

DENGUE WARNING SIGNS

Many people with dengue can be cared for at home with adequate rest and hydration. But, if you experience any warning signs, go immediately to the nearest medical center.

Watch out for dengue warning signs!

A drop in body temperature accompanied by any of the following symptoms:

- Severe and continuous headache
- Joint pain
- Severe muscle pain
- Severe stomach pain
- Severe fatigue
- Severe skin rash
- Severe vomiting
- Severe bleeding from gums or nose, blood in stool
- Severe redness

If you have any of these symptoms, go to the nearest medical center IMMEDIATELY

JINDRAH IMAGES

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Inter-ministerial team collects samples, CM Omar Abdullah visits Budhal

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JAN 21

As the inter-ministerial team continued investigations into the mysterious deaths of 17 persons at Budhal village in Rajouri District, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah arrived in the hamlet on Tuesday and reiterated the government's commitment to uncover the truth behind the tragedy.

An official told the news agency the inter ministerial team, constituted by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah, led by a director-level officer from the Ministry of Home Affairs on the second consecutive day spent hours collecting samples and interacting with villagers and surviving family members.

Initial investigations, according to the officials, ruled out a communicable bacterial or viral disease, focusing instead on neurotoxins found in the samples of victims.

Authorities also sealed a local spring after discovering



traces of pesticides or insecticides in its water.

CM OMAR VISITS BUDHAL

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah visited Budhal village and met the members of three affected families that witnessed 17 deaths, including 13 children, between December 7, 2024 and January 19, 2025. The victims belonged to three related families.

Accompanied by Minister

Javed Ahmad Rana, Omar expressed solidarity with the bereaved families and assured residents of a transparent investigation. He pledged the government's commitment to uncover the truth.

Talking to reporters after meeting the families of the victims the Chief Minister said that till now investigators have not been able to

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Man shot dead in Jammu, ADGP rules out terror angle

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JAN 21

In a shocking incident, a 37-year-old man was shot dead in broad daylight at the busy Jewel Chowk in Jammu City on Tuesday.

An official told the news agency that at around 12.40 in the afternoon, a person identified as Sumit Jandial, son of Om Parkesh of Vijaypur, Samba was traveling in an SUV bearing registration number JK21G-0770 was attacked by



unidentified persons in Jewel Chowk area.

Eyewitnesses said that the unidentified gunmen arrived

in a car and started firing indiscriminately at Jandial, who was driving the Red colour Thar Jeep.

"The attackers fired six to seven rounds at the driver, injuring him seriously. The shooters managed to flee from the spot after leaving the man in a pool of blood," they said.

"The injured was rushed to the Government Medical College and Hospital, Jammu for treatment where he succumbed to injuries," said

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Mother, 6-month-old baby killed in Cylinder explosion

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JAN 21

A mother and her child lost their lives in a cylinder explosion on Tuesday in the remote Jandrola area of Block Sathra in Tehsil Mandi of Poonch district.

An official told the news agency that a mother and her 6-month-old child lost their lives in a cylinder

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J&K Raj Bhawan celebrates Foundation Day of Tripura among 3 places

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JAN 21

The Foundation Day of Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura was celebrated in J&K Raj Bhawan.

Students, Security personnel and the people of Tripura, Meghalaya and Manipur living in J&K were the special invitees for the cultural

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DGP Nalin Prabhat visits Samba

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JAN 21

Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat, along with senior officers, visited Samba-Kathua belt on Tuesday to review border security. An official told the news agency that the DGP assessed the infiltration challenges and visited Special Operations Group (SOG) camps near the International Border. The official said that DGP Prabhat also laid a wreath at the memorial of Assistant Commandant Vinay, who was martyred in a previous operation. The DGP emphasized the need for synergy, vigilance, and a robust security grid. KNO

ED Jammu attaches 2 hotels worth over Rs 15 crore at Patnitop

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JAN 21

The Enforcement Directorate Jammu has attached two hotels worth Rs nearly 15 crore at Patnitop in a money laundering case. In a statement, issued to news agency, a spokesperson said that the hotels have been attached in Patnitop Development Authority

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CM Omar releases Tourism Department's Calendar, Trekking Maps



JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JANUARY 21

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today unveiled calendars for the year 2025 and trekking maps created by the Department of Tourism, Jammu and Kashmir, in a ceremony held at the Civil Secretariat.

The launch event was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Commissioner Secretary Tourism Yasha Mudgal, and Directors of Tourism from Kashmir and Jammu and other concerned.

During the event, the Chief Minister launched wall calen-

dars, table calendars for the year 2025 and trekking maps featuring various scenic and tourist destinations, highlighting the rich tourism potential of Jammu and Kashmir.

The calendars showcase the breathtaking landscapes, cultural heritage and tourist treasures of the region.

The trekking maps detail several prominent trails, including: The Kolahoi Glacier Trek, Khrew-Wasterwan Trail, Gurez-Sonamarg Trek, Sarbal Bear Valley Trek and Margan Pass Tsoharmarg Trek.

Commending the efforts of the Tourism Department, the Chief Minister

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Dispute Over Power Projects in J&K

Setback for Pak, neutral expert backs India; MEA welcomes decision

JNEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JAN 21

In a big setback to Pakistan a World Bank-appointed neutral expert has extended support to India on the framework to resolve certain disputes between the two neighbours on Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric projects.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), according to the news agency, has welcomed the decision by the World Bank-appointed neutral expert, International Commission of Large Dams president Michel Lino, who stated that he is competent "to render a decision on the merits of the Points of Difference" between India and

Pakistan on the two hydro-power projects under the Indus Water Treaty.

India has consistently maintained that the neutral expert alone has the authority to address the concerns surrounding the Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric power plants.

The World Bank had appointed the neutral expert

and a Chairman for the Court of Arbitration in 2022, following the impasse between India and Pakistan over the projects.

While Pakistan had requested the establishment of a Court of Arbitration to resolve the issue, India had sought the appointment of a neutral expert,

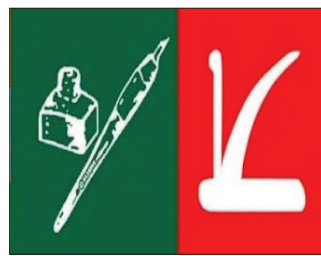
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Malicious, concocted: J&K Congress Chief debunks break-up reports with NC

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JAN 21

Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee president Tariq Hameed Karra while debunking reports that the alliance with the National Conference is on the verge of a collapse, termed them as "malicious" and "concocted."

Karra, while speaking exclusively with news agency, asserted that there was no truth in these reports and that Congress was committed to



this alliance and in support of the present dispensation.

"These are just baseless, malicious, concocted, and constructed rumours. I don't have much to say about it.

This is not a thing to respond to," Karra stated.

Karra, however, added that they have been reiterating their principal demand for restoration of statehood and that they would not be a part of the cabinet unless statehood is restored.

"Statehood restoration is our principal stand. We are not joining the cabinet unless statehood is restored," he said. Several reports have been doing rounds on

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NC, PDP enter into verbal brawl over recruitment scams, accuse each other of irregularities

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JAN 21

The ruling National Conference (NC) and opposition People's Democratic Party (PDP) entered into a verbal brawl on the recruitment scams in Jammu and Kashmir, with leaders from both parties targeting each other for irregularities in examinations.

Ittija Mufti, the daughter of PDP chief and former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti, as per the news agency, said, "The JKSSB has conducted two recruitment exams for telecommunications and photographer but there are discrepancies in both the exams as the candidates who have topped in these exams have failed to in the recent Jammu and Kashmir Police Constable examinations."

"I want to ask the JKSSB as well as the government how the candidates who have performed poorly in two exams have topped in the Police constable examination and

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Security beefed up across J&K to ensure peaceful Republic Day celebrations

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JAN 21

Ahead of Republic Day celebrations authorities have beefed up the security across Jammu and Kashmir.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, V K Birdi, while talking to the reporters here said that the multi-tier security arrangements have been put in place to ensure "disruption free" Republic Day celebrations.

This year's Republic Day will be the first following the



formation of an elected government after the abrogation of J&K's special status in 2019.

IGP Birdi, according to the news agency said, "The

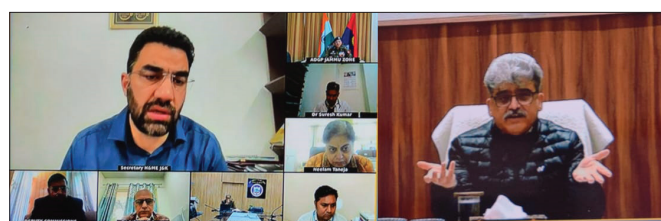
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RAJOURI DEATHS

CS for enforcing stringent containment measures to stop further loss of lives

JAMMU, JANUARY 21: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today held a meeting of the Divisional and District administrations along with Health experts and Police Department to take assessment of the measures taken so far to identify the real causes behind the mysterious deaths reported from village Badhal in district Rajouri here.

