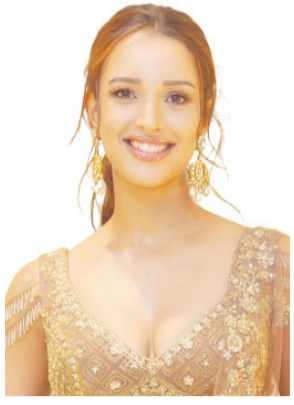


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BRIEFLY

Dr Raghav Langar among seven officers promoted to Secy Grade in Uttarakhand



JAMMU, Jan 1 (Agencies): Dr Raghav Langar, who served in various key positions in Jammu and Kashmir, including as Divisional Commissioner Jammu, has been promoted to the Super Time Scale (Secretary Grade) in Uttarakhand along with six other officers.

The other officers elevated to this grade are Savin Bansal, C. Ravi Shankar, Jyoti Yadav, Yugal Kishore Pant, Ranveer Singh Chauhan, and Dheeraj Singh Garbiyal.

ATF price cut by 1.5 pc, commercial LPG rates down Rs 14.5 per cylinder

NEW DELHI, Jan 1 (Agencies): The price of Jet fuel, or ATF, on Wednesday was reduced by 1.5 per cent and rates of commercial LPG that is used in hotels and restaurants was cut by Rs 14.5 per 19-kg cylinder in the monthly revision done in line with benchmark international prices.

The aviation turbine fuel (ATF) price was reduced by Rs 1,401.37 per kilolitre, or 1.52 per cent, to Rs 90,455.47 per kl in the national capital — home to one of the busiest airports in the country, according to state-owned fuel retailers.

The rate cut follows two rounds of monthly increases. Prices were increased by Rs 2,941.5 per kl (3.3 per cent) on November 1, and by Rs 1,318.12 per kl (1.45 per cent) on December 1, 2024.

The ATF price in Mumbai has been reduced to Rs 84,511.93 on Wednesday, from Rs 85,861.02 per kl previously.

Oil firms also reduced the price of commercial LPG by Rs 14.5 to Rs 1,804 per 19-kg cylinder in the national capital.

This is the first reduction in the prices after fifth straight monthly

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J&K holds first Assembly Polls since Article 370 repeal, gets elected Govt after six years in 2024

SRINAGAR, Jan 1 (Agencies): Jammu and Kashmir got an elected government after six years in 2024 but statehood remained elusive as a hybrid model of governance kept hampering full restoration of democratic rule.

The assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir — held after a gap of 10 years — had many firsts associated with them.

The polls were the first since the abrogation of Article 370, the first for Jammu and Kashmir in its Union Territory set up, and the first since the outbreak of militancy in which cadre of the banned Jamaat-e-Islami, a socio-religious party, participated. It was also the first election in which one party almost managed a majority on its own, with the National Conference — which ran a campaign on the restoration of special status



to Jammu and Kashmir — won 42 seats in the 90-member House.

National Conference leader Omar Abdullah became only the fourth Jammu and Kashmir leader to be sworn in as chief minister for a second term. The other three leaders to achieve the feat were his grandfather Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, father Farooq Abdullah, and Mufti Mohammad

Sayed of the People's Democratic Party (PDP).

The BJP emerged as the second largest party and cemented its vote bank in Jammu, bagging 29 of the region's 43 seats. However, the saffron party yet again drew a blank in the valley.

The Congress, which was hoping to improve its performance in the Jammu region, drew a blank in Hindu-dominated areas. The party

won six seats — five from the valley and one from Muslim-dominated Rajouri.

The PDP fared the worst among the mainstream parties, managing just three seats against the 28 it won in the 2014 polls.

The launch of former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti's daughter Iltija Mufti into electoral politics from the family's Bijbehara bastion also

failed.

In Jammu, the BJP's then-Jammu and Kashmir unit president Ravinder Raina — once tipped to be the saffron party's chief ministerial candidate — was humbled in the polls.

The assembly elections witnessed massive participation even in areas known for poll boycotts. Several former separatist leaders or their relatives contested the elections.

The resentment against the reading down of Article 370 favoured the National Conference as its tally of seats rose almost three times against the 15 it had in 2014.

Sticking to its electoral promises, the National Conference government passed a resolution for restoration of statehood in the first Cabinet meeting and followed it with a momentous assembly

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Security Forces recover drone in Akhnoor, Probe launched



JAMMU, Jan 1 (Agencies): Security forces seized a suspicious drone in the village Gadkhal, located near the Pargwal sector of Akhnoor Jammu.

Quoting official, that the drone was intercepted during routine surveillance operations, prompting immediate action by security forces and intelligence agencies.

"An investigation has been launched to determine the origin, purpose, and potential payload of the drone."

"We are thoroughly examining the drone to ascertain its specifications and any possible threat it might pose," said a security official.

18 protesters detained in stir against Katra ropeway released

JAMMU, Dec 31 (Agencies): Eighteen people detained by the police during protests against the ropeway project in Katra, the base camp of the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, were released, sparking overnight celebrations in the holy town.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration announced the release of the detainees on Tuesday night and constituted a four-member committee to hold talks with the protesters. Work on the ropeway would be suspended till the committee holds talks with the protesters.

"Eighteen detained individuals, including some leaders, were released around 1 am

from Reasi and Udhampur jails. They arrived in Katra to jubilant celebrations, where hundreds of people welcomed them," said a spokesperson for the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Sangharsh Samiti.

He added that the reopening of shops and businesses was underway, and the government-formed committee would hold discussions over the ropeway project.

"The government has succumbed to our hunger strike. They have released our leaders, marking the first step towards our victory. We will continue our fight to shelve the ropeway project," said a youth participating in the hunger strike.

Former minister and BJP MP Jugal Kishore Sharma welcomed the government's decision and said, "It is a positive step that all 18 detainees have been released."

Amid chants of "Jai Mata Di", hundreds of residents in Katra danced to the beat of drums as they welcomed the released protesters.

"This is a victory for the people of Katra, who stood united with us," said Bhupinder Singh, a Samiti leader who was among those released. Jammu Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar said detailed discussions were held with civil society members. "It was decided that all detainees would be

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Western disturbance set to bring fresh snowfall in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, Jan 1 (Agencies): Cold conditions have tightened their grip on Kashmir, with the valley bracing for fresh spells of snowfall as two back-to-back western disturbances are likely to affect the region starting Wednesday, officials said.

According to the Meteorological Department, a feeble western disturbance is expected to affect Jammu and Kashmir from January 1-2, with light snow at scattered places from Wednesday evening to Thursday morning.

From January 3-6, a moderate western disturbance is expected to bring light to moderate snow to most places in the state, with peak activity from January 4-6. The MeT Office added that there is a possibility of heavy snow at a few places in the higher reaches during the second spell.

Meanwhile, the night temperature dropped at most places in Kashmir as cold conditions tightened their grip on the valley.

Gulmarg, a tourist resort town known for

skiing activities in north Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 8.8 degrees Celsius, up from the previous night's minus 11.5 degrees Celsius, the Met Department said. Gulmarg was the coldest recorded place in the valley.

Pahalgam, one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath Yatra in south Kashmir, registered a minimum of minus 7.6 degrees Celsius, slightly up from minus 8.4 degrees Celsius, it said.

In Srinagar, the

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JKHARA delegation meets Chief Secretary

Tourism is backbone of J&K's Economy'; calls for immediate reforms to revolutionize tourism sector: Babar Chowdhary

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 1: A high-level delegation of the Jammu and Kashmir Hotels and Restaurants Association (JKHARA), led by its President Babar Chowdhary, held a pivotal meeting with Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo at the Civil Secretariat in Srinagar.

The discussion centered on urgent issues and reforms needed to rejuvenate the hotel and restaurant industry in Jammu and Kashmir.

The delegation, comprising Senior Vice President Dr. Lateef Ahmad Lone, Junior Vice President Sheikh Imran, Secretary General Ayesha Saleem and Joint Secretary Mohammad Shafi Beigh, presented a comprehensive agenda for the tourism sector's revival.

President Babar Chowdhary stressed the importance of reinstating the industrial status for the tourism sector to allow hotels and restaurants to benefit from subsidized power tariffs. He also advocated for the revival of financial benefits under the 2018-19 scheme, which would strengthen the sector and drive its growth.

Chowdhary called for streamlined procedures to ease operations for existing businesses, attract new investments, and create employment opportunities for J&K's



youth.

The delegation welcomed the J&K Bank's One-Time Settlement (OTS) scheme for NPA account holders but requested an extension of the repayment tenure from three months to two years. Additionally, it was suggested that the current OTS scheme, which is presently capped at ₹5 crore, should be expanded to include accounts up to ₹15 crore.

A proposal to extend leases for hotels, restaurants, and guest houses was also made, along with a suggestion to set up modern tent accommodations to cater to the anticipated growth in tourism due to new train services.

Babar Chowdhary urged the J&K government to construct additional public washrooms at tourist destination sites.

Senior Vice President Dr. Lateef Ahmad Lone

highlighted challenges faced by older hotels, restaurants and guest house establishments, urging easier registration renewals based on previous rules. He also emphasized the need for clarity in obtaining No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from departments like LCMA and Tourism department. Dr. Lone stressed the importance of streamlining these processes to promote hassle-free operations and support the hospitality sector's growth. He called for a collaborative approach between stakeholders and authorities to address these long-standing issues effectively.

Junior Vice President Sheikh Imran has called for significant reforms in the registration and renewal processes for the J&K tourism industry, highlighting the pressing challenges faced by hoteliers and restaurants. He

proposed extending the validity of registration certificates to a minimum of 10 years, similar like to passports and driving licenses. This will reduce the burden and ensure a more efficient operational environment for the hospitality sector.

Imran further emphasized the need to streamline the renewal process by eliminating redundant requirements, such as obtaining No Objection Certificates (NOCs) and undertaking affidavits from judicial magistrates annually. These repetitive and often cumbersome procedures, he noted, add unnecessary delays and financial strain on hotel and restaurant owners, many of whom are already grappling with the economic impact and natural calamities in the region.

He also pointed out that these reforms are essential to boost invest-

tor confidence and create a conducive environment for the growth of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir. Simplifying regulatory frameworks.

Imran called upon policymakers to engage in meaningful dialogue with stakeholders and introduce reforms that reflect the ground realities of the industry.

Secretary General Ayesha Saleem advocated for renovating old budget hotels and guest houses in Srinagar's Civil Lines and Downtown areas. She emphasized the need to permit tent facilities at tourist spots to cater to budget travelers in the region.

Joint Secretary Mohammad Shafi Beigh raised concerns about the steep hike in sanitation fees imposed by the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC). He called for a rationalized and affordable fee structure.

Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo assured the delegation that their concerns and suggestions would be addressed. He expressed his commitment to resolving grievances and promised to evaluate the proposed reforms for the tourism and hospitality sector.

The JKHARA delegation extended their gratitude to the Chief Secretary for his time and attention, particularly during the challenging winter season.



Devotees Throng Bawe Wali Mata (KALIKA) Temple To Seek New Year Blessings in Jammu on Wednesday. PicByAmanSharma

2010 batch IAS officer to face CBI trial in Gun license case

JAMMU, Jan 1 (Agencies): The Government of India has accorded sanction for prosecution of Jammu and Kashmir Revenue Secretary Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, for involvement in the infamous arms licence scam.

In a communique, The Department of Personnel & Training, Ministry of Personnel & Training, Government has conveyed to Vishal Sharma, Deputy Solicitor General of India, that it has accorded sanction for prosecution of Kumar Rajeev Ranjan in the case registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in 2018.

"I am directed to refer to your email dated 23.12.2024 on the subject mentioned above and to say that an order, conveying grant of sanction against Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, IAS, in CBI RCCHGO51201850007, under section 6 of Prevention of Corruption Act, 2006(1949 A.D)for alleged offences

under section 5(2) PC Act, 2006(1949 A.D.) has already been issued on 28.11.2004 with the approval of the competent authority," reads the communique.

It is worthwhile to mention that a huge arms licence scam involving deputy magistrates of Jammu & Kashmir was unearthed by the Rajasthan ATS in 2017.

The case was being probed by the J&K Police before then Governor NN Vohra handed over it to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The investigation revealed that arms licences in bulk were issued by the then deputy magistrates in J&K to non-residents on forged documents.

Between 2012 and 2016, deputy commissioners of various districts in J&K had fraudulently and illegally issued bulk arms licences in lieu of monetary consideration, the probe found.

