not able to make the contributions that were expected out of him but the superstar came up with an innings of immense substance when it mattered the most -- his not-so-fluent 76 of 59 balls kept India in the final after a poor start.

The contributions from all-rounder Hardik Pandya, future captain Suryakumar Yadav and Rishabh Pant, playing his first international event following his comeback from a life-threatening car accident, were also noteworthy. It was also a fitting fare-

well for head coach Rahul Dravid, whose tenure drew to a close.

Change of guard; Surya's much-deserved elevation

With Rohit calling it a day, it was expected that Hardik will lead the T20 side into the transition phase, having captained the side in the former's absence.

However, Dravid's successor Gautam Gambhir had a different line of thinking as he played a major hand in elevating India's best T20 batter Suryakumar to the leadership position ahead of the series in Sri Lanka.

To be fair to Suryakumar, the team has ticked all the boxes since he took over, also witness-

ing the rise of Tilak Verma and rebirth of the likes of Sanju Samson and Varun Chakaravarty.

India hit rock bottom against Kiwis

While India moved on from the mighty duo of Rohit and Kohli in the shortest format rather quickly, the same is unlikely in the Test team.

The chatter around the future of senior players in the Test team has gained momentum after India's first whitewash at home in a three-match series and more recently, the sudden retirement of premier off-spinner R Ashwin.

India's loss to New Zealand in their own backyard was easily

one of the most embarrassing outcomes for the team in Test cricket over the past decade.

Jay Shah becomes youngest ICC chairman India is the engine of the global game and its influence on the sport increased further with the elevation of Jay Shah as ICC chairman, making him the fifth from the country at the helm of the governing body after Jagmohan Dalmiya, Sharad Pawar, N Srinivasan and Shankar Manohar.

Shah took over in early December and has already made his presence felt by ending the deadlock over the hosting of the Champi-

ons Trophy in Pakistan by ensuring consensus for a reciprocal hybrid model in which India will not be required to travel across the border for any ICC event till 2028.

Women's cricket underperforms Amid all the drama in men's cricket, women's cricket continued to be relatively stagnant in terms of performance with ODI and T20 debacles in Australia along with an early exit from the T20 World Cup being the talking points.

However, the team did manage to log its first home series triumph at home in five years by beating the West Indies in a T20 showdown.

# GGM Science College felicitates students for outstanding performance in LEAD Mohatsav

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: GGM Science College celebrated a moment of pride as Principal Prof. (Dr.) Romesh Kumar Gupta felicitated students who brought laurels to the institution at the recently concluded Mohatsav, organized by the Ladakh Jammu and Kashmir Economic Growth and Development Dialogue (LEAD).

In a grand event celebrating the rich art, culture, and traditions of different regions, two talented students of the College, Maithly and Simran Jamwal, secured third positions in the Dance Category. Their outstand-



ing performance showcased not only their exceptional talent but also the cultural heritage of the region, earning them applause.

While interacting with the students, Principal Prof. (Dr.) Romesh Kumar Gupta extend-

ed his heartfelt congratulations to both Maithly and Simran Jamwal for their commendable achievement.

He remarked that the success of students in this prestigious event is a testament to their

hard work, dedication, and passion. It also highlights the creative talent nurtured at GGM Science College. The College remains committed to supporting and encouraging students to excel in academics, arts, and beyond. Such achievements inspire others to follow in your footsteps and bring glory to the institution he further added in his message to the winning students. This recognition reaffirms GGM Science College's commitment to holistic education, fostering talent across all domains, and celebrating the achievements of its students on regional, national, and international platforms.

# J&K To Receive 24x7 Electricity After 100% Metering, Says Cm Omar Abdullah

SRINAGAR, Dec 26 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir will have uninterrupted electricity once 100% metering is achieved, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said on Thursday. Addressing the issue of unscheduled power cuts, Omar, acknowledged the significant strain on the system caused by excessive and unauthorized electricity usage.