The meeting besides Secretary Health & Medical Education Department was attended by ADGP, Jammu; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; DIG, Rajouri-Poonch Range; DC, Rajouri; SP, Rajouri; Principal,



GMC, Jammu; Principal, GMC, Rajouri; Director, Health Services, Jammu besides some experts from the national health institutions.

During this meeting the Chief Secretary impressed upon the concerned from Health and Police Departments to take stringent con-

tainment measures in consultation with the Divisional administration to ensure that there is no further loss of any life.

He advised the concerned to frame a proper SOP for monitoring the population of the village. He asked

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DDC Gbl discusses work plan for SANJY-2025

J1 NEWS SERVICE
GANDERBAL, JANUARY 21

District Development Commissioner (DDC) Ganderbal, Shyambir, today chaired a high-level meeting in the Conference Hall of the Mini Secretariat here to discuss the comprehensive work plan for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY)-2025.

The meeting commenced with a review of the action plan from the previous year's Yatra, with a strong emphasis on enhancing the quality of services and infrastructure. Discussions revolved around key focus areas, including improvements in health services, sanitation, flood protection measures, solar lighting, parking facilities, mobile connectivity, transport services, contingency plans, and other vital infrastructure to ensure a seamless Yatra experience



for pilgrims.

Heads of Departments provided updates on their respective preparations and ongoing projects related to SANJY-2025. The DDC underscored the importance of submitting finalized work plans by January 24, 2025, to enable the timely execution of development works critical to the successful

conduct of the Yatra.

The Animal Husbandry Department was tasked with identifying suitable locations along the Yatra route for hot water facilities for ponies, while the Jal Shakti Department was directed to ensure the availability of hot water at these identified points. The Rural Development Department was instructed

to prioritize the maintenance of toilet facilities, and BEACON was asked to make provisions for repairing utilities that may require attention during the Yatra.

In addition, the ARTO Ganderbal proposed the establishment of a separate SRTC ticket counter and merging of parking areas to streamline transportation and parking management. Addressing the critical issue of mobile connectivity, the DDC directed telecom companies to submit a detailed plan in advance, with a special focus on strengthening connectivity at the Base Camp Baltal and along the Yatra track from Domail onwards. Officers shared their

insights and experiences from the previous year's Yatra, contributing valuable suggestions to further enhance the services provided to pilgrims.

The DDC assured immediate redressal of the issues raised by officers and issued specific directions to concerned departments to address them promptly.

Concluding the meeting, the DDC directed all departments associated with the Yatra via the Baltal route to update their action plans and prioritize upgrades in infrastructure and services.

The meeting was attended by SSP Ganderbal, Ragav S; Additional Deputy Commissioner Gulzar Ahmad; SDM Kangan, CEO SDA, Executive Engineers from various departments, DFO Sindh Forest Division, and officers from other line departments.

ADM conducts inspection of medical shops, suspends licenses for violations

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JANUARY 21

Additional District Magistrate Ansuya Jamwal today conducted an extensive inspection of medical shops near Government Medical College Bakshi Nagar.

The inspection focused on adherence to Schedule H drug protocols, verification of licenses, employee profiling, computerised billing systems and the proper functioning of CCTV cameras.

During the inspection, several irregularities were found, resulting in notices being issued to various medical shops for violating Standard Operating Procedures. The licenses of three medical shops



were suspended due to the absence of a registered pharmacist on-site and the shops were immediately sealed. Additionally, show cause notices were served to the shop owners, directing them to address the violations promptly.

Also noted were significant gaps in record maintenance. The ADM cross-verified whether psychotropic drugs were being sold without proper prescriptions and identified discrepancies between

the purchase, sales, and available stock in the shops. These irregularities pointed to a lack of transparency and accountability in operations, warranting immediate corrective measures.

Speaking on the occasion, the ADM emphasised the importance of strict compliance with legal provisions governing the sale of medicines, highlighting that any breach poses a serious risk to public health.

The ADM was accompanied by Tehsildar Jammu Khas Paramdeep Singh, Deputy Controller Legal Metrology Jammu, Drug Inspectors Nissar Ahmed and Sanjay Bhat.

DC Srinagar reviews implementation of PMAY-U

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JANUARY 21

To review the progress of implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in Urban and Rural areas of the District, a meeting of the Officers of line Departments was held under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, here.

At the outset, the DC took a detailed appraisal about the implementation of the PMAY-Urban scheme in the District. He also assessed the status of registration made under the PMAY-U scheme and directed the concerned authorities to organize special awareness camps across the district so that all eligible beneficiaries get benefitted from the scheme.

The DC asked all the concerned Officers after undertaking proper



demand survey in the district it should be ensured that not a single genuine beneficiary is left out from the scheme. He also stressed on maintaining utmost transparency and accountability in addition to timely disposal of cases.

Dr Bilal impressed upon the field functionaries to follow the robust mechanism already put in place to ensure immediate verification and processing of cases at each stage of construction and consequent disbursement of payments

to the verified beneficiaries under the scheme.

The DC directed the DGM Housing Board to establish facilitation centers for the beneficiaries so that they are provided information about the scheme and the eligibility criteria to get registered under PMAY-Urban scheme.

With regard to the target achieved under Beneficiary Led Individual House Construction (BLI) and Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme under PMAY-U,

the DC was apprised that as of today, as many as 3025 Housing Units have been sanctioned so far in the District.

The DC was also apprised that an amount of Rs 38 crores has been disbursed by State Nodal Agency (SNA) till date in the accounts of genuine beneficiaries after following due procedure and multilevel verification.

On the occasion, the DC directed the concerned Officers to ensure that the scheme guidelines are followed in letter and spirit so that all genuine eligible beneficiaries are covered under the PMAY-U scheme in the district.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; Joint Commissioner SMC, Syed Abul Qasim; DGM, Housing Board, Javid Ahmad; Tehsildar Headquarter and other concerned Officers.

DC Srinagar reviews progression of heritage conservation projects



J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JANUARY 21

In order to review the progression of the heritage preservation projects in the district, a meeting was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, at Conference Hall of DC Office Complex here, today.

At the outset, DC highlighted the significant cultural value of Srinagar's architectural heritage, underscoring the critical need to preserve these historical assets as symbols of the District's identity and legacy. He laid emphasis on collaborative frameworks in restoration practices to conserve architecture of the identified sites on heritage patterns. Dr

Bilal remarked that protecting Srinagar's architectural heritage is essential for cultural continuity and tourism promotion besides religious aspects.

On the occasion, the DC directed for constituting an Experts Team that will visit all sites and share a conservation report with the executing agencies so that preservation, revival, maintenance projects on identified sites in Srinagar District including Aali Masjid, Vicharnag Temple, Ziyarat Naqashband Sahib, Zeathyar Narayan Mutt temple, Solina, and Baba Ghulam-U-Din Shrine.

During the meeting, the DC also held interaction with the different stakeholders and received their feedback for ensuring smooth and sustainable progression of the

heritage preservation projects. He directed all departments involved to expedite efforts and collaborate closely to ensure the effective implementation of heritage preservation projects.

The DC reiterated the Administration's commitment to protect and revitalize Srinagar's historical assets and religious places, ensuring they are preserved for future generations to appreciate and learn from.

Besides, Chief Planning Officer, the meeting was attended by Superintending Engineer R&B, Executive Engineers of R&B, Officers from Archives, Archaeology & Museums Kashmir, experts from Kashmir University, SKUAST, INTACH and other concerned.

DC Baramulla inaugurates 105 ft-High National Flag at DC office premises

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, JANUARY 21

In a proud and patriotic event, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, inaugurated a 105-foot-tall Indian National Flag at the DC Office premises, today.

The ceremony was attended by Commandant CRPF 53 Battalion, Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Joint Director Planning and other senior officers and officials.

A ceremonial Guard of Honor was presented by the contingents of the 112 Naga Battalion, adding dignity and splendor to the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, DC highlighted the National Flag's significance as a symbol of India's unity, sovereignty, and pride.

He appreciated the Municipal Council Baramulla for taking the initiative to install this monumental flag, which stands as an emblem of national pride and civic spirit.

The event concluded with the unfurling of the flag, followed by the singing of the National Anthem, creating an atmosphere of unity and reverence. The 105-foot-high flag serves as a

Div Com Kashmir assesses preparations for celebration of Republic Day-2025

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JANUARY 21

In view of ensuing Republic Day celebrations, Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, convened a meeting on Tuesday with officials from civil departments and security agencies to assess the final arrangements and facilities for the national event.

During the meeting, the Div Com reviewed the facilities for the participants and emphasized on overwhelming participation in the Republic Day celebrations.

He also instructed for hassle-free entry of participants at the venue, and directed concerned departments to appoint nodal officers to facilitate them.

He called for the illumination of key government buildings and institutions to foster a festive atmosphere.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, Director Floriculture, and heads of all divisional and district offices.