Tourists enjoy New Year in snowy Gulmarg

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 1: Renowned tourist destination Gulmarg in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district attracted many visitors for New Year celebrations, offering them a memorable experience with its snow-covered scenery and winter charm.

Famous for its breathtaking views and adventure activities like skiing, snowboarding, and snowshoeing, Gulmarg was bustling with visitors despite no official events being organized.

News gathering agency KINS reported that the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Department had opted

for a low-key New Year due to the seven-day national mourning following the passing of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Deepika, a first-time visitor from Mumbai, described her joy at celebrating New Year in Gulmarg, calling it a dream come true. "It is truly a paradise.

This is my first time seeing snow, and I can't describe how magical it feels to be here. Celebrating the New Year in Gulmarg has been the best experience of my life," she said.

Manika, another tourist, echoed similar sentiments, marveling at the natural beauty of the region.

"Kashmir is indeed a paradise on earth. Gulmarg has been an incredible destination to start the New Year. We had so much fun," she told KINS.

The Gulmarg Gondola, one of the highest cable cars in the world, was a major draw for visitors, offering spectacular views of the snow-clad

mountains. Many tourists enjoyed the gondola ride, making it a highlight of their trip.

The influx of tourists has been a boon for locals involved in the tourism sector. Mustafa Gulam, a sledge and slide operator, expressed happiness over the turnout. "Many tourists came

for Christmas and New Year, and it has been great for our livelihood. Tourism here is thriving, and we hope it continues to grow," he said.

Local accommodations, including hotels, resorts, and guesthouses, were fully booked, and visitors indulged in the region's warm hospitality and unique

cuisine, adding to their experience.

Despite the absence of official celebrations, Gulmarg's natural beauty and winter activities made it a perfect destination for welcoming the New Year.

The joyful experiences of tourists and the support to local livelihoods have set a positive tone for the year ahead.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION GANDHI NAGAR JAMMU
e-mail : xenpwddivgandhinagar@gmail.com

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Short e-NIT No. DGN/93 of 2024-25 Dated 30-12-2024

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir e-tenders are invited on **percentage basis** from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Union Territory of J&K, CPWD, Railways, MES and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works :-

S. No	Name of Work	Name of Division	Advertised Cost (₹ in Lacs)	Cost of document (₹)	Earnest Money (₹)	Time Allowed for complete-on	Time and date of opening of tender	Class of Contractor
1	Up-gradation of Conference Hall at Additional Commissioner (A&E) 2nd Floor at Excise & Taxation Complex Rail Head Jammu (Under Capex Budget 2024-25)	PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar	42.63	600	85300 (2% of the Advertised Cost)	02 Months	(1200 Hrs) on or after 11-01-2025	"A" & "B" Class

Position of AAA :- Accorded by Commissioner State Taxes J&K vide order No. 103/Capex of 2024 dated 10-12-2024.

Position of TS :- Sanctioned by Superintending Engineer PWD (R&B) Circle South Jammu's order No. 179 of December 2024 dated 19-12-2024.

Project Authority :- Commissioner State Taxes J&K.

Major Head :- Under Capex Budget 2024-25.

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website <http://jktenders.gov.in> as per below schedule :

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	30-12-2024
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 30-12-2024 to 10-01-2025, 1800 Hrs
3	Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting	04-01-2025 at 1300 Hrs. in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar Jammu
4	Bid submission Start Date	30-12-2024
5	Bid Submission End Date	10-01-2025 upto 1800 Hrs
6	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	11-01-2025 on or after 1200 Hrs in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar Jammu
7	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of e-challan through Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date, e-NIT No. and name of work duly crediting to 0059 (Revenue) favoring Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar Jammu and upload the same i.e treasury challan/receipt, Earnest money/Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar Jammu. The CDR/FDR/BG shall be valid for 45 Days beyond the bid validity period. The original instruments in respect of cost of documents, EMD and relevant documents of L1 be submitted to the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Gandhi Nagar Jammu at the time of allotment.

2.

.. Sd ..
(Er. Rahat Gupta)
Executive Engineer
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EDITORIAL

New Year 2025: Time for New Beginnings

As we step into 2025, we are presented with the perfect opportunity to reflect on the year gone by and embrace the endless possibilities that lie ahead. New Year's Day has always been a moment for personal reflection, collective hope, and setting goals. It marks the end of one chapter and the beginning of another, offering a sense of renewal and a fresh start. Around the world, millions of people from different cultures, religions, and backgrounds celebrate the arrival of the new year in their own special way, but the common thread is always the same—a sense of optimism and excitement for what the future holds.

The arrival of the New Year brings with it a sense of renewal and hope. It is a blank canvas, waiting to be filled with new experiences, challenges, and accomplishments. The tradition of setting New Year's resolutions is a way for people to chart a course for the year ahead. These resolutions often revolve around self-improvement—be it adopting healthier habits, achieving career goals, traveling to new places, or simply being kinder to oneself and others.

The idea of starting fresh is deeply ingrained in human culture, and it can be a powerful motivator. Whether one believes in the concept of resolutions or not, the arrival of a new year often sparks a sense of possibility. It reminds us that we have the power to make changes, set new goals, and take proactive steps to create the life we desire.

For some, 2025 might symbolize the beginning of a new chapter in their personal or professional lives. It could be the year they start a new job, launch a business, or go back to school. For others, it might be a year focused on personal growth—learning new skills, developing healthier habits, or nurturing relationships. Whatever the goals, New Year's Day is a reminder that we are in control of our destiny and have the power to shape the year ahead.

While the past year may have had its share of difficulties, the New Year is a time to look ahead with hope and optimism. The world has faced numerous challenges in recent years, from political turmoil and economic instability to health crises and climate change. However, New Year's Day serves as a reminder that no matter the hardships, humanity continues to endure, adapt, and strive for a better future.

For many, 2025 holds the promise of recovery and healing. The global pandemic has reshaped the world in profound ways, but with the advent of new technologies, vaccines, and public health measures, there is hope for a brighter future. Communities are coming together to rebuild, economies are recovering, and individuals are finding strength in the face of adversity. The hope for peace, prosperity, and unity is ever-present as we step into the new year, knowing that we have the power to create a better world.

Moreover, New Year's Day brings with it a renewed sense of togetherness. It is a time when families and friends come together to celebrate, share their experiences, and support one another. It's a reminder that no matter how challenging the past year may have been, we are never alone. The sense of connection and solidarity that comes with the arrival of the new year is a powerful force that can help us overcome obstacles and find joy in the little things.

One of the most beautiful aspects of the New Year is the opportunity it provides to embrace change and growth. As we grow older, we evolve—our perspectives change, our priorities shift, and our values become clearer. The New Year is a time to embrace these changes, to welcome new opportunities, and to step out of our comfort zones. It's a time to be open to new experiences and to take risks that will lead to personal and professional growth.

For many, the New Year is also a time to focus on mental health and well-being. The pressures of modern life can often take a toll on our emotional and psychological state, but the start of a new year encourages us to prioritize self-care, mindfulness, and inner peace. Whether it's through meditation, therapy, or simply taking time for oneself, the New Year is a chance to commit to better mental health and well-being.

By:- Omkar Dattatray

At the 12Pm of December 31st, 2024, the universe steps into 2025 and we accord good bye to eventful and bountiful year 2024 and at the same time welcome 2025 with open arms and embrace it with happiness and pleasure with the resolve to be good and do good and continue our march to peace, development and progress. As the year 2024 comes to close and the sun shines on the New Year 2025, let us bade a good bye to the bygone year 2024 and welcome and embrace new year 2025 with hopes and expectations. India had a lot to be proud of in 2024. Every year the list of milestone achievements by Indian's grow longer but this time, it is really felt like an India was in the news for breaking a record almost every fortnight. It is in the fitness of things to throw light on the India's achievements in 2024 and list these in an unbiased manner and show the challenges of the new year 2025 as the new year is full of challenges and opportunities. 2024 was a breakthrough year, where promises began to take shape, and sustainability became the cornerstone of corporate strategies and global agendas. This was not merely about trends or social pressure. In fact 2024 saw a convergence of forces driving governments, businesses, and citizens towards tangible actions to tackle challenges in biodiversity, climate change, and social justice. And as we leave behind a year of achievements, 2025 promises to be the year of truth—the moment we will see whether the future we are envisioning can truly become a reality. 2024 marked two critical moments for our planet. COP16 on biodiversity held in Cali, and COP29 on climate change, hosted in Baku. Both events represented historic steps forward. COP 16 emphasized the urgency of preserving biodiversity, with an ambitious goal, protecting 30% of land and oceans by 2030. At COP29, the world addressed climate change with an unprecedented sense of responsibility. In the Indian context, it can be said, while 2024 has certainly been a year marked by moments of pain, it has also been one of remarkable achievements and hope. From space exploration to sporting triumphs, and domestic victories to environmental successes, India's resilience has been on full display. India's 2024 was not without its shadows, but the year was defined by extraordinary achievements—both on the global stage and within its borders. As 2024 draws to close, the world reflects on a

Alvida 2024 & Khushamadeed 2025

year marked by revolutions, protracted conflicts, assassination attempts, and even the elusive search for extraterrestrial life. For India, it was a year of intense contrasts—one where grief and joy coexisted, and where triumphs were tempered by deep sorrows. From the ongoing crisis in Manipur to the passing of national icons such as Dr Manmohan Singh, Ratan Tata and Ustad Zakir Hussain, the country bore witness to moments that left indelible marks on the national consciousness. Yet, amid these turbulent times, there were achievements that stood as beacons of hope and perseverance, offering a glimpse of a brighter future. Following is a reflection on the moments that gave the nation pride, hope, and a sense of collective strength. The ISRO opened the year with a bold stride into the unknown. On January 1, ISRO successfully launched the X-ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat), a mission dedicated to understanding cosmic phenomena through the polarization of X-rays. Developed in collaboration with Bengaluru's Ram Research Institute, the satellite's goal is to study pulsars, black holes, and active galactic nuclei, unraveling the mysteries of the universe. This launch symbolized India's continued ambitions in space exploration and research. The country's space program also soared throughout the year, as ISRO's Chandrayaan 3 mission—launched a year earlier—unveiled critical discoveries regarding the Moon's surface. New findings suggested that a liquid magma ocean once existed on the lunar surface, reinforcing India's position as a leader in space science. Furthermore, ISRO's Aditya-L1, India's first space-based solar observatory, completed its first successful orbit in July. Stationed at a distance of 1.5 million Km from Earth, Aditya-L1 aims to study the sun's radiation, heat and magnetic fields—a monumental step in India's scientific pursuits. 75th Republic Day exhibited a celebration of women's power. India's Republic Day celebrations in 2024 was significant not just for its scale but also for the historic participation of a 144-person tri-service women's contingent. For the first time, women soldiers, sailors, and airwomen from all branches of the Indian army marched together and in a display of strength, resilience, and unity. Their participation reflected India's growing recognition of women's vital role in nations defense and society. In a diplomatic win, India celebrated the return of eight Indian Navy veterans in February, who had been detained in Qatar on charges of espionage. Their release after years of imprisonment marked a major

victory for Indian diplomacy. The year gone by was a sporting year of glory. 2024 was a banner year for Indian sport, with victories that echoed far beyond the stadiums. One of the most memorable moments was India's performance at T20 World Cup, where the national cricket team, led by Rohit Sharma, claimed its second title. The year also saw India's athletes excel at the Paralympics. In a moment of pride, Avani Lekhara became the first Indian woman to win two medals at the Paralympic Games. One of the milestone achievements of India was the successful conduct of the general election to the 14th Lok Sabha and it was the biggest triumph of Indian democracy. In a significant development the state assembly elections were conducted after a gap of 10 long years and J&K got its democratic government and it added a feather in the cap of Indian democracy. The consecration of Lord Ram temple in Ajodhya on January 22, 2024 was a spectacular achievement of the country. December 2024 marked the 100th anniversary of the birth of Raj Kapoor, one of the most influential figures in the history of Indian cinema. The centenary celebration of the birth anniversary of the former PM Vajpayee on 25th December was also a significant development. India is the world's largest and the oldest civilization. It has the second largest population of scientists and engineers in the world. It is the world's largest democracy with rich culture and tradition having huge visions for the future. Eradication of Polio is the outstanding achievement of India. The last case of Polio was reported in January 2012 in West Bengal when a young girl got paralyzed by the disease. In March 2014 WHO certified India as the Polio-free region. The health and family welfare minister of India collected the certificate of the Polio-free status from WHO. All the achievements of year 2024 cannot be penned down here for paucity of space. We look with hope and expectation to year 2025 and it is hoped that the journey of peace, development and progress will continue in the new year 2025. New year will be dotted with prosperity and wellbeing for all. The year 2025 offers a window to look beyond elections unlike year 2024. In 2024, politics took a surprise turn in India, its immediate neighborhood, and in many countries around the world. The BJP bounced back to power in a spectacular fashion in the assembly elections in Haryana and Maharashtra. 2025 will perhaps be a year in which governance will take a centre stage. There are pressing challenges in economic front as