"There are people who have agreements for using power for four bulbs but end up consuming electricity equivalent to four heaters. This puts a lot of pressure on the system," the Chief Minister told reporters here while urging people to cooperate with authorities in streamlining power consumption.

The harsh winter has added to the region's

woes, with frozen water pipes compounding the difficulties faced by the population. He expressed hope for snowfall, which would improve weather conditions and ease some challenges.

"We are working hard to resolve all problems, but some issues will persist until statehood is restored," he added, highlighting the ongoing challenges of governance in the Union Territory.

# Keshav Chopra meets DIG UR Range, SSP Udhampur



## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: Prominent social activist and Chairman of Samvedna Society, Keshav Chopra, recently met with Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Udhampur-Reasi Range, Rayees Mohammad Bhat, IPS, and Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Udhampur, Amod Nagpure, IPS. During the meeting, Keshav discussed various issues concerning the welfare of society and commended the efforts of the district police in maintaining law and order.

Keshav Chopra praised DIG Rayees Mohammad Bhat for his people-friendly approach to policing. He lauded the DIG's leadership, under which several drug ped-

dlers and notorious criminals have been apprehended. In response, DIG Bhat emphasized the J&K Police's commitment to serving the community and acknowledged the commendable work done by Samvedna Society in uplifting the common man and addressing social issues.

SSP Amod Nagpure highlighted the Udhampur Police's 24/7 dedication to serving the public and elaborated on their initiatives to combat the growing menace of drug abuse. He shared details about various awareness campaigns and events organized to educate the youth about the dangers of substance misuse. SSP Nagpure also appreciated the support of civil society and NGOs like Samvedna in spreading awareness and assisting the police in eradicating crime.

Later, Keshav Chopra met with Station House Officer (SHO) Udhampur, Inspector Raghuraj Singh, to recognize his contributions to maintaining peace and order in the area. Keshav felicitated the SHO for his dedication and exemplary service to the community.

The meeting underscored the importance of collaboration between law enforcement agencies and social organizations like Samvedna Society. This partnership aims to create a safer and drug-free environment in Udhampur, ensuring the well-being of its residents.

# Popcorn due to sweetness but garlic unnecessarily expensive: Shiv Sena

'Dal Saadi, Tadka, Makhani' escaped eyes of Gabbar Singh Tax: Sahni



## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu-Kashmir unit has strongly criticized the decision to classify caramelized popcorn as 'sweets' and impose 18% GST.

Along with this, while cornering the government on the unnecessary rise in the price of garlic, it has advised to work

on policies to provide relief to the public.

In a press release issued from the party's state central office, state chief Manish Sahni said that the burden of tax called Gabbar Singh is continuously increasing on the people struggling with inflation.

Caramelized popcorn has been classified as 'sweets' and 18% GST has been imposed on it. On the other hand, despite being bitter, garlic is going out of the reach of the common people. Sahni said that the common people struggling with unemployment and inflation were hoping for relief on health and other schemes from the GST meeting.

But the decision of three different tax slabs on common food items like popcorn has proved that the government is not concerned with the common and poor people, his focus to fill its own and business friends' coffers. Sahni said sarcastically that it is surprising how Dal 'Saadi, Tadka, Makhani' escaped the eyes of Gabbar Singh Tax.

# Shiv Sena demands not to destroy Vaishnodevi Yatra structure

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: Shiv Sena (UBT) Jammu-Kashmir unit chief Manish Sahni has strongly condemned the lathicharge on the Sangharsh Samiti members protested against the ropeway and the police taking some leaders into custody, demanded not to destroy the Shri Mata Vaishnodevi Yatra structure under the pretext of ropeway.

According to the press release issued from the party's state central office, state chief Manish Sahni

said that the ropeway project is destroying the Shri Mata Vaishnodevi Yatra structure and encouraging half-hearted travel. Sahni said that the devotees taking advantage of this facility will not be able to get the privilege of visiting the Holy Banganga, Charan Paduka, Ardhkunwari etc.