Later, the Div Com also visited Bakhshi Stadium to assess the arrangements for the seamless execution of the Republic



Day celebrations. During this visit, he inspected the availability of drinking water and electricity, installation of LED screens, sound systems, seating arrangements, sanitation, and toilet facilities. On the occasion, he directed the Roads and Buildings department to install four LED screens at the stadium for live broadcast of the celebration proceedings.

He also urged the relevant authorities to ensure adequate heating arrangements for guests

and enjoined the Srinagar Municipal Corporation to deploy mobile toilets at the venue.

During the visit, the Div Com was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, SSP Srinagar, SSP Traffic, ASP Security and officials from various departments, including PHE, KPDC, R&B, Information, MED, Traffic Police, YSS, AACL, Sports Council, and Hospitality & Protocol, and others.

DC Kupwara reviews arrangements for celebration of National Voters Day

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, JANUARY 21

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan, who is also District Election Officer (DEO) today, convened a meeting of concerned officers to review the arrangements for the celebration of National Voters Day (NVD) in the district.

During the meeting, a threadbare discussion was held to review various arrangements for the smooth celebration of National Voters Day, falling on 25th January. It was given out in the meeting that the main function of NVD will be held at BHSS Kupwara.

On the occasion, the DC impressed upon the officers to work with added dedication and close coordination to ensure vibrant



celebration of the event.

The Chief Education Officer was asked to conduct various activities including Art and Essay competitions in Higher Secondary and High Schools to mark the celebration of National Voters Day.

It was also given out in the meeting that the functions for celebration of NVD shall also be held in Assembly Constituencies

and Booth level across the district. The Booth Level Officers were also directed to conduct special Voter Registration drives for enrollment of new voters, besides they shall also distribute EPIC cards among the newly registered voters.

SDM Lolab, ACR, Dy. DEO, CEO, ACP, ACD, CPO, Tehsildar Handwara and other concerned were present in the meeting.

GDC Marh shines in Inter-Zonal Display your talent contest

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JANUARY 21

Sahil Sandhu of 1st Semester and Kashish of 5th Semester of Government Degree College Marh have secured 1st and 2nd Positions in Western Instrument solo and Rangoli Making contests in first ever Inter Zonal Display Your Talent 2024-25 competition organized at University of Jammu.

The prize distribution ceremony was held on 20th January 2024 at JU where the Chief Guest for the event was Principal Secretary, Department of Culture, JKUT Suresh Gupta, and guest of honour was Prof. Anju Bhasin, Dean Academic Affairs University of Jammu.

The ceremony was attended by the Principal of the college along with faculty members to encourage the winner students. All the Affiliated Colleges of Jammu Province were divided into 5 zones namely Tawi Zone, Devika Zone, Ravi Zone, Pir-Panjal Zone and Chenab Zone. Kashish and Sahil Sandhu firstly brought laurels at Tawi Zone Competition and then bagged top positions at Inter-Zonal Level. Their exceptional performance and creativity has earned them a well-deserved recognition and they will be now representing the College at Regional Level at University of Punjab, Chandigarh.

The Principal of the college Dr. Rakesh Kumar Koul congratulated both the students as well as their family members. He also blessed them with grand success in their future endeavors. The Teacher-in-charges who worked tirelessly behind the curtain for the two meritorious students were Dr. Ashu Jolly (HOD Education), Dr. Sheetal Sharma (HOD Dogri) and Dr. Ruchika (Department of English).

DDC reviews progress of CRF and NABARD Projects in Doda district

JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, JANUARY 21

District Development Commissioner (DDC) Harvinder Singh on Tuesday chaired a crucial review meeting in the mini conference hall, DC Office Complex, to assess the progress of projects funded under the Central Road Fund (CRF) and NABARD schemes.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer (CPO), Superintending Engineers of PWD (R&B) Chenab Circle and Hydraulic Circle, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Divisional Forest Officer, Chief Medical Officer, and Block Medical Officer. Officials stationed in Bhandarwah and Batote joined virtually to provide updates on their respective projects.

The DDC emphasized the importance of expediting ongoing projects to enhance the district's infrastructure and socio-economic development.

The Superintending Engineers presented



detailed updates on status of the projects, challenges, and proposed solutions.

Issues related to land acquisition, technical approvals and inter-departmental coordination were extensively discussed, with the DDC directing officers to address these bottlenecks promptly. Special focus was placed on resolving delays, particularly those involving land disputes, forest clearance, and road construction issues, for which coordination with Tehsildars was mandated. The DDC also instructed the termination, blacklisting, and re-tendering of significantly delayed projects within a week. The review also covered the progress of community-centric projects, such as improving road connect-

ivity, irrigation facilities, and healthcare infrastructure. The construction of PHCs and road connectivity to these centers was highlighted, with officers directed to prioritize their timely completion. Forest clearance and land acquisition issues were taken up, and the DDC assured full administrative support to resolve such challenges. Concluding the meeting, the DDC stressed the importance of maintaining quality standards, transparency in fund utilization, and accountability among departments. He directed officials to submit comprehensive progress reports for effective monitoring and assured that the administration would extend all necessary support to ensure impactful results.

DC Baramulla launches Clean River Jhelum campaign on R-Day-2025 eve

JI NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, JANUARY 21

In a significant step to promote environmental cleanliness ahead of Republic Day, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today launched the 'Clean River Jhelum Campaign.'

The campaign, running from January 21 to January 25, 2025, aims to clean the River Jhelum and raise awareness about environmental conservation.

Organized by the Housing and Urban Development Department Kashmir, with active participation from the Municipal Council (MC) Baramulla, the initiative will focus on cleaning the riverbanks, collecting waste, and educating the public on the



importance of preserving natural resources.

"The River Jhelum is a vital part of our heritage, and this campaign highlights our collective responsibility to protect and preserve it for future generations," stated DC during the launch. The campaign is designed to inspire the local community to take action in maintaining a cleaner and greener environment. The campaign was

launched in the presence of Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina; Chief Executive Officer Municipal Council Baramulla, Naveed Ajaz, and other officers and officials.

This initiative aligns with the ongoing efforts of the Housing and Urban Development Department Kashmir to improve urban cleanliness and foster sustainable development practices in the region.

Secretary J&K Legislative Assembly participates in 61st Conference of Secretaries of Legislative Bodies

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JANUARY 21

Secretary, J&K Legislative Assembly, Manoj Kumar Pandita, participated in the 61st conference of Secretaries of Legislative Bodies in India held at Patna, Bihar.

The conference was presided over by Secretary General Lok Sabha, Utpal Kumar Singh.

The conference brought together the Secretaries of Legislative Assemblies and Legislative Councils to share their experiences of Parliamentary Democracy and issues confronted while discharging their duties.

During the conference, robust discussions were held on adoption of modern technologies in Legislative Bodies for

greater efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.

During the discussions, Manoj Kumar Pandita spoke on the initiatives being taken by the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir under the leadership of present Speaker Advocate Abdul Rahim Rather. He mentioned that the three day orientation programme was recently held at Jammu for newly elected Legislators which has been appreciated throughout India. Manoj Pandita further discussed with Secretary Legislative Council Bihar, Akhilesh Kumar Jha, about implementation of National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) in Bihar Legislative Council.

Earlier, Manoj Kumar had attended 60th conference of Secretaries at

Mumbai Maharashtra held on the theme "Making use of Cutting Edge Technologies in the Service of Legislature". He also attended the 59th conference of Secretaries of Legislative Bodies in India held at Jaipur in the month of January, 2023 under the theme "Enforcing Executive Accountability by Strengthening Committee System in Legislature".

During the discussions, Secretaries of other states where elections have been held recently like Haryana and Maharashtra, have decided to hold such type of conferences in their respective states.

Pertinently, such type of conferences are being held every year on different subjects pertaining to functioning of State Legislatures.

Republic Day-2025 celebration arrangements finalized at Handwara

JI NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, JANUARY 21

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, District Programme Officer ICDS Kupwara, Hakeem Tanveer today convened a meeting of all concerned officers here, to finalize the arrangements for smooth and hassle free celebration of Republic Day 2025.

The meeting held threadbare discussions on the arrangements made for the celebration of the national event.

Officers present gave details of their preparations with regard to the smooth celebration of Republic Day.

The meeting was informed that the function will start with Shahnaivadan at 8:05 AM, while the National Flag will be unfurled by the chief guest at 10:05 AM.

The meeting was further informed that the main function of Republic Day will be held at District Police Lines (DPL) Kulnagam Handwara, where National Flag will be unfurled and the VIP will take salute at the March past comprising the contingents of paramilitary forces, JKP, JKAP, CRPF, IRPF, BSF, SSB, Home Guards, NCC cadets and school children.

The DPO Kupwara asked all officers to work with coordination and ensure proper arrange-



ments on ground for successful conduct of the event.

It was given out in the meeting that smooth power and water supply shall be made available at the venue, for which concerned officers were given directions on spot.