growth has slowed more than expected in the second quarter. Here is a look at five broad issues, trends, and developments that could shape the political discourse in India in 2025 and beyond—Deepening political bitterness. One message from 2024 Lok Sabha election was the people's preference for continuity with moderation. But both BJP and Congress seem to have consciously chosen to misread the mandate. Their political positions have hardened and they have taken their bitter rivalry into everyday politics. As, the year ended, ties between the ruling party and the opposition hit the nadir during parliament's winter session. The Supreme Court has called a halt, for now, to the rush of civil suits challenging the ownership and title of Muslim places of worship allegedly built over the ruins of existing Hindu temples. RSS Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat has said that after the construction of the Ram Temple in Ajodhya, raking up similar issues in new places was unacceptable. But it is unlikely that politics over mandir and masjid will cease in 2025. To maintain statuesque of all religious places and maintaining communal amity will be the biggest challenge for India. The major Assembly elections in 2025 will be a test for three major political brands—Nitish Kumar, Arvind Kejriwal and Narendra Modi. At least two contentious and polarizing Bills will be taken up by the Parliament in 2025—the constitution Amendment Bill to synchronize Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, and the Bill to regulate wakf properties. In 2025 the central government will intend to begin the delayed decadal Census exercise, the rhetoric over caste will get shriller. 2025 will be another year of massive change. AI Robotics, space travel, and healthcare breakthroughs suggest that the possibilities of this new year are limitless. In brief the year ahead will also be turbulent in many ways and let us hope that the sanity will prevail on the P5 and Putin as well as Zelensky and there will be peace in the world and it will be a better place for the mankind. Similarly global warming and climate change will be checkmated by the positive response of the international community and the nature will be saved for the future generations.

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

Winter Makeup Tips for Dry Skin

By:- Shahnaz Husain

As the winter chill sets in, women often find themselves grappling with the challenges of dry and flaky skin.

Dry skin is a major concern throughout the year, and the winters make matters more challenging.

Low humidity during winters, strips moisture from the skin, leaving it feeling parched and vulnerable. Indoor heating and hot water baths can further dry out your skin, while harsh winds cause irritation and sensitivity. It leads to dry patches or a rough texture, often accompanied by redness and irritation and your skin may start to show signs of dullness.

Winter skincare is all about hydration. Invest in nourishing products that keep your skin moisturised and shield it from the harsh elements.

The right makeup products, techniques and tools for dry skin in winter can enhance your skin's natural texture and give you a fresh, radiant finish.

1--Cleanse gently
Cleansing your face is a crucial step in your winter makeup routine.

The cold air makes your skin delicate, yearning for a gentle touch.

You can begin by using cream-based skincare cleanser to remove impurities from the skin, without stripping your skin off natural oils. It will help to slough off all kinds

of dirt and dead skin cells that may have built upon the surface of your skin.

Poorly cleansed skin doesn't allow makeup products to settle and blend in properly. Hence, you should prioritise cleansing in your winter makeup routine.

Start with a nourishing face wash because it suits all skin types. This will help remove impurities without stripping your skin of essential moisture. Follow up with a hydrating serum. It will provide your skin with an extra layer of moisture, making it a perfect base for makeup.

Use a hydrating cleanser twice a day to wipe off all dirt, oil, or makeup. For best results, use a mild scrub twice a week to slough off dead skin cells and unclog pores.

2--Hydrate your skin:

Winter air tends to be dry, leading to dehydration of the skin. Before applying any makeup, ensure that your skin is well-hydrated by using a nourishing cleansing balm and hydrating moisturiser suitable for your skin type. Incorporate serums, moisturizers, and face mists into your routine with hydrating ingredients like hyaluronic acid or glycerin. A moisturising serum containing hyaluronic acid may be used after using a mild cleanser. To get a smooth surface for makeup, seal in moisture with a thick moisturiser that is high in ceramides. Apply moisturizer right after you cleanse to lock in the moisture left on your skin.

Cleansing balms contain hydrating ingredients such as peptides and shea butter. These ingredients work to lock in moisture as they cleanse, preventing your skin from feeling stripped or tight. Drink plenty of water, soup, and juice, to maintain internal hydration, supporting your skin from within.

Using a hydrating primer is essential for dry skin in winter. It creates a barrier between your skin and makeup, preventing moisture loss. But make sure you apply it before your foundation. When you have dry skin, avoid ingredients such as salicylic acid, parabens, and alcohol. These ingredients can tend to dry out the skin.

3--- Exfoliate Your Skin-----

If you want healthy, smooth skin, exfoliation needs to be a part of your skincare routine to slough off dull skin. Increasing your exfoliation routine during the winter months will help your skincare products absorb deeper and work even harder—making them way more effective. Exfoliation also boosts blood circulation, facilitates collagen production and speeds up cell turnover, leaving your skin feeling fresher, clearer and brighter. However over-exfoliation can strip away your skin's natural oils and cause irritation. You really shouldn't be exceeding exfoliation twice per week using a gentle product like lactic acid to avoid over-drying or irritation. Regular exfoliation can help smooth the skin, though you'll

want to take care to choose the right exfoliation method. If you have sensitive or dry skin, use a gentle chemical exfoliator to avoid irritation or redness. For people with acne-prone or oily skin, it is best to opt for physical exfoliators that unclog your pores and cut through oil on your skin. However, avoid abrasive physical exfoliators.

Opt to exfoliate in the evenings because you are removing the top layer of skin, you are leaving your face immediately more vulnerable.

4--Lip Care----

Your lips seek attention: chapped lips are a common winter problem.

Even the most perfect appearance might be ruined by cracked lips.

Use creamy lipsticks with hydrating formulas that help keep your lips moisturized all day long. Be sure to apply a lip primer before adding colours to your pout.

Use lipstick that has natural ingredients and a nourishing formula for the lips. A natural lipstick will keep your lips moist and prevent chapping. Stay away from long-wearing matte finish lipsticks that very likely will dry your lips out and settle in the cracks of your lips. Instead, opt for a nutritious lip mask and leave it on all night. Apply a moisturising lip balm underneath your lipstick during the day. Select lipsticks with a satiny, creamy texture to maintain the suppleness and softness of your pout. Also, start exfoliating your lips gently using a lip scrub at least once a week.

2025 will witness India assuming critical role in Global Biotechnology revolution: Dr. Jitendra

Top News Report

JAMMU / NEW DELHI, Jan 1: On the first day of the New Year on Wednesday, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, gave an exclusive interview to Door-darshan News, in which he exuded confidence that the year 2025 will witness India assuming critical role in Global Biotechnology revolution and that India's 1st Biotechnology policy-BIO-E3 brought by Modi Govt 3.0 has already paved the way for it.

The Minister highlighted India's significant strides in biotechnology and the nation's growing global leadership in Biotechnology.

Reflecting on the past decade of progress under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Dr. Jitendra emphasized the pivotal role of biotechnology in India's future, particularly as the country continues to embrace innovation, technology-based interventions, and startups.

"Prime Minister Modi's vision has consistently prioritized innovation and technological advancement, driving India's evolution into a global biotechnology powerhouse," said Dr. Singh. He added that biotechnology is poised to be at the forefront of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, with India playing a central role.

Dr. Jitendra highlighted the newly launched BIO-E3 (Biotechnology



for Economy, Employment, and Environment) Policy, which was recently approved by the Union Cabinet under Prime Minister Modi's leadership. This forward-thinking policy marks a significant milestone for India's biotechnology sector, reinforcing its potential to shape the country's economy, employment landscape, and environmental sustainability in the years to come.

India's biotechnology sector has experienced extraordinary growth, skyrocketing from a \$10 billion industry in 2014 to over \$130 billion in 2024, with projections to reach \$300 billion by 2030.

As Dr. Singh pointed out, "India is not only a leader in biotechnology but is now at the center of a global biotech boom, which will foster innovation, create jobs, and strengthen environmental commitments."

The Minister also underscored the fact that India currently accounts for 60% of

global vaccine production and is home to the second-largest number of USFDA-approved manufacturing plants outside the United States. With growing investment opportunities across sectors such as Bio-Pharma, Bio-Agri, Bio-Industrial, Bio-Energy, Bio-Services, and Med-Tech, India is emerging as a global leader in biotechnology.

Dr. Jitendra further compared the ongoing "Bio-revolution" in India to the IT revolution driven by the West, highlighting that the country's rich natural and biodiversity resources are key to its biotechnology success. He also praised the efforts of Indian startups leveraging biotechnology to create innovative solutions such as non-human milk and other sustainable products.

The Union Minister recalled the launch of the Mission Suraksha initiative, which led to the development of indigenous DNA-based vaccines and the world's largest vaccination drive

during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2024, India's biotechnology sector has also seen notable achievements, such as the development of the world's first HPV vaccine and the breakthrough creation of the indigenous antibiotic 'Nafithromycin,' which has proven effective in treating respiratory diseases. Furthermore, the Department of Biotechnology has successfully developed a gene therapy experiment for Haemophilia.

Dr. Singh also commended the collaboration between 14 institutes that had previously operated in silos, emphasizing the importance of a "whole of Science, whole of Government, and whole of Nation" approach. He highlighted ongoing initiatives such as the Deep Sea Mission, which Prime Minister Modi has referenced on multiple occasions, and the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (NRF), which was passed in 2024 and is

set to foster innovation with a 60% contribution from the private sector. In 2024, the Indian government has already sanctioned 1000 crores to further accelerate innovation in biotechnology.

Additionally, Dr. Jitendra noted that India's leadership extends beyond biotechnology to other cutting-edge fields, such as quantum technology, where India has emerged as a global leader. He also celebrated the significant progress made in space exploration, revealing that an Indian-origin individual will soon be sent to the US Space Station, as part of a broader effort to position India at the forefront of space technology.

As Dr. Jitendra concluded, "In the past, India would often take cues from other countries in terms of technology and innovation. Today, times have changed. Other countries are now looking to India for guidance and inspiration. India is proud to be leading the way, particularly in areas such as quantum technology, where the country is making significant strides with the Quantum Mission."

India's remarkable advancements in biotechnology and other emerging technologies position it as a key player on the global stage, driving the future of innovation, sustainability, and economic growth.

Sadguru Madhuparamhans extends New Year wishes to all countrymen



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 1: Sadguru Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj of Sahib Bhandagi extended heartfelt New Year wishes to all the countrymen for 2025.

On this occasion, a grand Satsang was held in Ranjri, where artists from across the country showcased their talents. The event was marked by divine moments as Sahib Ji showered the congregation with the Amrit of Satsang, emphasizing the profound impact of meeting a Sadguru.

Sahib Ji shared an enlightening perspective, stating that while visiting countless pilgrimages may bring one a certain benefit, meeting a Sadguru bestows

unparalleled rewards. He illustrated this by saying that a pilgrimage grants one fruit, meeting a saint brings four fruits, but meeting a Sadguru offers infinite fruits in an instant.

This message stems from the idea that both positive and negative experiences can affect a person in an instant. For example, a person's emotions can be instantly influenced by what they see—whether it be an unpleasant sight that causes discomfort or a beautiful scene that brings joy. Similarly, the moment one encounters a true Sadguru, they are imbued with transformative power. It doesn't require time for the influence of a Sadguru to take effect; the change occurs in that

very moment. Sahib Ji further emphasized that just as certain painful deeds may lead to immediate consequences (such as the symbolic thorn of punishment), meeting a Sadguru serves as a remedy for the soul. Through the Guru's name, one's inner being is purified, and one's connection to divine wisdom deepens.

He urged everyone to visit the Guru as frequently as possible, comparing it to the beneficial impact of the rain of tears. Just as the rain nourishes, visiting the Guru and receiving his guidance brings spiritual nourishment and purification. Sahib Ji's words remind us that the blessings of a Sadguru are immediate, profound, and transformative.