At the same time, the ropeway project is hanging the sword of unemployment on those who provide services with horses, pithus as well as the shopkeepers of the traditional route.

# FICCI FLO JKL launches WeFLO: first all-women job portal for Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh, powered by MIET

## Top News Report

JAMMU, Dec 26: FICCI FLO JKL Chapter launched WeFLO.in, the region's first dedicated all-women job portal, designed to empower the women of Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh. Powered by the Model Institute of Engineering and Technology (MIET), this pioneering initiative was launched at a grand event attended by esteemed dignitaries and stakeholders.

The occasion was graced by Sakina Itoo, Minister of Education, Health & Medical Education & Social Welfare, Jammu & Kashmir, as the Chief Guest. Her presence emphasized the critical importance of women's participation in the workforce.

Adding to the event's significance, Joyshree Das Verma, National President of FICCI FLO, joined as Guest of Honour, and Ms. Reshma Patel, National Head of Digital Literacy Initiative, FICCI FLO and Prof. Ankur Gupta, Director MIET attended as Distinguished Guests. Senior government officials and dignitaries also extended their support to this landmark initiative as Special Guests, including Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, J&K, Khalid Jahangir, MD JKTPO, Arun K Manhas, Director, Industries & Commerce Jammu, Rajinder K Sharma, Director, JKEDI, G Velladurai, Jt. Director, MSME J&K UT, Ladakh among others.

In her welcome address, Ruchika Gupta, Chairperson of FICCI FLO JKL, highlighted the portal's transformative

potential in bridging the gap between talented women and meaningful employment opportunities. She expressed heartfelt gratitude to Minister Sakina Itoo for her inspiring leadership and for officially inaugurating the portal. Gratitude was also extended to Joyshree Das Verma for her steadfast dedication to advancing women's empowerment in business and industry, which has shaped meaningful projects such as this portal.

In her presidential address, Minister, Sakina Itoo congratulated FICCI FLO JKL and MIET for their pioneering initiative and trusted that women in J&K shall find suitable avenues for employment and career opportunities through the portal.

She felt that all stakeholders need to join hands to accelerate the socio-economic growth of the J&K region. She expressed confidence in the ability of the youth of the region and foresaw the region leapfrogging ahead on the path to peace, progress and development.

Joyshree Das Verma, National Head, FICCI FLO expressed delight on her maiden visit to Jammu and extended compliments to the JKL chapter for thinking out-of-the-box to launch weflo.in, an impactful initiative with far reaching implications. She felt that the time for the J&K region to shine on the national stage had arrived and was impressed with the development work taking place in all sectors.

WeFLO.in, built with the technical expertise of MIET under the leadership of its Director,

Prof. Ankur Gupta, aims to connect women job seekers with progressive employers committed to diversity and inclusivity. Prof. Gupta and his team played an instrumental role in conceptualizing and developing the platform, generously contributing financial and technical resources.

The launch also saw the felicitation of key contributors and collaborators who played a pivotal role in making this project a reality. Heads of academic institutions were recognized for their efforts in enrolling women students on the portal, ensuring a seamless connection between education and employment. Academic partners facilitated were Prof. SP Saraswat, Principal, GCW Gandhi Nagar, Prof. Ravinder Tickoo, Principal, GCW Parade, Prof. Pragya Khanna, Principal, GLDM GDC Hiranagar, Prof. Twinkle Suri, Principal, SPPND GDC Samba.

Other key dignitaries present included Priya Sethi, Former Minister BJP, Dr. Renu Gupta, Chairperson MIER, Ranjeet Kalra, Member J&K UT Sports Council, Sidharth Dogra, Director Jammu Links to name a few.

The event also saw in full support esteemed FLO JKL representatives including Varuna Anand, Immediate Past Chairperson, core team and FLO members.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Arti Choudhary, Senior Vice Chairperson of FICCI FLO JKL, followed by a networking session over tea, leaving attendees inspired to champion this noble cause.



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