Likewise, BMO Chogal was directed to keep ambulance available at the venue, Medical Superintendent DH Handwara was asked to ensure first aid and availability of doctors at the venue, Municipality Handwara was asked to maintain proper coordination and cleanliness at the venue and Town area.

Other arrangements were also reviewed which included refreshment, reception of chief guest, transport, fire and emergency services, cultural programmes, deployment of Magistrates, distribution of invitation cards,

selection of officers/officials for recognition of their extraordinary services.

The DPO asked concerned officers to ensure proper exhibition of schemes through Tableaus to showcase developmental activities of their respective departments and government schemes. He said all efforts shall be made to make the National function more attractive and informative. The DPO directed the concerned officers to maintain proper protocol in seating arrangements. He also asked officers to ensure their presence including staff in the Republic Day functions and ensure Flag hoisting in their respective offices.

The meeting was attended by sub district level civil and police officers.

DLC meeting on implementation of HADP held at Baramulla



JI NEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, JANUARY 21

A District Level Committee (DLC) meeting was convened today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, to review and strategize the implementation of the Holistic Agriculture Development Plan (HADP) in the district.

The meeting witnessed participation from senior officers, experts, and stakeholders from the agriculture and allied sectors. During the meeting, the DC emphasized the

importance of achieving the set targets under HADP to enhance agricultural productivity, promote sustainable practices, and uplift the socio-economic conditions of farmers in the district.

Comprehensive discussions were held on various components of the plan, including capacity-building initiatives, infrastructure development, and ensuring 100% coverage of eligible beneficiaries.

The DC directed concerned departments to work in close coordination to address implementation challenges and expe-

dite ongoing projects. He also stressed on creating awareness among farmers about the benefits of HADP and adopting innovative techniques to improve yield and profitability.

Key decisions taken during the meeting included setting timelines for specific projects, allocating resources efficiently, and conducting regular field inspections to monitor progress. The committee resolved to ensure timely execution of all initiatives and maximize the impact of the plan on ground.

Awareness/ training programme on 'Red Rice' held at Lalmandi Srinagar

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JANUARY 21

An awareness cum training programme on 'Red Rice' under HADP Project, (promotion of niche crops in the UT of J&K), was held today at agriculture complex Lalmandi Srinagar.

The programme was organised by an advanced research station for saffron and temperate seed spices, SKUAST-K.

Speaking on the occasion, Joint Director Agriculture highlighted the importance of

different niche crops including Red Rice. He enumerated the different initiatives by the department in this direction.

He said that our niche crops would play an important role in the economic growth and sustainability

of the agriculture sector in the region. He said under the holistic agriculture development program (HADP) government has approved a multi-crore prestigious project to promote the niche crops in the region.

1st UTRC meeting held at Shopian 03 Under trial prisoners recommended for release



JI NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, JANUARY 21

The District Legal Services Authority Shopian under the aegis of J&K Legal Services Authority conducted 1st Under Trial Review Committee (UTRC) meeting in District Court Shopian today at Shopian.

The meeting was held in compliance with the directions of Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai, Judge, Supreme Court of India (Executive Chairman, NALSA) and as per the UTRC meeting schedule issued by National Legal Services Authority for the year 2025.

The meeting aimed to expedite the identification and review of prisoners who are eligible to be considered for release, as well as to accelerate the regular functioning of UTRC and review all eligible under-trial prisoners (UTPs)/prisoners.

The meeting was

chaired by Pr. District & Sessions Judge (Chairman DLSA), Shopian, Mehmoood Ahmad Chowdhary and attended by Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Mohammad Shahid Saleem Dar with other members of the Under Trial Review Committee (UTRC).

In the meeting, the committee reviewed cases of eligible UTPs/Prisoners shortlisted by the Secretary, DLSA Shopian for consideration and the committee recommended 03 under trial prisoners for release, besides it also recommended constitution of Medical Board for 02 under trial prisoners.

Additional SP Shopian, Shoukat Rafiq; Secretary District Legal Services Authority Shopian, Mudasar Farooq; Superintendent Jails (Correctional Home), Pulwama, Shabir Ahmad also attended the meeting.

NORTHERN RAILWAY				
E-TENDER NOTICE				
DEN/HQ/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date: 10.02.2025 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through only payment modes available on www.ireps.gov.in portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand Draft Banker Cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information logon to www.ireps.gov.in				
Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System		
Open	Works	Single Packet System		
Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time		
16.01.2025 & 17.01.2025	27.01.2025	10.02.2025 15:00 Hrs.		
S. No.	Tender No.	Details of Tender		
1.	284-2024-25-ADEN-1-FZR	Renovation of control office chambers of DRM office Firozpur along with Misc. work related to control under ADEN-1/FZR.		
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Validity of Offer
		1,15,97,747.58	2,08,000.00	60 Days
				Period of Completion
				09 Months
Special Technical Criteria: "Any civil work other than track work".				
2.	297-2024-25-DEN-HQ-FZR	Replacement of 32 Nos. i.e. (25 Nos. 60 Kg 1 in 12 turnout), (1 Nos. 60 Kg 1 in 8.5 turnout) in c/w/ "Firozpur Division-TTR (FS CS CMSC)-13 sets, TTR (TWS WCMSC)- 38 sets, TTR (CMS)-61 sets & TTR (CS CMSC)-17 sets" & (1 Nos. 60 Kg Diamond Crossing D/S) (1 Nos. 60 Kg Diamond Crossing S/S) (4 Nos. 60 Kg scissor x-over 1 in 8.5) in c/w/ "TTR(FS CS CMSC)-56 sets, CS CMSC-18 sets, FS TWS WCMSC-44 sets, WCMSC-4 sets, DS-2 sets & TWS WCMSC-4 sets on PSC sleepers" in GNA, CBX, GJUT, RLS, KKP, KBU, FZR, TWB & PHS yards in the section of ADEN-1/FZR & ADEN-2/FZR under jurisdiction of DEN/HQ/FZR.		
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Validity of Offer
		1,97,48,743.60	2,48,800.00	60 Days
				Period of Completion
				09 Months
Special Technical Criteria: "CTR/TRR/TFR/TTR including raising of Track, screening, distressing of track, pre & post work for track maintenance machine like Tamping Machines/Ballast Screening/Regulating Machines and TTR by T-28".				
3.	298-2024-25-ADEN-1-FZR	Repair and maintenance of Level Crossings including road surface, speed breakers in the section of ADEN-1/FZR under DEN/HQ/FZR.		
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Validity of Offer
		44,99,963.26	90,000.00	60 Days
				Period of Completion
				07 Months
Special Technical Criteria: "NIL".				
4.	299-2024-25-ADEN-1-FZR	Repair & maintenance of bridges in the section of ADEN-1/FZR under DEN/HQ/FZR.		
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Validity of Offer
		29,28,959.11	58,600.00	60 Days
				Period of Completion
				07 Months
Special Technical Criteria: "NIL".				
5.	300-2024-25-ADEN-1-FZR	Crossing of 600 mm internal dia Water Supply carrier Pipe Line passing through 900 mm internal dia D.I. encasing pipe K-7 and 1200 mm dia M.S. heavy duty casing pipe under the Railway Track near Level crossing no. A-2 at Km 2/0-1 (2.014) on KKP-FKA section under ADEN-1/FZR.		
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Validity of Offer
		41,64,108.98	83,300.00	60 Days
				Period of Completion
				05 Months
Special Technical Criteria: "NIL".				
Note 1. Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender.				
No.: 284, 298, 299 & 300-2024-25-ADEN-1-FZR & 297-2024-25-DEN-HQ-FZR				
Date: 17.01.2025				
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE				

NORTHERN RAILWAY					
E-Tender Notice					
Sr./DEE/G/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders (www.ireps.gov.in) against below titled Tenders. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only.					
Tender No.	Name of work	App. Cost. (in ₹)	Earnest Money (in ₹)	Completion period	Opening of tender
251-Elect-T-54-2024-25	Electrical work in c/w provision of Rewiring of staff quarters along with safety items (i.e. MCB, ELCB/RCCB etc.) as per new scale fitting over Firozpur division.	Rs. 99,05,252.50/-	Rs. 198100.00/-	6 Months	11.02.2025 after 15:00 Hrs.
No. 251-Elect/T. Notice No. 45-Elect/2024-25 Dated :- 21.01.2025					
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE					

FROM THE PAGE 1...

Inter-ministerial...

establish the reason behind mysterious deaths in the hamlet but efforts are on to ascertain the cause of deaths. "The government's priority is to stop this cycle of deaths and that it should not go beyond 17," he said, adding, "Since the day we have got the information, officials of Health and other departments have been working to understand the cause behind these deaths."

"Tests were done, and we reached the conclusion that there was no bacteria or virus that caused these deaths," he said, adding, "All these deaths have taken place in three families. But, we are yet to find the reason behind these deaths. Since it's not a disease, Police are also involved in it and they have formed a team to investigate the matter."

The Central Government team is also there, and together we will look into the reason behind these deaths," the Chief Minister said.