KCPS bids farewell to Class XII students



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 1: KC Public School, Jammu organized a farewell ceremony 'KCPS-Khwaahish- E- Safar' for the outgoing batch of class XII at Hotel Taj Vivanta. Class XI students organized a glistening farewell party for their seniors and left no stone unturned to make the day most memorable and special for them. The event commenced with an instrumental bash and a melodious Farewell song.

Devoting the day to the years spent together with friends, teachers, and reminiscences of joyous moments, students of Class XI presented a rich array of cultural programs which included mesmerizing

solo, group and duet songs and a variety of foot-tapping hip-hop dances.

This was followed by a presentation of goodbye speeches where a few students from the outgoing batch took the stage to share their loving & cherished memories of their school days. However, the most awaited moment was the Title Ceremony in which students were presented with Mementos and their respective titles.

The icing on the top was the Talent Hunt which was judged by the faculty members on the following criteria which were Imagination, Creativity, Confidence, Presentation, Voice projection, and Crowd appeal.

The shortlisted 22 nominees competed to

win the coveted titles of Mr. & Ms. KC Juweel. The girls and boys came in their best attire to rock the event. Eddha Manhas was crowned as Ms. KC Juweel and Medhaj Pathania was crowned as Mr. KC Juweel.

Principal, KCPS, Amarendra Kumar Mishra appreciated the talent and creativity displayed by the students. He urged the children to carry the school's spirit high and wished them luck for their future endeavors.

Student Council managed the event under the guidance of Shobhna Sethi. The program ended with high tea. The students reminisced about their fulfilled days and it was an emotional moment as they said farewell to their alma mater.

Omar Abdullah Govt has failed on every front: BJP

Top News Report

SRINAGAR, Jan 1 (Agencies): The BJP on Wednesday alleged Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah-led government has "failed on every front" and existed only on paper.

"It has almost been three months that the NC government has been in power, but they have failed on every front. They have failed to keep their guarantees which they had mentioned in their manifesto like providing 12 free gas cylinders, 200 units of free electricity, 10 kgs rice, one lakh jobs and regularising daily wagers," BJP's J&K spokesman Altaf Thakur said at a press conference here. Jammu local businesses, Jammu and Kashmir tourism

Referring to the snowfall in the plains of the valley, including Srinagar last week, Thakur said there was "light snowfall, but even on the fourth day today, link roads are still closed".

"NC (government) made huge claims, but they were only statements. They cleared the snow from the roads only on papers, provided electricity only on papers. Abdullah has run the government through statements only and they have failed on ground zero. There are viral videos in which people are saying snow is cleared from the roads, and electricity is provided," he added. Thakur accused the chief minister of making

a U-turn on his promises. "Making U-turns has been a tradition of Abdullah and the NC governments. When out of power, they used to say we will throw (electricity) meters in Tawi (river) in Jammu and Jhelum (river) in Kashmir. But now that they are in power, they are saying round-the-clock electricity will be provided only when 100 per cent metering is completed," he added.

The BJP spokesperson asked Abdullah to come up to the expectations of people, saying they have high hopes with him.

"You had made huge promises, but have failed in fulfilling them. We condemn that people had to face difficulties even due to little snowfall," he said. On the BJP's performance in Kashmir, Thakur said the assembly elections were conducted in a peaceful atmosphere without any violence or fear.

"The BJP government has put the last nail in the coffin of terrorism in Kashmir and today Kashmir is terror-free," he added.

Thakur said Prime Minister Narendra Modi would connect Kashmir with the rest of the country through a Vande Bharat train on January 26.

The BJP's J&K unit also said the party has added 1.75 lakh new members in the valley in its membership drive.

The BJP had 3.5 lakh members after the last membership drive in 2019.

Govt SPMR College NCC cadet completes Youth Exchange Programme at Bhutan



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 1: NCC cadet SUO Dhruv Sharma of NCC Directorate, JK&L has successfully completed the Youth Exchange Programme (YEP) held at Bhutan from December 12 to 18, 2024.

The main aim of the program was to encourage understanding international relations and build leadership qualities and promote participants a unique opportunity to interact with cadets from various countries.

The cadet belonging to 2 J&K Bn NCC and is a student of Govt. SPMR College of Commerce, Jammu.

The Youth Exchange Programme, one of NCC's most esteemed initiatives, provides selected cadets with the chance to travel abroad, engage in cultural exchanges, and participate in a range of activities designed to promote global friendship, diplomacy, and teamwork.

Before attending the programme in Bhutan, Dhruv had represented

the JK&L directorate in the Republic Day camp 2024 in New Delhi.

He passed multiple selection phases at Jammu as well as in Delhi, which include an examination, drill test, and group discussion that are conducted at all India level.

Dhruv was the only cadet from Jammu in the 12-member group, led by Major Anand and Major Hricha that represented India in Bhutan.

The programme was so exciting, and the Bhutanese people were so warm and welcoming. It was a proud moment for the cadet to represent India at international level.

Principal of the college, Dr. Rajinder Singh congratulated the cadet and encouraged the endeavors of the cadets. He also boosted another students to actively participate and to foster upon new horizons of life and career via NCC.

Mehbooba urges CM Omar Abdullah to look into advertisement, accreditation renewal issue of media outlets

SRINAGAR, Jan 1 (Agencies): Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti today urged chief minister Omar Abdullah to look into the issues facing by media outlets

in Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir tourism

She claimed that Information Department continues to withhold advertisements to most news outlets, while



senior journalists are still waiting for accreditation renewals.

Taking to micro-blogging site X (formerly Twitter), Mehbooba wrote: "It's been over three months since the

popular government took office, yet the information department continues to withhold advertisements to most news outlets. Furthermore, senior journalists await accreditation renewals".

"I urge Omer Sb to intervene and address these pressing issues so that the press can operate freely and without undue influence," She added on X.

From personal growth to career milestones, celebs reveal their 2025 resolutions



New Year resolutions are a wonderful convention, offering us a chance to reset and refocus. While most resolutions revolve around being good and doing good, the bridge between taking a pledge and making it real is action. The focus on actionable steps is what make a resolution come true!

Celebs tell us about their resolutions for 2025 and how to intend to pursue it.

Gratitude!

I am putting it all to prep for my next role in the New Year. I am going to grow a beard. My New Year resolution for 2024 was to give my best in everything and be content with what came my way. This served me very well, and I will carry on with it in 2025 too, trying to do better in every walk of life, while remaining grateful for every success. - Kartar Cheema, actor

A shot at fusion
My New Year resolution for 2025 is to

expand my creative boundaries. Experiment with new dance styles or fusion choreography to challenge myself. I am looking forward to partner with musicians, filmmakers, or other dancers to create unique and impactful performances. - Gagan Kaur, choreographer

On a song
My New Year resolution for 2024 was to get back in shape. Though I'm binging now during the holiday season, for most of the year I have eaten healthy and been consistent with workouts and happy to have met my goal. In 2025, my resolution is to release more songs! Though I perform live frequently, I have been doing one or two song releases per year. I received lots of love for my latest release Sajna Badal Gaya and that's motivated me to put more of my music out there. Given that I sing different genres of music, I want to bring out the best of each genre and hence am aiming for

8-10 good releases in 2025. - Jashan Bhumkar, singer, entrepreneur
Positive impact

My focus for 2025 is to continue evolving, not just as an actor, but as an individual while staying committed to self-improvement every single day. In 2025, my goal is to expand my horizons and achieve even greater milestones. Reflecting on 2024, I accomplished a variety of things and aim to carry the same positivity into the New Year. - Simaran Kaur, actress
Bring on the challenges

I visit the temple in my hometown with family on January 1 every year, seeking blessings for the New Year. My resolution for 2025 is to take on more challenging roles as an actor and explore different genres. I plan to celebrate New Year's Eve with close friends and family, reflecting on the past year and looking forward to the new one. - Aadesh Chaudhary, actor
Balancing it out

For 2025, I want to take out more time for travel while balancing it out with work. Life is too short to keep postponing things you love to do. - Rinku Ghosh, actress
Healthy body, happy mind

I believe in keeping resolutions but I need somebody to motivate me to achieve them. For the coming year, my resolution will be to stay fit and healthy and take care of my mental health and stay optimistic. I'm hoping that I meet the goal. - Shivangi Verma, actress
In focus

A healthy body is the foundation of a good life. This year, I am committing to eating wholesome, nourishing foods and incorporating regular exercise into my routine. My goal is consistency, not perfection. Our minds often bear the brunt of stress, overwork, and negativity. This year, I resolve to be mindful of what I feed my mind. I will read more books, engage in

stimulating conversations, and spend less time scrolling through social media.

This year, I want to do things that truly satisfy my soul. Whether it's spending time with loved ones, helping someone in need, immersing myself in nature, or pursuing a creative hobby, I aim to nourish my spirit.

To make all of this actionable, I will break my resolutions into small, manageable goals. I'll start by setting weekly or monthly targets, tracking my progress, and celebrating small victories along the way. Most importantly, I will allow myself grace when I falter—because self-compassion is essential for sustained growth.

My New Year resolutions are not just about being good or doing good — they are about being intentional, consistent, and kind to myself. Here's to a New Year filled with action, growth, and purpose! - Bhaavna Arora, author

After Diljit, Aujla and AP, Honey Singh to kick off 'Millionaire India Tour'

The Punjabi music industry has reached not just national but even international levels with singers like Diljit Dosanjh, Karan Aujla and AP Dhillon making everyone dance to their tunes.

The most recent example of this was seen during Diljit's concert which remained in the news for quite some time.

Now there seems to be an exciting update for all the music lovers out there. Beside Diljit and Aujla, Punjabi singer and rapper Yo Yo Honey Singh will be seen performing live in 2025.

Here is a detailed list of all the exciting concerts this New Year:

Honey Singh
Diljit Dosanjh has been riding high on the success of his recent concerts. While many got a chance to enjoy his music, there were a few who missed the opportunity. Now, those who wish to hear the singer live can book their tickets for Diljit Dil-Luminati concert 2025.

Scheduled to take place between October and November 2025, the passes for the tour are expected to be available in two phases on September 10 and 12 respectively. The prices of the tickets range from Rs 1,499 to Rs 12,999 as per the seats.

Karan Aujla
Karan Aujla is currently on his -- 'It Was All A Dream' tour. The fans love to move to his upbeat tunes while enjoying his charis-

matic stage presence.

His tour covers multiple cities including Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata. Karan concluded 2024 with his performance in Ahmedabad on December 31. His last concert will be on January 5 in Hyderabad. The tickets are available on BookMyShow priced from Rs 5,999 onwards.

One of the most celebrated singers in Bollywood, Sonu Nigam will be performing live in the national capital soon. Known for his melodious voice in the tracks 'Saathiya', 'Abhi Mujh Mein Kahin', 'Papa Meri Jaan', 'Yeh Dil Deewana', the vocalist is slated to spread his magic in Delhi on March 8, 2025.

While the location of the concert is not known till now, the tickets can be booked through BookMyShow. The prices range from Rs 499 and Rs 7,999 depending on the seats.

AR Rahman
For all the AR Rahman fans out there, the music maestro will be seen performing live on January 17, 2025. The performance will be taking place in Mumbai's Jio World Garden, BKC. BookMyShow is selling tickets for the show between the price range of Rs 3,000 and Rs 60,000.

Ed Sheeran
Famous Hollywood singer Ed Sheeran will also be visiting India during his 2025 tour. He will be performing in multiple cities between January 30 to February 15, 2025. However, the venues and the ticket prices for the tour have not been revealed till now.



Triptii Dimri craves for clear sky this New Year

This New Year, actress Triptii Dimri is yearning for a clear sky, symbolizing a fresh start and boundless possibilities.

As 2025 unfolds, she embraces the hope for peace, clarity, and new beginnings. Taking to her Instagram stories, the 'Animal' actress, who is holidaying in Finland, posted a picture of herself posing against the beautiful backdrop of snow-capped mountains.

Alongside the photo, Dimri wrote, "Drove from Finland, 3 hours into Sweden to get clear skies." She looked stunning in a black outfit. The actress had earlier shared glimpses of her winter getaway, capturing the serene beauty of the snowy surroundings and her peaceful moments with the animals.

Triptii posted a couple of photos and videos from Lapland, Finland, featuring charming snow-covered huts and reindeer peacefully grazing outside her window.

Alongside one of the videos, the actress wrote, "Snowflakes and Smiles... Today feels like one of the happiest chapters of my life." In the video, Dimri was seen delighting in the snowfall, spinning with pure joy as the flakes fell around her. Her Lapland getaway also showcased serene, snow-covered cabins and reindeer grazing



outside her window, creating a breathtaking winter paradise.

The 'Qala' actress embarked on a snowy adventure, sharing glimpses of her scenic holiday on Instagram. Fans have started speculating that she's spending time with her rumoured boyfriend, Sam Merchant, as both have posted similar photos from the trip.

In one video, Triptii was seen walking through the snow, offering a glimpse of her winter getaway in Rovaniemi. She also posted a series of selfies and photos,

along with videos captured by Sam.

On the professional front, Triptii Dimri was recently seen in the horror comedy 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3,' alongside Kartik Aaryan, Vidya Balan, and Madhuri Dixit.

Next, Triptii is preparing for an exciting new project with renowned filmmaker Vishal Bhardwaj and actor Shahid Kapoor.

The film, produced by Sajid Nadiadwala, has officially been announced and is set to hit theatres on December 5, 2025.

Sonakshi Sinha calls hubby Zaheer Iqbal an 'irritating person'

Bollywood actress Sonakshi Sinha, who was last seen in the streaming movie 'Kakuda', is annoyed by her husband Zaheer Iqbal's shenanigans.

On Wednesday, the actress took to the stories section of her Instagram, and re-shared a video from her husband in which he could be seen talking to the camera about his wife's penchant for taking long shots in the camera.

The actress wrote on the video, "You are a VVIP, very very irritating person".

Earlier, the actress saw the Boxing Day test between India and Australia in Melbourne. The actress was seen among the humongous crowd of fans at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Sonakshi took to the stories section of her Instagram and shared several videos of herself in which she could be seen cheering for team India. One of the videos posted by the actress also shows her hus-



band Zaheer Iqbal playing cricket with the kids on the ground during the break.

Sonakshi and Zaheer tied the knot on June 23 in Mumbai after 7 years of dating. They first met at a party hosted by Bollywood

superstar Salman Khan. Interestingly, both Sonakshi and Zaheer started their careers with Salman.

While Sonakshi made her debut opposite Salman in the box-office phenomenon 'Dabangg', Zaheer made his debut with Salman Khan's home production 'Notebook'. The couple reportedly dated for 7 years, and lived together for a year before tying the knot. Their wedding ceremony was followed by a grand reception ceremony that was attended by several Bollywood celebrities including Salman Khan, Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Kajol, Tabu, Yo Yo Honey Singh and more.

Meanwhile, on the work front, the actress is set to share the screen with her husband in 'Tu Hai Meri Kiran'. The two have previously worked together in the film 'Double XL', which also starred Huma Qureshi, and a music video titled, 'Blockbuster'.

Speech in movies growing violent with time, even in non-crime ones: Analysis

Dialogues in English-language movies have become more "murderous", with characters using more of 'murder' and 'kill' words—and not just in crime movies, a new analysis of lines spoken in more than 1.5 lakh movies has found.

Female characters too make more references to killing and murder, even though they did not have as many violent dialogues as men, the study published in The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Psychiatry found.

Researchers, including those at The Ohio State University, US, analysed subtitles from the open platform 'opensubtitles.org', extracting dialogues involving actions committed by characters in 1,66,534 English-language movies produced from 1970 to 2000.

Using machine learning, a type of artificial intelligence, the team calculated the number of dialogues using variations of the words 'murder' or 'kill' in each of the films.

The results suggested that "speech about committing murder in movies is increasing over time, even in non-crime movies, regard-

less of character gender." "This is more evidence that violence is a bigger part of the movies we watch than ever before," lead author Babak Fotouhi, an adjunct assistant research professor in the College of Information at the University of Maryland, US, said.

While the use of "murderous verbs" varied widely on a yearly basis, there was a clear increasing trend over the five-decade period, said corresponding author Brad Bushman, a professor of communication at The Ohio State University. And not just in crime movies, where violence might be expected, the researchers said.

"Characters in non-crime movies are also talking more about killing and murdering today than they did 50 years ago," Bushman said.

"Not as much as characters in crime movies, and the increase hasn't been as steep. But it is still happening. We found increases in violence cross all genres," Bushman said.

For the analysis, the researchers defined murderous verbs as verbs derived from the roots 'kill' and 'murder'. The number of such

words used was divided by total number of verbs used in a dialogue to compute the percentage of murderous verbs.

Overall, about seven per cent of the movies were found to have murderous verbs in dialogues over the period studied.

Further, the estimate is a conservative one, owing to the "narrow focus of the study", co-author Amir Tohidi, a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Pennsylvania, said.

"We focused exclusively on murderous verbs in our analysis to establish a lower bound in our reporting. Including less extreme forms of violence would result in a higher overall count of violence," Tohidi said.

Fotouhi said, "We designed this to be a conservative estimate. It is likely there was more violence in the movies than what we calculated in terms of the dialogue." Given that movies are competing for the audience's attention, with research showing violence being an effective means for doing so, the authors called for promoting a "mindful consumption and media literacy to protect vulnerable populations, especially children".

Work together for more inclusive, sustainable future for India, world: President Murmu greets people on New Year



NEW DELHI, Jan 1 (Agencies): President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday greeted

people on the New Year and asked them to renew commitment to work together for creating a brighter, more inclusive and sustainable future for India and the world.

"Wishing everyone a very Happy New Year! May the year 2025 bring joy, harmony and prosperity to all! On this occasion, let us renew our commitment to work together for creating a brighter, more inclusive and sustainable future for India and the world," she said in a post on X.

PM Modi greets nation on New Year



NEW DELHI, Jan 1 (Agencies): Extending his greetings to the nation on the New Year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday hoped it brings "new opportunities, success and endless joy". "Happy 2025! May this year bring everyone new opportunities, success and endless joy. May everybody be blessed with wonderful health and prosperity," he said on X.

Rajnath Singh calls 2025 a year of reform, says "a step in modernisation of Armed Forces"



NEW DELHI, Jan 1 (Agencies): The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has declared 2025 as the 'Year of Reforms.' With this declaration, the MoD aims to transform the Armed Forces into a technologically advanced, combat-ready force capable of integrated multi-domain operations.

"Defence Minister Rajnath Singh chaired a meeting with all the Secretaries of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) on the eve of the New Year to review the progress on various schemes, projects, reforms and the way ahead. In order to give impetus to the ongoing and future reforms, it was unanimously decided to observe 2025 as the 'Year of Reforms' in the MoD. This would aim at transforming the Armed Forces into a technologically advanced combat-ready force capable of multi-domain integrated operations," as per a Ministry of Defence release.

During the meeting, it was decided that the MoD would focus that reforms should further bolster Jointness & Integration initiatives, facilitating the establishment of Integrated Theatre Commands.

Additionally, it was also emphasised that reforms should focus on new domains such as Cyber and Space, and emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Hypersonics and Robotics, Associated Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures necessary to win future wars should also be developed.

In the meeting, it was also decided that the MoD would focus on developing a shared understanding of operational requirements and joint operational capabilities through inter-service cooperation & training. It was noted that procedures need to be made simpler and time-sensitive to facilitate swifter and robust capability development.

It was also decided that MoD would focus on collaboration across various stakeholders in

the defence ecosystem. Breaking silos. Effective civil-military coordination should aim to eliminate inefficiencies and optimise resources. Position India as a credible exporter of defence products, fostering R&D and partnerships between Indian industries and foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers for knowledge sharing & resource integration, as per the release.

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh expressed confidence that the 'Year of Reforms' would be a momentous step in the modernisation journey of the Armed Forces. He stated, "It will lay the foundation for unprecedented advancements in the country's defence preparedness, thus preparing to ensure the security and sovereignty of the nation amidst the challenges of the 21st century."

Air Marshal Mishra takes charge as Chief of IAF's Western Command

NEW DELHI, Jan 1 (Agencies): Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra on Wednesday took charge as the chief of Indian Air Force's Western Air Command that looks after the security of the air space in the sensitive Ladakh sector as well as some other parts of north India.

Air Marshal Mishra, a fighter combat leader and an experimental test pilot, has more than 3000 hours of flying experience, according

to the IAF. He succeeds Air Marshal Pankaj Mohan Sinha, who superannuated after putting in more than 39 years of distinguished service.

Air Marshal Mishra was commissioned into the Indian Air Force (IAF) as a fighter pilot on December 6, 1986.

He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Air Force Test Pilots School, Bangalore, Air Command and Staff College, the US,



and Royal College of Defence Studies in the UK. In his service career spanning over 38 years, the Air Marshal has tenanted important com-

mand and staff appointments. These include Commanding Officer of a fighter squadron, chief test pilot at Aircraft and Systems Testing

Establishment (ASTE), Air Officer Commanding of two frontline air bases, Director (Operational Planning and Assessment Group), Assistant Chief of Air Staff (Projects) at the air headquarters. He was Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Operations) prior to taking over his new appointment.

The Air Officer is a recipient of 'Ati Vishisht Seva Medal' and 'Vishisht Seva Medal'.

Learn spirit of service from RSS, instead of writing to its chief for media attention: BJP to Kejriwal

NEW DELHI, Jan 1 (Agencies): The BJP on Wednesday asked AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal to learn "spirit of service" from the RSS leaving behind his "political moves" instead of writing to the organisation's chief Mohan Bhagwat to draw "media attention".

The BJP's reaction came after Kejriwal wrote a letter to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief and alleged deletion of voter's names from the electoral rolls and distribution of money by the BJP to "buy votes" in Delhi ahead of the Assembly polls.

He also asked Bhagwat if he supports such "wrong activities" of the BJP.

Reacting sharply, BJP



national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi alleged that Kejriwal's letter to the RSS chief is nothing but a bid to grab "media attention".

"Don't write to the Sangh (RSS), learn from it," he asked Kejriwal.

He said the Seva Bharati, which is affiliated to the RSS, is the "biggest organization" in India which works for

the welfare of people, including the Dalits living in slums.

"Learn the spirit of service (from the RSS and its affiliates). Leave behind your political moves," Trivedi, also a Rajya Sabha MP, asked the AAP chief.

The BJP leader was replying to media queries at a press conference at the party headquarters here.

Gaurav Gogoi asks govt to roll back decision to withdraw India Post's book packet service

NEW DELHI, Jan 1 (Agencies): Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi has sought roll back of the government's decision to withdraw the India Post's book packet service saying it will bring hardship to the literary community and directly impact millions of Indians in accessing books that contribute to their education, personal growth and connection to the world.

In a letter to Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia, Gogoi expressed deep concern over the decision to discontinue the India Post's book packet service and said it will affect readers in smaller towns and villages across India since the service was often the most accessible and cost-effective way



to receive books.

"On December 18, India Post decided to withdraw this service in favour of alternatives like Speed Post and Registered Post, which cost nearly 50 per cent more. This price increase poses a significant challenge for publishers, particularly those catering to niche audiences, regional languages, and specialised genres, and could make books less affordable for

many readers," he said.

The Congress deputy leader in Lok Sabha said with the new, higher postal rates, access to literature will likely become more limited, especially for those already facing barriers to obtaining reading materials.

He said the removal of a service that made books more accessible to people across regions, without imposing a financial strain

on either publishers or readers, runs counter to the broader goals of fostering a literate, informed, and equitable society.

"I request you to reverse this decision immediately to prevent further hardship for the literary community and ensure that books remain accessible to all. I would be grateful if this matter is treated with the urgency and attention it deserves, as it directly impacts the ability of millions of Indians to access books that contribute to their education, personal growth, and connection to the world around them," he said.

Gogoi said the book packet service of the postal department, which allowed publishers to send books weigh-

ing up to 200 pages for as little as Rs 20-25 anywhere across India, has been a cornerstone for small and independent publishers.

Even when books weighed more, the cost of sending them remained very affordable, with prices rarely exceeding Rs 30.

"This affordable rate made books accessible to readers, particularly in rural and remote areas, where alternatives like private courier services were either too expensive or unavailable.

"While I understand that the changes in postal services were necessitated by the new Post Office Act, I urge you to consider the significant impact on small publishers and readers across India," he said.

CBI probes ED officers in bribery and scholarship scam

SHIMLA, Jan 1 (Agencies): The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered two First Information Reports (FIRs) against officials of the Enforcement Directorate (ED), including an Assistant Director and senior officers posted in Shimla, for allegedly demanding and accepting bribes.

The bribery allegations are linked to the ongoing investigation of the 181 crore scholarship scam in Himachal Pradesh.