He said that the government is fully committed to uncovering the cause of the tragic deaths, with multiple agencies actively involved in the investigation.

Asked about opposition criticism of his government over the handling of the situation, Omar said he would not like to play politics on such a happening.

"...Had we worked in haste and taken any wrong step, then you would have blamed us (for the deaths). The administration responded to the situation in a right way and the local MLA (Javaid Iqbal Choudhary) was there on the ground, taking the people into confidence and keeping them informed."

"We took time because we failed to establish the reason for the deaths. But we will expose the truth though it will take two or three more days and we have no issues with it," he said, adding "we will come out with the answers to all the questions". KNO

Man shot dead in...

an official. Meanwhile, Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), Jammu Anand Jain along with Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Jammu-Samba-Kathua Range, Shiv Kumar Sharma visited the spot to assess the situation.

Speaking to media men, ADGP Anand Jain said, "It is a gang war. He (Jandiyal) belonged to the Gataru gang of Vijaypur. Members of a rival gang fired on him. It is not a terrorist incident, but a case of rivalry."

He added that police have launched an operation to track down the attackers.

Police Issue Statement Police in a detailed statement urged the people to remain calm and refrain from speculation, awaiting official updates from the police.

"A firing incident occurred this afternoon in the Jewel Chowk area, under the jurisdiction of Police Station Nowabad. Upon receiving the information, ADGP Jammu, along with senior police officers, arrived at the scene," said police in a statement.

Reports indicate that one person has been seriously injured. The injured individual was promptly transported to GMC Jammu by a police team from PS Nowabad. An investigation has been initiated into the incident, and further details will be provided later.

The public is urged to remain calm and refrain from speculation, awaiting official updates from the police. KNO

Mother, 6-month-old...

explosion in the remote Jandrola area. Shazia Kousar, a 28-year old woman, wife of Sajad Hussain, was working in the kitchen when the gas cylinder suddenly exploded, leading to the on-the-spot deaths of both the mother and child, they said.

Meanwhile, Police have taken cognizance of the incident while further investigations taken up. KNO

J&K Raj Bhawan...

programme celebrating the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, organized to commemorate the occasion.

In his address, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha conveyed his hearty greetings and best wishes to the people of Tripura, Meghalaya and Manipur.

He paid homage to the great personalities of the three states and remembered their significant contribution in nation building.

The Lieutenant Governor also spoke on the socio-economic transformational journey of North Eastern States, under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

He said the rapid and inclusive development has connected the aspirations of the people of the North East to the aspirations of the nation.

"Tripura, Meghalaya and Manipur are the treasure troves of India's rich traditions, culture, folk art & crafts. I can say with immense pride that today the North Eastern States have emerged as growth engines of the country and are inspiring the entire society through their spiritual ideals and cultural values. May these blessed states continue to achieve new heights of growth, progress, and development. I wish the people happiness, peace, and prosperity in the years to come," the Lieutenant Governor said. KNO

Setback for Pak...

arguing that the matter could be addressed by such an expert rather than through arbitration.

The neutral expert's statement clarified that he would proceed with evaluating the merits of the case based on the differences submitted by both countries.

The MEA today said that India's consistent position has been that the neutral expert has the sole authority under the treaty to address these concerns.

The statement said that the neutral expert had found all seven points raised by India in relation to the two projects to be within his jurisdiction. As a result, India views this as a validation of its position on the matter.

The MEA also said that India would continue to engage with the neutral expert process, aiming for a resolution that adheres to the treaty's provisions. India also reiterated its stance of not recognizing the

Court of Arbitration established by Pakistan, considering it to be an illegal proceeding.

The MEA's statement also referred to the ongoing dialogue between the two countries concerning potential modifications and reviews of the Indus Water Treaty, as provided for under Article XII(3) of the agreement. The treaty allows for such revisions if both nations agree to it

Notably, the dispute centers on the Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric power plants, which both countries have been debating in relation to the provisions of the 1960 Indus Water Treaty.

The treaty, which governs the use of water from the Indus River system, includes mechanisms for cooperation and dispute resolution between India and Pakistan.

The disagreement revolves around whether the technical design aspects of the two power plants violate the terms of the treaty.

In 2015, Pakistan had sought the appointment of the neutral expert to deal with its objections to the two projects. However, a year later, Islamabad demanded that the objections be handled by the court of arbitration. India has been cooperating with the neutral expert but stayed away from proceedings of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague.

New Delhi considers the start of the two concurrent processes to resolve the dispute a violation of the provision of the graded mechanism prescribed in the IWT. India and Pakistan signed IWT on September 19, 1960 after nine years of negotiations with a sole aim to manage issues relating to cross-border rivers—(KNO)

Malicious, concocted...

social media that Congress was contemplating to put an end to the alliance with the National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir. KNO

CM Omar releases...

emphasized the importance of such initiatives in promoting Jammu and Kashmir as a leading travel destination.

He remarked, "These calendars and trekking maps will serve as valuable tools in providing people with essential information about the region's stunning tourist destinations and trekking routes. This initiative will undoubtedly help attract more visitors to explore the natural beauty and adventure opportunities our state offers."

Security beefed...

preparations for 26th January are in full swing, and there will be multi-tier security arrangements to ensure that people can come and go smoothly and enjoy the parade with peace of mind."

Meanwhile, an official told KNO that the multi-tier security measures have been put in place to ensure that day passes peacefully.

"Sanitization and area domination exercises are being carried out by security personnel to ensure safety of the people," the official added.

"The security has been beefed up in 20 districts, particularly in the border areas. Enhanced security measures, include road blockades, vehicle checks, security cordons, and search operations," the official said.

He said there is an extensive deployment of police and paramilitary forces along the International Border (IB) and Line of Control (LoC). "Senior officers have reviewed security arrangements in sensitive border areas to ensure effective coordination between various agencies," he added.

"To further bolster security, advanced surveillance technologies, including drones and high-resolution CCTV cameras, have been deployed to monitor event venues and surrounding areas," he said, adding that checkpoints have been set up in Srinagar and other district headquarters, particularly at key entry points.

"Random vehicle checks and frisking operations are being conducted to prevent the movement of subversive elements," he added. KNO

CS for enforcing...

them to deploy sufficient manpower from both the Health department and Police to enforce the Do's and Don'ts set in the SOP.

Dulloo further enjoined upon the divisional and district administration to not let down their guard and allow only tested edibles and non-edibles to be used by the persons under quarantine. He stressed that till the actual causes of these deaths are not known both the Police and Health professionals should carry on their investigations as required as per the set procedures.

He also urged them to study the reports received from the national diagnostic institutions that had taken samples from the village. He directed them to take every possible measure to protect the lives of these villagers till the toxicology reports point out the actual causes of these deaths.

He also took note of the work done so far by the SIT constituted by the Police Department and other investigation agencies including the Ministerial team sent by the Ministry of Home Affairs. He enquired from the experts the possible preventive measures that could be taken to control the further damage.

The Secretary H&ME, Dr Syed Abid Rashid Shah informed the meeting that every measure has been taken to isolate the families and provide them food and water after testing the same.

It was given out that the health teams are stationed there to keep surveillance for any of the symptoms appearing in any person. It has further been added that the local PHC/CHC has been kept in a state of readiness besides it is ensured that no food or eatables are exchanged as the families had been removed from their homes and kept under continuously monitored to safeguard their lives.

ED Jammu attaches...

case under money laundering act. "ED, Jammu has provisionally attached Hotel Trinetra Resorts and Hotel Green Orchid both at Patnitop (J&K) worth Rs. 14.93 Crore

Cyber Crime in India: Trends, Challenges, and Solutions released by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah

JINNEWSERVICE
JAMMU, JAN 21

The much-anticipated book "Cyber Crime in India: Trends, Challenges, and Solutions" by Rahul Pandit was officially released today by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, Omar Abdullah, at a special event in Jammu.

The book delves into the evolving landscape of cybercrime in India, providing in-depth insights into the challenges posed by digital threats and offering practical solutions to address these issues. With a focus on raising awareness and fostering collaboration among stakeholders, the



book is a valuable resource for policy-makers, law enforcement agencies, and citizens. While unveiling the book, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah lauded Rahul Pandit's efforts in addressing such a crucial subject. "This book is a timely contribution to understanding and combating the growing menace of cybercrime in our country. Rahul Pandit's expertise and vision are evident in his work, and I am confident this book will serve as a guide for tackling emerging challenges in the digital age," the Chief Minister stated.

115th Annual General Meeting of Ramakrishna Mission held

JINNEWSERVICE
JAMMU, JAN 21

The 115th Annual General Meeting of the Ramakrishna Mission was held at Belur Math, district Howrah, West Bengal. During the meeting, the General Secretary of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission presented the "Report of the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission" on the organization's activities and achievements during FY 2023-24.

Swami Suvirananda, General Secretary of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission informed that the Mission was honored with several awards, including the Governor's Award for Excellence from the Governor of West Bengal, recognizing its significant contributions to social service.

Additionally, the Mission received the Arunachal Pradesh State Award for its meritorious services in the state. Students of Vivekananda University excelled in the All India Sanskrit Students Talent Festival, securing 1 gold, 1 silver, and 1 bronze medal, hosted by the National Sanskrit University, Tirupati. Further, Vivekananda School in Agartala was acknowledged as an exemplary CBSE institution by the Chairperson of the Central Board of Secondary Education. The school also participated in a national-level boot camp conducted by NITI Aayog, Government of India, achieving 6th position.

Expanding its reach, the Ramakrishna Mission inaugurated six new branch centers at Gurugram in Haryana, Kalyani in West Bengal, Kharupe-

tia in Assam, Sakwar in Maharashtra, Thirumukudal in Tamil Nadu, and Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh. Additionally, three new Ramakrishna Math centers were established at Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh, Dakshineswar in West Bengal, and Venkatapura in Karnataka.

In India, the Ramakrishna Mission and Ramakrishna Math operated through 235 branch centers and sub-centers, spending Rs 1,292.03 crore on service activities. These initiatives benefited millions of people across diverse sectors. Relief and rehabilitation efforts reached 5.23 lakh beneficiaries, utilizing Rs 8.56 crore. General welfare programs supported 56.34 lakh individuals with Rs 29.07 crore. Medical services, the most extensive sector, benefited 79.28 lakh people with an

expenditure of Rs 496.70 crore. Educational initiatives impacted 2.87 lakh beneficiaries, with Rs 712.89 crore dedicated to this sector. Rural development programs benefited 2.40 lakh individuals, with Rs 18.31 crore spent, while Rs 26.50 crore was allocated for the publication of literature.

Internationally, the Ramakrishna Mission and Ramakrishna Math operated in 24 countries through 100 centers and sub-centers, offering various service activities that continue to promote their mission of universal welfare and spiritual growth.

The Ramakrishna Mission expressed its heartfelt gratitude to its members, well-wishers, and devotees for their unwavering support and cooperation in advancing its service programs.

ADGP Jammu chairs meeting to review Republic Day arrangements

JINNEWSERVICE
JAMMU, JANU 21

Addl. Director General of Police Jammu zone, Sh. Anand Jain, IPS, held a meeting with the officers of intelligence agencies, Army/BSF/CRPF/Armed and District Police at Zonal Police Headquarters, Jammu, to review the security and logistical arrangements for the upcoming Republic Day celebrations in the zone.

The agenda of the meeting was to ensure the smooth and secure

execution of Republic Day events in Jammu. The discussions covered aspects such as law and order management, traffic arrangements, security protocols, coordination between different agencies, and ensuring the safety of participants and spectators.

The ADGP emphasized the importance of meticulous planning and coordination among all concerned agencies to ensure the smooth and safe conduct of Republic Day celebrations. Special

attention was given to maintaining high security levels, efficient traffic management, and ensuring the readiness of all law enforcement and emergency response units. He further directed SSP Jammu/SSP Traffic City and all supervisory officers to identify and create adequate parking arrangements and also maintain a high level of alert in their respective jurisdictional areas. The following key officials were present at the meeting: DIG CRPF Jammu

Sector, DIG BSF Frontier Jammu, DIG Traffic Jammu, DIG Armed Jammu, DIG JKS Range, Asst. Commissioner, SB, Jammu, Asst. Dir., IB Jammu, SSP PCR Jammu, SSP Security Jammu, SSP CID CI Jammu, SSP Railways Jammu, SSP Jammu, SSP CID SB Jammu, Commandant, IRP 18th Bn, SSP APCR Jammu, SSP Traffic City Jammu, SSP Telecom. Jammu, SP South/Rural/Hqrs Jammu, SP Ops Jammu, Repts of 16 Corps, and 26 Infantry Div.

(approx.) in the Patnitop Development Authority (PDA) case under the PMLA, 2002," the statement reads. KNO

NC, PDP enter...

those who have worked hard didn't even make the list. Are not you (government & JKSSB) able to conduct exams transparently," she said.

Itija alleged that all the recruitment exams held since 2019 have irregularities. She said agencies like Aptech are tasked with the responsibility of conducting the exams. "There seems a nexus between those who are at the highest position in power and the agencies conducting exams," she said, asking if the government that "rose to power by making lofty promises has conveniently washed their hands off any accountability".

Responding to her allegation, the NC spokesperson, Ifra Jan targeted PDP for what she termed as the biggest recruitment scam in J&K Bank. "Itija Mufti belongs to the party that is responsible for the biggest recruitment scam of J&K Bank. We are not answerable to PDP but to

the people of J&K," she said.

Ifra further added that these exams have been conducted by the Lieutenant Governor-led administration and instead of raising fingers on the elected government; she should have posed this question to the BJP and LG administration.

"PDP has been raising questions on the NC government only. We have nothing to do with these exams," the NC spokesperson said, adding that the investigation should be held if the BJP and LG administration have done anything wrong in the recruitment process.

Ifra asked Itija to muster the courage to ask this question to the LG administration rather than "sabotaging the elected government like the way they have been sabotaging the fight for the restoration of statehood".

The aspirants, who appeared for the JKP Constable Telecommunication and Photography exams, have reportedly cried foul, alleging major irregularities and questioning the transparency of the selection process.

According to aspirants, those who topped the Telecommunication and Photography exams had alarm-

District Administration Poonch hosts 3-day Chess Tournament

JI NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, JANUARY 21

The District Administration Poonch, in collaboration with the Department of Youth Services and Sports, kicked off a three-day chess tournament today here at DNRM Girls Higher Secondary School.

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal inaugurated the tournament in presence of ADC Tahir Mustafa Malik, CPO Mohammad Rafi, AD Food Adil Shabir, DIO NIC Parvinder Singh and other officers were present.

At the opening ceremony, the Deputy Commissioner engaged with the participants, encouraging them to actively partake in sports, highlighting the importance of chess as both a mental challenge and a source of enjoyment.

The tournament will feature a competitive environment with significant incentives for participants. The Deputy Commissioner announced a cash prize of Rs 5,000 for



first place, Rs 3,000 for second and Rs 2000 for third position. Emphasizing the historical significance of chess, the Deputy Commissioner noted that the game originated in India before spreading to the rest of the world, reinforcing the nation's rich cultural heritage in sports.

The tournament represents a significant opportunity for young athletes in Poonch to showcase their skills, foster camaraderie, and promote a spirit of healthy competition.

DC reviews achievements under HADP in Poonch

JI NEWS SERVICE
POONCH, JANUARY 21

Deputy Commissioner Poonch Vikas Kundal on Tuesday chaired a meeting to review the implementation and achievements made under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) in the current financial year 2023-24.

The meeting featured comprehensive updates from stakeholder departments, including Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, and Fisheries. Departmental functionaries presented detailed PowerPoint presentations showcasing program registrations, approvals, and ongoing projects.

The Deputy Commissioner asked the Chief Horticulture Officer to enhance data quality on the DAKSH portal and encourage maximum acceptance of applications under the Kisan Samridhi Abhiyan (KSA). He urged the officials to improve the registration under Kisan Sathi and increase the enrollment of farmers



under KKG. Highlighting the importance of diverse crop cultivation, the Deputy Commissioner directed the promotion of multiple crops, including pulses, kinu, and hill garlic, particularly in the Mendhar region. He also advocated for the cultivation of Rajmash in Surankote and organic clusters.

Additionally, the Deputy Commissioner called for encouraging farmers to avail the poly house and other schemes across all subdivisions. He instructed allied departments to actively promote all available schemes and proposed the establish-

ment of a Mushroom Sale counter at prominent locations, such as the Bus Stand and near Poonch Fort. Furthermore, he urged the Agriculture Department to focus on growing till.

In a bid to streamline processes, the Deputy Commissioner directed concerned SDOs to visit bank branches to expedite the clearance of pending cases under the PM Fasal Bima Yojana.

The meeting was attended by CAO, CHO, CAHO, DSHO, DSO, AD Fisheries, AD Floriculture, AMO, SDAOs all, Veterinary Surgeon all and other concerned officers.

District Manager NABARD encourages women trainees at SBI RSETI Ramban

JI NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, JANUARY 21

District Development Manager (DDM) NABARD Arashi Sharma today visited SBI Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI) and interacted with the women trainees enrolled for tailoring training program.

The DDM appreciated the efforts of SBI RSETI Ramban in empowering women through skill development initiatives. She encouraged the trainees to utilize their new-found skills to achieve

self-reliance and explore entrepreneurial opportunities in tailoring and related fields.

Director SBI RSETI S. Harvinder Singh was also present on the occasion. He briefed the DDM about the institute's ongoing and upcoming training programs, highlighting the positive impact of such initiatives on rural women.

The trainees expressed their enthusiasm for the program, thanking NABARD and SBI RSETI for providing them with this opportunity to gain valuable skills.