According to CBI sources, the first FIR pertains to a bribe demand of 85 lakh, while the second involves 80 lakh. Both cases reportedly involve ED officers demanding money from educational institution promoters who are under investigation for financial irregularities

under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The primary accused, ED Assistant Director Vishaldeep Singh, allegedly summoned the complainants to his Shimla office, tortured them, and coerced them into paying hefty bribes.

The accused officers also involved middlemen, including Vishaldeep's brother, a senior manager at Punjab National Bank in Delhi, who allegedly helped facilitate the transactions.

The CBI, based on complaints from the educational institution promoters, planned a trap operation near Chandigarh.

The complainants were instructed to pay 55 lakh in cash to the accused officer while CBI opera-



tives monitored the transaction. However, Vishaldeep Singh, reportedly alerted to the trap, escaped during the operation. His brother and a middleman were arrested, and 55 lakh in marked currency notes were recovered.

The bribery allegations have a direct connection to the 181 crore post-matriculation scholarship scam. Between 2013 and 2017, funds intended for SC, ST, and OBC students were allegedly misappropri-

ated by private educational institutions. The CBI, which began investigating the scam in 2019, found evidence linking ED officials to attempts to cover up the scam in exchange for bribes.

The scope of the investigation has now widened, with the second FIR reportedly addressing the alleged quid pro quo arrangement involving ED officers to shield the accused institutions.

Following the scandal, the ED has transferred

the accused Assistant Director and two supervisory officers—a Deputy Director and a Joint Director—to Delhi. However, the CBI has yet to apprehend Vishaldeep Singh, who remains absconding. Attempts to locate him are ongoing.

During a press conference in Shimla, the complainants accused the ED officers of harassment, mental torture, and coercion. They revealed how they were summoned repeatedly, threatened with arrests, and forced to arrange large sums of money. One of the complainants even considered suicide, underscoring the extent of the alleged abuse.

The CBI has recovered substantial evidence, including 55 lakh in graft money and other docu-

ments implicating the accused.

The agency is also probing the involvement of additional ED officials and their associates.

The allegations of corruption within the ED's Shimla office have raised serious concerns about the integrity of enforcement agencies tasked with combating financial crimes.

With the CBI expanding its investigation, the scandal is likely to have far-reaching implications, not only for the accused but also for the credibility of institutions meant to uphold justice. As the search for Vishaldeep Singh continues, all eyes are on the CBI to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice and the victims receive the redress they deserve.

Four workers killed in fire at Surat steel plant



SURAT, Jan 1 (Agencies): Four workers were killed and another one was injured in a fire at a steel plant in Hazira industrial area in Gujarat's Surat on Tuesday evening, officials said today.

The incident occurred at ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India's, Surat

Commissioner of Police Anupam Singh Gehlot said.

"We have learnt that the fire spread in one section of the plant after burning coal suddenly spilled over. The resultant blaze killed four labourers, who were on a lift at that time in the plant," he said.

Israeli strikes kill nine in Gaza as war grinds into new year with no end in sight

Israel's air and ground offensive has killed over 45,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

DEIR AL-BALAH, Jan 1 (Agencies): Israeli strikes killed at least nine Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, mostly women and children, officials said Wednesday, as the nearly 15-month war ground on into the new year with no end in sight.

One strike hit a home in the Jabaliya area of northern Gaza, the most isolated and heavily destroyed part of the territory, where Israel has been waging a major operation since early October.

Gaza's Health Ministry says seven people were killed, including a woman and four children, and that at least a dozen other people were wounded.

Another strike overnight into Wednesday in the built-up Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza killed a woman and



a child, according to the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, which received the bodies.

The war began when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people and abducting around 250. About 100 hostages are still held in Gaza, at least a third of whom are believed to be dead.

Israel's air and ground offen-

sive has killed over 45,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. It says women and children make up more than half the fatalities but does not say how many of those killed were militants.

The Israeli military says it only targets militants and blames Hamas for civilian deaths because its fighters operate in dense residential

areas. It says it has killed 17,000 militants, without providing evidence.

The war has caused widespread destruction and displaced some 90% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million, many of them multiple times.

Hundreds of thousands are living in tents on the coast as winter brings frequent rainstorms and temperatures drop below 10 degrees Celsius (50 F) at night. At least four infants have died of hypothermia.

American and Arab media-tors have spent nearly a year trying to broker a ceasefire and hostage release, but those efforts have repeatedly stalled as Hamas demands a lasting ceasefire and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vows to keep fighting until "total victory" over the militants.

Teenagers stabbed during New Year's Eve celebrations in Sydney, Melbourne

SYDNEY, Jan 1 (Agencies): Two teenagers have been hospitalised after being stabbed during New Year's Eve celebrations in Sydney and Melbourne.

Police in Sydney said on Wednesday that officers were called to a park in the suburb of Guildford, 20 km west of central Sydney, at 10:40 pm local time on Tuesday night following reports of a stabbing, Xinhua news agency reported.

Officers attending the scene were told that a group of males were allegedly illegally setting off fireworks in the park before a 17-year-old was stabbed in the back.

The boy was treated by ambulance crews at the scene before being taken to a nearby hospital in a serious but stable condition, police said. His alleged attacker fled the scene.

Police made 36 arrests across Sydney's central business district as more than one million people flocked to the city for New Year's Eve celebrations.

The arrests were made for various offences, including assault, robbery, and possession of weapons.

More than 200,000 people rushed to vantage points on the Sydney Harbor

on Tuesday to watch the city's iconic fireworks display.

"Police were kept busy by a handful of revellers doing the wrong thing, but those people were dealt with quickly," Assistant Police Commissioner Peter McKenna said in a statement.

In Melbourne, police responded to 52 reported assaults and arrested 14 people for possessing weapons.

A teenager was stabbed in the seaside suburb of Blairgowrie at about 5:45 pm and was transported to hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. Two teenagers were arrested by police over the attack.

Illegal fireworks ignited several small fires across the city but police said that there had been no injuries reported.

"The safety of the NSW community is of the utmost importance to us, so for those continuing to celebrate until the morning, we will have police in the air, on the roads and water to ensure it is a night to remember for all the right reasons."

General duties officers remained out on the streets into the early hours with specialist police from the riot squad, mounted and dog command, PoAir, water police and other divisions.

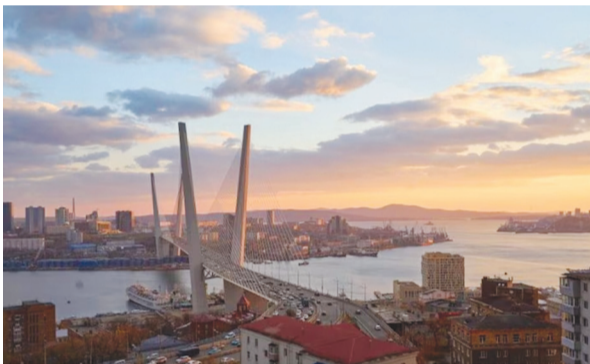
Russia hikes tourist tax, lifts export duties on coal

MOSCOW, Jan 1 (Agencies): A new tourist tax has come into effect across Russia on Wednesday, replacing the previous resort fee, local media on Wednesday.

From January 1, 2025, travellers staying in hotels and other accommodations will contribute an additional 1 per cent of their lodging costs, marking the start of a phased plan to bolster regional tourism infrastructure, reports Xinhua, quoting RIA Novosti news agency.

The tax was introduced as part of amendments to the Russian Tax Code in July 2024, which added a new chapter titled "Tourist Tax," granting regional authorities discretion to implement the tax as a local levy. Many regions, particularly those with established or emerging tourism industries, have already embraced the initiative.

Under the current



framework, the tourist tax will begin at a rate of 1 per cent in 2025 and gradually rise to 3 per cent by 2027. To ensure a baseline contribution, a minimum daily charge of 100 rubles (0.9 US dollars) has been established.

While hotels and other lodging providers are technically taxpayers, the cost will be incorporated into the price of accommodations, thus being passed on to tourists.

Additionally, Russia has also officially dropped export duties on anthracite, coking coal, and thermal coal

starting January 1, 2025, local media reported on Wednesday.

Introduced on October 1, 2023, flexible export duties were in place until the end of 2024.

However, duties on anthracite and thermal coal were temporarily suspended between May 1 and November 30, 2024.

In November 2024, the Russian government decided to lift the export duty on coking coal ahead of schedule and extended the suspension of duties on anthracite and thermal coal to support the coal industry.

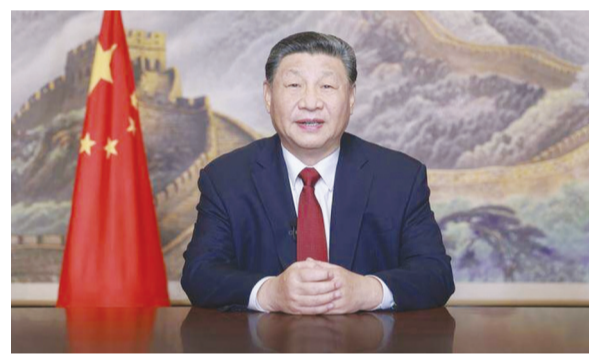
No one can ever stop Taiwan's reunification with China, says President Xi in his New Year message

BEIJING, Jan 1 (Agencies): President Xi Jinping has said that no one can ever stop Taiwan's reunification with China as he signed off 2024 amid growing anxieties in the country over the continued slowdown of the economy and the return of Donald Trump, who has threatened to impose punitive tariffs and trade measures against Beijing in his second term.

"We Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Strait belong to one and the same family. No one can ever sever the bond of kinship between us," Xi said while delivering his 2025 New Year Address televised on the state broadcaster.

China claims the self-ruled island Taiwan as part of its mainland and makes "One-China," recognising Taiwan as part of it, as a mandatory diplomatic policy.

In recent years, Xi, who is in his third five-year term, made it a major military and diplomatic initiative to step



up efforts to reintegrate Taiwan with China.

On the foreign policy front, Xi reiterated China's commitment to promoting global governance reform and contributing to the maintenance of world peace and stability.

"In a world of both transformation and turbulence, China, as a responsible major country, is actively promoting global governance reform and deepening solidarity and cooperation among the Global South," he added.

The other main focus of Xi's New Year message was to reassure the Chinese public about the economy,

gains in pursuing high-quality development in the past year, he said.

Highlighting China's success in the new productive forces like E-Vehicles, he said the country has fostered new quality productive forces in light of actual conditions and has seen new business sectors, forms and models emerging.

China's annual production of new energy vehicles has topped 10 million for the first time in 2024, and the country has made breakthroughs in integrated circuits, artificial intelligence, quantum communications and many other fields, Xi said.

China, however, is struggling to enhance its exports of e-vehicles as the US and EU have imposed heavy tariffs on their imports.

The main challenge for Xi, however, is to deal with Trump 2-0.

Trump, who has threatened to pursue tough policies against China, will assume the US

presidency on January 20.

In his first term, Trump launched a trade war against China by imposing tariffs on over USD 380 billion on Chinese imports in 2018-19, saying that China is ripping off America. His successor, Joe Biden, has continued the tariffs, denting China's profits.

During his campaign, Trump threatened to impose over 60 per cent tariffs on Chinese imports, which last year accounted for USD 427.2 billion.

The China-US relations became tense over a host of policies pursued by Trump, including blocking Chinese tech.

He also blamed China for the COVID-19 pandemic, saying that the virus emanated from a bio-lab in Wuhan.

The military relations between the two countries also remained tense under Trump's previous presidency.

Grieving families of victims of South Korean plane crash visit site for memorial service

SEOUL, Jan 1 (Agencies): Grieving relatives of people killed in a plane crash in South Korea visited the site to pay respects to their loved ones on New Year's Day on Wednesday, as officials said they have identified all 179 bodies.

Only two of the 181 people aboard the Boeing 737-800 operated by Jeju Air survived when it crashed in Muan International Airport in southern South Korea on Sunday. Video showed the aircraft, without its landing gear deployed, landing on its belly at high speed, skidding off the end of the runway into a concrete fence and then bursting into flames.

All of the victims were South Koreans except for two Thais, with many returning from Bangkok after Christmas holidays there.

The bereaved families visited the site on Wednesday for the first time since the crash for a traditional memorial service. They were bused to the site, where they took turns laying white flowers, knelt down and bowed deeply before a memorial table where food was placed. The food included "ddeok-guk," a Korean rice cake soup eaten on New Year's Day.

Some wailed and dropped to the



ground.