Two-day Handball tournament concludes at Mini Stadium Udhampur

JI NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, JANUARY 21

The two-day Handball Tournament organized by the Kargil Martyrs Handball Club Udhampur for under-14 and under-17 boys and girls successfully concluded today here at Mini Sta-

dium. Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai was the chief guest at the closing ceremony. A total of 11 teams from across the district participated in the event, showcasing their talent and enthusiasm for the sport.

R-Day 2025 arrangements finalized at Bandipora

JI NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, JANUARY 21

To ensure smooth and successful celebration of Republic Day 2025, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, on Tuesday convened a meeting of officers from various departments at the Mini Secretariat, Bandipora.

The meeting was aimed at reviewing and finalizing the arrangements for the celebration of the national event.

The meeting discussed threadbare various aspects of the preparations, including flag unfurling, parade activities, cultural performances, and other logistical arrangements.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bandipora, Zaffar Husson Shawl, briefed the chair regarding the measures and plans in place by different departments to ensure the successful conduct of the event.

It was informed that, at the sub-divisional level, Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) will unfurl the National Flag while at tehsil level, the concerned tehsildars will preside over Republic Day functions. Similarly at block level, the Block Development Officers (BDOs) will lead the celebrations besides all district officers whose offices are located outside the Mini Secretariat have been directed to organize flag unfurling ceremonies in their respective offices.



It was given out that the Republic Day parade at S.K Stadium Bandipora will feature contingents from Jammu and Kashmir Executive Police, Armed Police, Indian Reserve Police (IRP), District Police Women Battalion, Fire and Emergency Services, National Cadet Corps (NCC), Home Guards/SDRF, Special Police Officers (SPOs) and students from various schools.

The meeting was informed that the event will include vibrant cultural performances by students from local schools, highlighting India's rich heritage, diversity, and patriotic spirit.

The DC also took stock of the ongoing rehearsal activities and directed all departments to ensure flawless execution.

Qadri emphasized strict adherence to timelines and called for inter-

departmental coordination to address any gaps in the preparations.

The DC also reviewed other logistical arrangements, including seating, Public Address system, power backup, and security. Special attention was given to crowd management and ensuring smooth access for attendees.

He urged the public, and all stakeholders to actively participate in the Republic Day celebrations, emphasizing the importance of fostering unity, patriotism, and respect for the country's sovereignty.

Among others, the meeting was attended by ADDC Mohammad Ashraf Bhatt; ACR, ACD, Commanding Officer CRPF 3rd Battalion, CPO, DIO, DySP, District Officers of various Departments and other concerned.

SKUAST-K, KVK Budgam conclude MSME entrepreneurship skill development programme for farmers

JI NEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, JANUARY 21

SKUAST-K, KVK Budgam Tuesday successfully concluded its six weeks MSME entrepreneurship skill development programme titled 'From spores to harvest: a comprehensive mushroom training' sponsored by Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Govt of India.

The programme that commenced on from 12 December, 2024 culminated today on 21 January, 2025 was aimed at empowering farmers and farm women with vital skills in mushroom cultivation.

The program equipped participants with knowledge and practical experience to enhance their farming practices and diversify their income sources. This hands-on training brought together over 25 participants of Galwanpora and adjoining villages of district Budgam.

During the programme participants were engaged in a series of interactive sessions covering crucial aspects of mushroom farming, including selecting appropriate mushroom varieties, techniques for spawn preparation and substrate preparation, sustainable cultivation practices, pest and disease management, and harvesting and post-harvest handling.

The training included practical demonstrations allowing participants to get first-hand experience in mushroom farming operations.


Participants expressed enthusiasm and commitment in applying their newly acquired skills, with many indicating plans to establish their own mushroom farms or integrate mushroom cultivation into their existing farming practices.

The training also facilitated an interaction with mushroom entrepreneurs like Gowhar Ali, (National award winner in mushroom production) and Syed Arshad in order to share their experience and encouragement to the participant to take the lead for mushroom farming to


enhance food security and generate additional income for families.

An exposure visit to

Mushroom Research & Training Centre Shalimar was undertaken during the programme.



GOVT. OF JAMMU & KASHMIR, POWER DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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e-NIT NO: 05of 2025-26 **Dated:20/01/2025**

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

For and on behalf of the Managing Director, JPDCL, J&K Power Development Department; e-Bids are hereby invited from leading Marketing Agencies to handle **Digital Marketing and Influencer Marketing** Campaign of " PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana" as an IEC initiative by JPDCL on Social Media platforms: Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. The tagline of the Campaign shall be **"Ab Solar Lagwao, Bijli Banao Aur Bachat Karo"**.

Bidders are advised to study the Bidding Document carefully. Submission of e-Bid against this SBD shall be deemed to have been done after careful study and examination of the procedures, terms and conditions of the Standard Bidding Document with full understanding of its implications by the bidder.

- The tender document is available on website <http://jktenders.gov.in>.
- Interested bidders may view, download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e- Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below:

1	Date & Time of downloading of Standard Bidding Document	20/01/2025:1830 Hrs.
2	e-Bid submission (start) date & time	20/01/2025:1830 Hrs.
3	e-Bid submission (end) date & time	30/01/2025:1200 Hrs.
4	Hard Copy Submission date	29/01/2025:1630 Hrs.
5	Online Technical e-Bid Opening date and Time	31/01/2025:1200 Hrs.
6	Venue of opening of technical Bids	Office of the Executive Engineer, IT & C Division, JPDCL, Gladni Grid Station Complex, Narwal, Jammu
7	Online Financial e-Bid Opening date and Time	shall be communicated to the Qualified Bidders separately
8	Cost of e-Bid document	Rs. 500.00 (<i>Rupees Five Hundred only, Non-refundable</i>)
8	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit	Rs. 5,000.00 (<i>Rupees Five Thousand only</i>)

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
IT & C Division, JPDCL
Jammu

NO: IT&CD/Tender/J/236-40
Dated:20-01-2025
DIP/J-3661-P/24
Date: 21-1-26

DC reviews Meraj-un-Nabi (SAW) arrangements at Shopian

JI NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, JANUARY 21

In connection with the celebration of upcoming Meraj-un-Nabi (SAW), Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, M Shahid Saleem today chaired a meeting of officers at Mini-Secretariat, here to finalize the arrangements by line departments for smooth observation of the auspicious day.

Auqaf Committee members of Asar Sharief Pinjora intimated about the arrangements to be kept in place, with particular focus on electricity and sanitation. The DC listened to them patiently and assured proper arrangements shall be made by the administration for the smooth celebration of the day. The DC instructed concerned officers for making adequate

arrangements with respect to proper electricity, illumination, water supply, sanitation, transport & parking arrangements, security and medical facilities, etc.

At the Shrine of Asar-i-Sharief Pinjora, Shopian and other prominent religious places of the district, special night prayers shall be held which will be attended by hundreds of devotees.

EDITORIAL

How skill-based degrees are redefining India's future

DINESH SOOD

A Landmark Decision in the Kishenganga and Ratle Dispute

In a significant development, the World Bank-appointed neutral expert, Michel Lino, has extended support to India's framework for resolving disputes over the Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric projects. This marks a crucial moment in the longstanding contention between India and Pakistan over the provisions of the 1960 Indus Water Treaty (IWT), which governs water sharing and dispute resolution for the Indus River system. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) of India has welcomed the expert's decision, viewing it as a validation of its position and a step toward an equitable resolution.

The neutral expert's affirmation of jurisdiction over the seven points of difference raised by India underscores the legitimacy of New Delhi's approach. India has consistently maintained that disputes under the treaty should be addressed through the neutral expert mechanism, as stipulated in the IWT. By contrast, Pakistan's demand for concurrent proceedings via a Court of Arbitration has been criticized by India as a violation of the treaty's graded dispute resolution process. This divergence in approach has fueled the impasse, but the recent decision brings much-needed clarity.

The Kishenganga and Ratle projects have been focal points of contention, with Pakistan raising objections to their technical designs, alleging treaty violations. India, however, has argued that the projects comply with the treaty's provisions, emphasizing that the neutral expert's role is paramount in resolving such technical disputes. The expert's willingness to evaluate the merits of the case strengthens India's position and reaffirms the treaty's mechanism for resolving differences.

The decision's implications extend beyond the immediate dispute. By recognizing the authority of the neutral expert, the World Bank has reinforced the sanctity of the IWT's dispute resolution framework. This not only bolsters India's stance but also sets a precedent for handling future disagreements under the treaty. At a time when transboundary water conflicts are escalating globally, adherence to established mechanisms like the IWT serves as a model for cooperation and peaceful resolution.

India's refusal to engage with the Court of Arbitration's proceedings highlights the broader challenge of ensuring treaty compliance in the face of divergent interpretations. While Pakistan's concerns warrant consideration, initiating parallel processes risks undermining the treaty's integrity. The MEA's statement reiterates India's commitment to engaging with the neutral expert, signaling its intent to resolve the matter within the treaty's framework.