The Transport Ministry said authorities have completed the identification of the dead, which was complicated by the severe damage some bodies received. It said the government has so far handed over 11 bodies to relatives.

The exact cause of the crash is under investigation. Video showed the plane was experiencing an apparent engine problem in addition to the landing gear malfunction. Investigators say the pilot received a warning from air traffic controllers of possible bird strikes and the plane issued a distress

signal before the crash.

Officials have said they will also look into whether the airport's localizer — a set of antennas at the end of the runway designed to guide aircraft during landings that was housed in a concrete fence — should have been constructed with lighter materials that would break more easily upon impact.

The South Korean government has begun safety inspections of all 101 Boeing 737-800s in the country. On Tuesday, a team of U.S. investigators including representatives from Boeing also examined the crash site.

Russia launches more than 100 drones at Ukraine in New Year's attack, Kyiv says

A pregnant woman was among the 6 injured, the Kyiv city administrators said.

KYIV, Jan 1 (Agencies): At least six people, including a pregnant woman, were injured in Kyiv as Russia launched more than 100 drones in an overnight strike into New Year's Day, Ukrainian military and civil officials said.

Ukraine's air force said at least 111 attack drones were launched toward at least 10 regions throughout Ukraine, including the capital. Ukraine shot down 63 of the drones and another 46 failed to strike a target, the military said.

"The air attack was repelled by aviation, anti-aircraft missile troops, electronic warfare units, mobile fire groups of the Air Force and the Defense Forces of Ukraine," the air force



said.

Ukraine began the new year under "another massive air attack," said Ruslan Stefanchuk, the chair of Ukraine's parliament.

"These inhumans decided to give us a hot

start to the year and, like real weaklings and cowards, continued to hit civilians," Stefanchuk said on social media. "I wish the victims a speedy recovery."

Air raid sirens began blaring before sunrise

in Kyiv, urging people to make their way to shelters, the Kyiv City State Administration said.

Most of the injured were in the city's central Pecherskyi neighborhood, where the strike started a fire in an apartment building, Vitali Klitschko, Kyiv's mayor, said in a post in Ukrainian on the Telegram messaging app.

"Two of them were hospitalized. Two were treated on the spot by doctors," Klitschko said. A pregnant woman was among the injured, the city administration said in a statement.

Falling debris also broke windows, started a fire in a garage and damaged trams in the western Sviatoshynskiy neighborhood, Klitschko added.

Cabinet approves continuation of PM Fasal Bima Yojana, restructured weather-based crop insurance scheme

NEW DELHI, Jan 1 (Agencies): The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved the continuation of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme till 2025-26 with an overall outlay of Rs 69,515.71 crore from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

The decision will help in risk coverage of crops from non-preventable natural calamities for farmers across the country till 2025-26.

In addition, for large-scale technology infusion in the implementation of the scheme leading to increasing transparency and claim calculation and settlement, the Union Cabinet has also approved the creation of the Fund for Innovation and Technology (FIAT) with a corpus of Rs 824.77 crore.

The fund will be utilised towards funding technological initiatives under the scheme namely, YES-TECH, WINDS, as well as research and development studies.

Yield Estimation System using



Technology (YES-TECH) uses Remote Sensing Technology for yield estimation with minimum 30 per cent weightage to Technology based yield estimates. Nine major states are currently implementing (namely AP, Assam, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, MP, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka).

Other states are also being on-boarded expeditiously. With wider implementation of YES-TECH, Crop Cutting Experiments and related issues will be gradually phased out.

Under YES-TECH Claim calculation and settlement has

been done for 2023-24. Madhya Pradesh has adopted 100 per cent technology based yield estimation.

Weather Information and Network Data Systems (WINDS) envisages setting up Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) at block level and Automatic Rain Gauges (ARGs) at panchayat level. Under WINDS, 5 times increase in current network density is envisaged to develop hyper local weather data. Under the initiative, only data rental costs are payable by Central and State Governments. Nine major states are

in the process of implementing WINDS (Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh Puduchery, Assam, Odisha, Karnataka, Uttarakhand & Rajasthan are in progress), while other states have also expressed willingness to implement.

WINDS could not be implemented by states during 2023-24 (1st year as per EFC) due to various background preparatory and planning work required before tendering. Accordingly, the Union Cabinet has approved 2024-25 as the first year of implementation of WINDS as compared to 2023-24 earlier to give benefit to state governments with higher central fund sharing in 90:10 ratio.

The government said all efforts are made and will continue to be made to saturate all farmers of northeastern states on priority.

However, due to the scheme being voluntary and low gross cropped area in the northeastern states, flexibility has been given to avoid surrender of funds and for reallocation in other development projects and schemes with fund requirements.

Stock markets rebound in first session of 2025 on buying in blue-chips



MUMBAI, Jan 1 (Agencies): Benchmark Sensex and Nifty started the New Year on a high note with the key indices closing higher in a see-saw trade on Wednesday on buying in blue-chip stocks.

Snapping its two-day falling streak, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 368.40 points or 0.47 per cent to settle at 78,507.41 on the first trading session of 2025. During the day, it surged 617.48 points or 0.79 per cent to

78,756.49.

The NSE Nifty climbed 98.10 points or 0.41 per cent to 23,742.90.

Among Sensex shares, Maruti, Mahindra & Mahindra, Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finance, Tata Motors, IndusInd Bank, Asian Paints, Power Grid, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank advanced.

Tata Steel, Adani Ports, Zomato, HCL Tech, State Bank of India, Hindustan Unilever and Tech Mahindra were among the lag-

gards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 4,645.22 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

Most of the Asian and European markets were closed for New Year holidays.

US markets ended lower on Tuesday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.88 per cent to USD 74.64 a barrel.

The BSE benchmark Sensex declined 109.12 points or 0.14 per cent to settle at 78,139.01 on Tuesday. The Nifty dipped marginally by 0.10 points to settle at 23,644.80.

In the entire 2024, the Sensex jumped 5,898.75 points or 8.16 per cent, and the Nifty surged 1,913.4 points or 8.80 per cent.

GST collections in December increase 7.1% to Rs 1.76 lakh crore

NEW DELHI, Jan 1 (Agencies): Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections in December, in gross terms, were at Rs 1.76 lakh crore, with a yearly jump of 7.3 per cent, according to data from the finance ministry released on Wednesday.

In December 2023, the total collection was to the tune of Rs 1.64 lakh crore.

CGST, SGST, IGST, and cess all increased year-on-year in December 2024, official data made available showed today.

So far in 2024-25, the total GST collection has been 9.1 per cent higher at Rs 16.33 lakh crore, as against Rs 14.97 lakh crore mopped up in the corresponding period of 2023.

In April of 2024, the total GST mop-up surged to a record high of Rs 2.10 lakh crore.

During the financial year 2023-24, the total gross GST collection was recorded at Rs 20.18 lakh crore, with an 11.7 per cent increase compared to the previ-



ous fiscal year.

The recent GST collections reflects a positive trajectory for India's economy, underscoring robust domestic consumption and buoyant import activity. The figures bode well for the country's fiscal health and economic recovery efforts, signalling resilience amidst global uncertainties.

The Goods and Services Tax was introduced in the country with effect from July 1, 2017, and states were assured compensation for loss of any revenue arising on account of the implementation of GST as per the provisions of the GST (Compensation to States) Act, 2017 for five years.

Hair oil, toothpaste, soap; detergents and washing powder; wheat; rice; curd, lassi, buttermilk; wristwatches; TV up to 32 inches; refrigerators; washing machines, mobile phones, are among key items on which GST rates have been slashed substantially, or for some kept at zero, benefiting people of this country.

The GST Council, a federal body comprising the Union Finance Minister as its Chairman and Finance Ministers of all States as members, has stayed its part in the forum.

The latest meeting of the GST Council was held on December 21 at Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

Study in US teens reveals brain differences between those using substances and those not

Findings are published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Network Open*

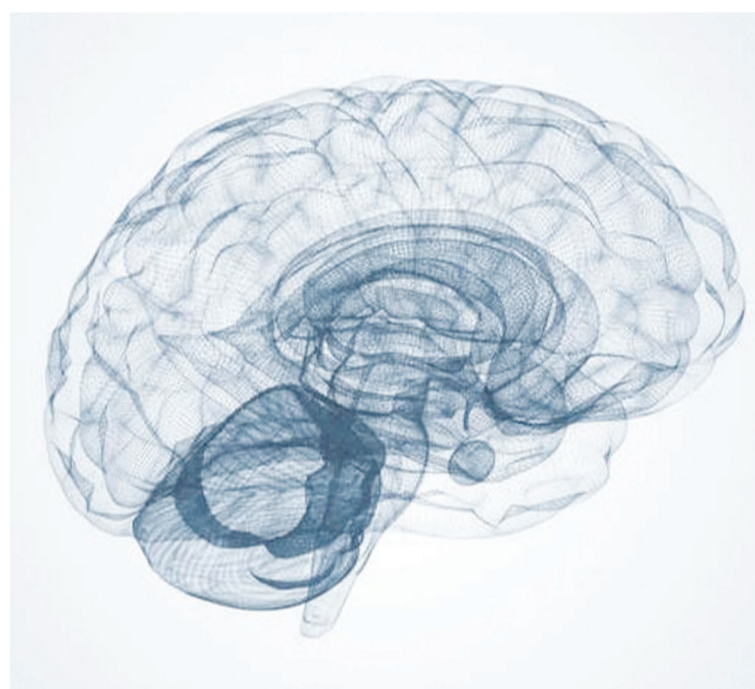
NEW DELHI, Jan 1 (Agencies): A study of teenagers in the US has revealed distinct differences in brain structures between those resorting to substance use, including alcohol and cannabis, before turning 15 and those not.

The researchers, including those from Washington University in St. Louis, US, also found that many of these differences such as a bigger brain and a thinner prefrontal cortex were possibly present before the teenagers started substance use.

This suggested that these aspects may be involved in the risk of initiating substance use later in life, along with other factors, including genetic and environmental ones, the researchers said.

The prefrontal cortex is part of the cortex—the outermost layer of the brain and known to help one perform higher-level functions such as planning, decision-making and achieving goals.

Some of the brain differences observed between the two groups of teenagers also appeared unique to the type of substance used, the team said.



The findings are published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Network Open*.

However, the researchers said that more work is needed to discern how these structural differences translate into brain function or behaviours.

"This (study) adds to some emerging evidence that an individual's brain structure, alongside their unique genet-

ics, environmental exposures and interactions among these factors, may impact their level of risk and resilience for substance use and addiction," said US' National Institute on Drug Abuse Director Nora Volkow.

"Understanding the complex interplay between the factors that contribute and that protect against drug use is crucial for informing effective prevention interventions and providing sup-

port for those who may be most vulnerable," Volkow said.

The team also said that the study's findings should not be used for diagnosing, as brain structure alone cannot predict substance use.

For the analysis, the researchers looked at MRI scans of 9,804 children across the US when they were 9-11 years of age. The participants were followed over a period of three years -- 3,460 reported substance initiation before age 15, while the others did not.

Between the two groups, five structural differences pertained to the brain in general, while an additional 39 pertained to specific regions -- 22 of which were related to the thickness of cortex.

"We identified neuroanatomical features associated with substance use initiation that were present before substance exposure," the authors wrote.

The participants were recruited from the ongoing Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) Study, examining brain development and mental health in nearly 12,000 youth in the US starting at age nine and following them into early adulthood.

Artificial heart patients can regenerate heart muscles: Study

WASHINGTON, Jan 1 (Agencies): A research team at the University of Arizona College of Medicine--Tucson's Sarver Heart Center found that a subset of artificial heart patients can regenerate heart muscle, which opens the possibilities of new ways to treat and perhaps someday cure heart failure.

The results of the research which was co-led by a physician-scientist were published in the journal *Circulation*.

Comparing the repair of skeletal muscles to heart muscles, Hesham Sadek, MD, PhD, director of the Sarver Heart Center and chief of the Division of Cardiology at the University of Arizona College of Medicine--Tucson's Depart-

ment of Medicine said that when a heart muscle doesn't grow back if it gets injured, "We have nothing to reverse heart muscle loss."

Sadek led a collaboration between international experts to investigate whether heart muscles can regenerate. The study was funded through a grant by the Leducq Foundation Transatlantic Networks of Excellence Program.

The project began with tissue from artificial heart patients provided by colleagues at the University of Utah Health and School of Medicine led by Stavros Drakos, MD, PhD, a pioneer in left ventricular assist device-mediated recovery.

Jonas Frisen, MD, PhD, and Olaf Berg-

mann, MD, PhD, of the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, led teams in Sweden and Germany and used their innovative method of carbon dating human heart tissue to track whether these samples contained newly generated cells.

The investigators found that patients with artificial hearts regenerated muscle cells at more than six times the rate of healthy hearts.

"This is the strongest evidence we have, so far, that human heart muscle cells can actually regenerate, which really is exciting, because it solidifies the notion that there is an intrinsic capacity of the human heart to regenerate," Sadek said.

Earlier, Sadek pub-

lished a paper in *Science* showing that while heart muscle cells actively divide in utero, they stop dividing shortly after birth to devote their energy to pumping blood through the body nonstop, with no time for breaks.

In 2014, he published evidence of cell division in patients with artificial hearts, hinting that their heart muscle cells might have been regenerating.

"The pump pushes blood into the aorta, bypassing the heart," he said. "The heart is essentially resting."

Sadek's previous studies indicated that this rest might be beneficial for the heart muscle cells, but he needed to design an experiment to determine whether patients with artificial

hearts were actually regenerating muscles.

"Irrefutable evidence of heart muscle regeneration has never been shown before in humans," he said. "This study provided direct evidence."

However, Sadek wants to figure out why only 25 per cent of patients responded to the regeneration of the muscle.

"It's not clear why some patients respond and some don't, but it's very clear that the ones who respond have the ability to regenerate heart muscle," he wrote.

Sadek believes that in future a mechanical heart will not be a therapy on which people will rely and with this study, he hopes to deliver regeneration of heart muscles in future.

Surging oestrogen levels could drive women to 'binge-drink', mice study suggests

NEW DELHI, Jan 1 (Agencies): Drinking alcohol when oestrogen levels are surging could compel women to hit the bottle harder, thereby possibly driving them to 'binge-drink', researchers said after they found that female mice drank much more on days when the sex hormone's levels were high.

The study, published in the journal *Nature Communications*, is the first to find that a higher oestrogen level in the body promotes 'binge-drinking' behaviour in women by contributing to sex-specific differences, researchers said.

Binge-drinking is said to intensify alcohol's harmful effects, with women being more vulnerable to the negative health effects, compared to men.

Researchers, led by those at Weill Cornell Medicine, US, previously showed that neurons in a brain region called 'bed nucleus of the stria terminalis', or BNST, were more excitable in female mice, compared to male ones.

Sometimes referred to as 'extended amygdala', the BNST is a central hub for regulating stress-related brain activity, including mood, anxiety and depression.

The enhanced activity in BNST correlated with the female mice's binge drinking behaviour, the researchers

said. "Oestrogen has such powerful effects on so many behaviours, particularly in females. So, it makes sense that it would also modulate drinking," senior author Kristen Pleil, associate professor of pharmacology at Weill Cornell Medicine, said.

In the latest study, the researchers monitored 'oestrogen' hormone levels throughout the oestrous cycle of female mice — the equivalent of menstrual cycle in women — following which, the mice were served alcohol.

The team found that on days when a female mouse had high levels of oestrogen circulating in the body, it drank more, compared to days with low levels.

"We found that female mice displayed greater binge alcohol drinking and reduced avoidance when oestrogen was high during the oestrous cycle than when it was low," the authors said.

The intensified binge-drinking behaviour was related to heightened activity in BNST, the researchers said.

"When a female takes her first sip from the bottle containing alcohol, those neurons go crazy. And if she's in a high-oestrogen state, they go even crazier," Pleil said.

Police register 123 NDPS cases, arrest 185 drug peddlers in Anantnag in 2024

ANANTNAG, Jan 1 (Agencies): The Jammu and Kashmir Police in Anantnag recorded significant achievements in its anti-narcotics operations during 2024 registering 123 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Jammu and Kashmir tourism

The police arrested 185 accused and seized property worth Rs26.40 crore in connection with these cases.

According to data shared by the police, 102 of the arrested individuals were charge-sheet-

ed in court.

24 detentions under the Prevention of Illegal Trafficking (PIT) NDPS Act were reported in the district.

The contraband substances recovered- included- Brown-Sugar 1.64 Kg; cannabis (Bung powder, Bung Fuki); 510.648 Kg, Charas 2,641 Kg and Poppy Straw 510,648 Kg.

"Intoxicant tablets; 300 strips and intoxicant syrups; 1350 bottles were also seized", police said.

The police also destroyed cannabis and poppy spread over

292 and 250 Kanals respectively.

18 cases were registered under the Excise Act related to the alcohol related seizures.

"7500 bottles of 3458 liters were seized," the data said.

The bank accounts of repeat-offenders were frozen and property confiscated. "255 Bank accounts with a total amount of 1.94 crore Rs was frozen".

The property worth Rs 26.40 crores of the accused was attached by the police. This included 17 houses, 9 shops, 10 vehicles and cash amount-

ing to Rs 1071,755, police said.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Anantnag, G.V. Sundeeep Chakravarty told Greater Kashmir, "The police is committed to eradicating the drug menace from society".

Jammu and Kashmir tourism

While extending New Year greetings to the public, he urged for their cooperation in tackling drug trade and substance abuse.

"The anti-narcotics drive in the district will persist in the coming year," SSP Chakravarty assured.

Jodhamal hosts Regalia '24 to bid farewell to Class XII of 2025



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 1: As the academic year 2024-25 draws to a close, Jodhamal Public School hosted the elegant Regalia'24 to bid an emotional adieu to its outgoing Class XII students.

The event celebrated the culmination of their transformative journey at the school, marking the end of a memorable chapter.

The grand event commenced with a ceremonial lamp-lighting and a cake-cutting, symbolizing new beginnings. This was followed by an electrifying ramp-walk where students dazzled the audience with their poise and style. Adding to the excitement, the school honoured selected students with special titles under the 'Masters of Many' category, recognizing their excellence across diverse fields.

The event was a poignant reminder of the remarkable contributions of the graduating students, who have exemplified Jodhamal's core values of excellence, integrity, and leadership.

ity and camaraderie. The graduating Class of 2025 was lauded for their resilience, dedication, and accomplishments, leaving an indelible legacy on the institution.

The highlight of the evening was the much-anticipated title ceremony. Mr. & Ms. Charming was bagged by Sarthak Jain and Mayara Aul respectively. Nirbhay Choudhary and Avikshita Sharma were adjudged Mr. & Ms. Consistent respectively. Rohan Langar and Adaliya Narang were declared Mr. & Ms. Perfect respectively while Sachdeep Singh and Czia Raina became Mr. & Ms. Elegant respectively. The most coveted title of Mr. & Ms. Jodhamal was given to Aryan Manhas and Vidhi Dhalam respectively.

The ceremony concluded with heartfelt words of encouragement from the school's leadership. Trustee Nandan Kuthiala, Director Arati Kuthiala, Principal Girish Kumar, and Vice Principal Amita Arora expressed their gratitude to parents, teachers, and the school community for their unwavering support in nurturing these bright young minds.

Meticulously orchestrated by Aashima and her dedicated team, Regalia'24 was a splendid tribute to the Class of 2025, inspiring them to embark on the next phase of their journey with confidence and grace. Vote of thanks was proposed by Pooja Sharma, the CCA Coordinator, whose best wishes added a perfect closing touch to the event.

The formal ceremony was followed by a sumptuous lunch and a vibrant dance floor which was rocked by all students and teachers alike.

Project Sampark celebrates Golden Jubilee with release of special cover

Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 1: Project Sampark was carved out of Project Beacon on January 1, 1975 for maintenance and construction of all roads South of Pir Panjal ranges in Northern Command with approximately 500 Kms of road network and Rs. 3.4 crores as initial outlay.

The Project was christened 'Sampark' which signified its commitment to reach out and maintain harmonious relations with stakeholders and diverse agencies associated with road development work in its area of responsibility.

In a nutshell the Golden Arc of Developmental Responsibility envelopes areas South of Pir Panjal range in J & K and contiguous areas of the states of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh for constructing, improving and maintaining strategic road networks in the border Districts of Jammu, Kathua, Doda, Udhampur, Rajouri, Reasi and Poonch. Presently Project Sampark commands the responsibility for maintaining approximately



3000 Kms of road network with yearly financial outlay of approximately Rs 1400 Crores.

Today Project Sampark is completing 50 glorious years of dedicated service to the nation. To commemorate the special event Maj Gen. MK Khan, VSM, ADG Army Postal Service (APS) personally presented the Special Cover in a solemn ceremony to DG Border Roads Lt Gen Raghu Srinivasan, VSM which was released by DGBR, in the presence of Brig Neeraj Madan, Chief Engineer Project Sampark and senior officers of HQ DGBR.

In addition to release of the Special Cover, a "Bridge Compendium" of Project Sampark was released by the DG. The Bridge Com-

pendium showcases stellar Bridging Achievements of the Project spanning last 50 Years.

The Compendium will serve as a glowing beacon to the effort put in by all ranks and file of Project Sampark, past and present and future, in the role of BRO towards improving infrastructure in the UT of J&K. A Bridge by definition is a mechanical construct to span gaps/obstacles, across water bodies or ravines.

Project Sampark is bridging and connecting the hearts, minds, hopes and aspirations of the local populace as it tames the mountains and associated terrain.

It has achieved inroads by opening new trade routes and joining the remote and

inhospitable areas with the rest of the country due to its personnel working relentlessly under extreme climatic and hostile conditions with utmost enthusiasm, courage and dedication.

Consequently, the Project goal congruent to the ethos of BRO of Connecting, Caring and Contrib-

uting has been a Growth Engine spearheading gargantuan socio-economic development given its reach, spread, and depth to enhance grassroots communication and incidental Ribbon Development along areas its roads course through.

With 50 Years of glorious and stellar performance in the firmament of BRO with rich history behind, DGBR highly appreciated the work done by the rank and file encouraged them to trail blaze in the same fervour and Josh in the future too.

At this poignant and historic occasion Project Sampark rededicates its strength, energy and vigour to the nation true to its motto of Sadaiva Agrasar 24x7x365.

Dimple calls upon CEC to nominate Jammu Dogra representative for upcoming Rajya Sabha seat

Urges to conduct of by-polls for Nagrota, Budgam constituencies



Top News Report

JAMMU, Jan 1: Sunil Dimple, the president of the Mission Statehood Jammu Kashmir, addressed a press conference, outlining several demands and concerns regarding the political situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

Dimple called on the Chief Election Commission of India, the Lieutenant Governor (LG), and the alliance government to nominate a Jammu Dogra representative for the upcoming Rajya Sabha seat. He also urged the swift conduct of by-polls for the Nagrota and Budgam constituencies, along with the nomination of five MLAs for the assembly. According to Dimple, elections for the four Rajya Sabha seats and by-polls for the Nagrota and Budgam constituencies are expected to be held soon, with notifications anticipated by February before March.

In his statement, Dimple expressed deep concern over the delay in allotting constituency development funds to MLAs, highlighting that, despite

this, luxury cars and high-end vehicles like Scorpios have been provided to the representatives. He criticized the lack of allocation for constituency development, emphasizing that the alliance government should focus on fulfilling the needs of the people rather than indulging in such luxuries.

He further accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of being insincere about restoring statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. Dimple said that despite the two-month completion of the alliance government, the situation remains unclear for the youth and the people of Jammu and Kashmir, who are unsure where to address their issues—whether at the LG's Raj Bhawan or the Civil Secretariat.

Dimple demanded that alliance government leaders, Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah, take immediate action and nominate members for the four Rajya Sabha seats, including one Dogra candidate from Jammu. He pointed out that Jammu districts currently have no representation in the alliance government.

Furthermore, Dimple accused the government of not being committed to the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood and special status, a resolution submitted by the elected assembly that remains unaddressed.

In addition, Dimple raised concerns over conflicting business rules, questioning whether the business rules of the Ministry of Home Affairs or those of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Speaker would be applied. He stressed the need for clarity in this matter.

The Mission Statehood president also demanded that Chief Minister Omar Abdullah nominate five MLAs, including two women, two Kashmiri Pandits, and one from the West Pakistan refugee community, for the assembly. He emphasized that the government should immediately conduct local body elections (ULB and Panchayat) to restore full democracy and provide representation at the grassroots level.

Lastly, Dimple urged Dr. Farooq Abdullah and the alliance government leaders to nominate a Jammu Dogra representative for the Rajya Sabha seat, especially considering the efforts made by Jammu Dogras in uniting the people for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood after the revocation of Article 370 in August 2019.



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