The dispute also brings into focus the evolving dynamics of the IWT. Signed in 1960 after nine years of negotiations, the treaty has withstood geopolitical tensions for over six decades. However, the growing complexities of water resource management and climate change underscore the need for periodic reviews and potential modifications, as envisaged under Article XII(3) of the treaty. Both nations must seize the opportunity for constructive dialogue to modernize the treaty while preserving its core principles of cooperation and mutual benefit.

The Kishenganga and Ratle projects symbolize India's aspirations for sustainable development and energy security. Hydropower projects are vital for meeting the country's growing energy demands while reducing its carbon footprint. At the same time, it is imperative to address Pakistan's genuine concerns to foster trust and goodwill. Water is a shared resource, and its equitable management is essential for regional stability.

India's education system is undergoing a quiet revolution. As the global job market evolves, the emphasis on traditional degrees gives way to skill-focused education tailored to the demands of a dynamic economy. A prime example is the introduction of degree courses in salons, spas, beauty parlours, and other vocational domains. These courses signify a paradigm shift in how we perceive education, employment, and entrepreneurship in 'Viksit Bharat.' This development addresses critical challenges. It aligns with the growing aspirations of India's youth, caters to burgeoning private sector industries, and equips individuals with skills for self-employment, entrepreneurship and opportunities abroad.

Growing Demand for Vocational Expertise

The global wellness industry, valued at over \$4 trillion, continues to expand, with India emerging as a key player.

The beauty and wellness sector alone is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 18 per cent over the next five years. The personal grooming industry demands nearly 1.3 million professionals annually, significantly surpassing the 3-4 lakh jobs the software industry adds yearly. This boom has created immense demand for skilled professionals, from hairstylists and spa therapists to salon manag-

ers and beauty wellness consultants. Recognising this, regulatory bodies like the UGC and AICTE have integrated skills courses into the education system. Indian universities now collaborate with training institutes to offer structured programmes like the Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Beauty and Wellness. These programmes cover skincare, makeup artistry and salon management.

Other universities offer diplomas and degree programmes in wellness and hospitality sectors, designed with industry leaders. Globally, institutions such as the London College of Beauty Therapy (UK) and the Australian Academy of Beauty Dermal and Laser offer world-class programmes. These courses adhere to international standards, providing globally recognised certifications that enhance employability abroad.

Parity Between B Voc and BSc Degrees

An essential aspect of this transformation is recognising the equivalence of Bachelor of Vocation (B Voc) and Bachelor of Science (BSc) degrees. While BSc focuses on academic learning, B Voc emphasises hands-on, industry-relevant training. Recent policy reforms place these degrees on par, ensuring vocational education is no longer seen as secondary but as an equally credible academic pathway. This parity allows B Voc graduates to access the same opportunities as BSc graduates in employment,



higher education, or competitive exams. It underscores the value of skills and practical expertise in driving economic growth.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and National Credit Framework

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) further strengthens this integration. RPL allows individuals to earn formal recognition for previous informal training or work experiences.

When aligned with the National Credit Framework, credits earned in schools, vocational training institutions, or universities become seamlessly transferable across sectors. This fosters flexibility in education, empowering individuals to personalise their learning journeys and reduce redundancy. By integrating RPL with skill-based programmes, India's education system becomes more inclusive and adaptable. Employment and Entrepreneurship Opportunities Skill-based degree programs unlock diverse career pathways:

1. Private Sector Jobs: Luxury wellness brands, fitness chains, and beauty franchises seek trained professionals. Graduates

can secure jobs in high-end spas, salons, and wellness centres with lucrative salaries and career growth.

2. Self-Employment and Freelancing: These courses empower entrepreneurial individuals to establish businesses. Graduates can run boutique salons or offer personalised wellness services, catering to niche markets.

3. Government Jobs: Recognising vocational degrees has expanded opportunities in government roles. Graduates are eligible for positions in wellness centres and initiatives under schemes like Skill India and PMKVY (Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana).

4. Global Opportunities: Programmes often include internationally recognised certifications, enhancing employability abroad. For instance, graduates from LCBT in the UK find opportunities in European markets, while Australian academy-trained professionals thrive in Asia-Pacific regions.

Breaking Stigmas Around Vocational Careers

Vocational careers have long been viewed as secondary options. Introducing structured degree programs challenges these

stereotypes. Formal education in salons, spas, and beauty parlours combines technical skills, business acumen, and industry exposure, positioning these professions as aspirational.

This shift is especially empowering for women, who form a significant portion of the workforce in these fields and now gain access to recognised qualifications that enhance professional credibility. Challenges in Implementation

India's higher education system, often criticised for being theory-heavy, struggles to improve practical skill sets. Initiatives like the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and platforms like SWAYAM aim to modernise education, but challenges remain:

1. Quality Assurance: Maintaining high standards and industry relevance requires collaboration with established industry players.

2. Awareness: Many students and parents remain unaware of these opportunities, favouring traditional careers. Awareness campaigns are crucial.

3. Infrastructure and Faculty: Vocational education requires specialised infrastructure and trained faculty. Institutions must invest in state-of-the-art facilities and continuous professional development for educators.

4. Recognition and Accreditation: Further integration into academia and government recruitment processes will enhance vocational degrees' credibility.

Vision for the Future

Skill-based degree programmes signify societal reform, recognising youth aspirations and aligning education with market realities. By formalising careers through structured courses, India creates a skilled and confident workforce.

These reforms reflect a commitment to inclusivity, providing pathways for diverse socio-economic backgrounds to pursue rewarding careers.

India is on the brink of an educational revolution. Skill-based degrees in fields like salons, spas, and beauty parlours redefine education. These programmes bridge the gap between aspiration and opportunity, equipping students with skills to thrive globally. As these initiatives gain momentum, scaling them, ensuring quality, and destigmatising vocational careers are imperative. With parity between B Voc and BSc degrees and the integration of RPL into the National Credit Framework, India's education system is transforming into a flexible and robust framework. These changes will meet today's demands and shape a prosperous future for the nation.

(The writer is co-founder and MD of Oran International, a training partner of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and a network member of India International Skills Centres, an initiative of Gol. The views expressed are personal)

The Transformative Role of Educators

SAKSHI SETHI

Education is not merely the transfer of knowledge. It is the shaping of minds, the fostering of growth and even more the cultivation of potential. As educators, the role extends far beyond delivering lectures or grading assignments. It encompasses mentoring, inspiring and empowering individuals to become critical thinkers and responsible citizens. Reflecting on our roles allows us to embrace our responsibilities more consciously and adapt to the evolving needs of learners and society. In contemporary education, the role of the educator has shifted from

being the sole source of knowledge to a facilitator of learning.

This transition underscores the importance of guiding students to explore, question, and construct their understanding. It is about creating an environment where students feel safe to express their thoughts, make mistakes and grow from them. The role of an educator becomes especially significant when working with board students. When talking about them, the educator's primary responsibility is to ensure a strong understanding of the curriculum, including breaking down complex concepts, identifying and address-

ing knowledge gaps and providing effective study strategies.

Beyond teaching content, educators must help students develop time management and exam techniques to perform confidently under pressure. The role demands subject expertise and a keen awareness of the examination format and trends. Today, the modern educational landscape for board students includes challenges such as increasing competition, societal expectations, and the rapid integration of technology in learning. Educators need to stay adaptable, leveraging digital tools to make learning engaging and accessible by

recognising diverse learning styles employing strategies to meet those needs, and ensuring that every student feels included and valued. Additionally, acknowledging the diverse learning needs of students and personalising instruction whenever possible is also crucial for ensuring their success. There is no denying that students are at a critical juncture in their academic journey, preparing for examinations that often determine their future educational and career paths. Reflecting on our roles as educators in this context reveals the need for a balanced approach that combines academic rigour, emotional support, and life-

skill development.

One of the most vital roles of an educator is to be a lifelong learner. Education is a dynamic field, and staying updated with pedagogical advancements, cultural shifts, and technological innovations is essential. This commitment to personal growth will not only enhance teaching effectiveness but will also model the value of continuous learning for students. Teaching values such as critical thinking, collaboration, and adaptability prepare students for challenges beyond the examination hall. It is essential to emphasise that education is about equipping them with skills for life, not just marks on a

report card. Reflecting on our roles as educators highlights the immense responsibility and opportunity, we have in shaping young lives. It requires academic expertise, emotional intelligence, and unwavering dedication. By nurturing not just the intellect but also the spirit of our students, we as educators can guide them toward success in their exams and, more importantly, in life. By embracing our multifaceted roles with passion and purpose, we can create transformative experiences for our students and leave an enduring legacy of knowledge and wisdom.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Balancing rights and order: Innovations in protest management

OP SINGH

Thousands of people gather, holding banners and chanting slogans, their voices echoing through the streets. For law enforcement, these aren't merely demonstrations but skill, strategy, and restraint tests. Managing protests today demands more than enforcing law and order; it requires innovation, preparation, and trust.

Reflecting on this evolving role, a senior officer once remarked, "Our goal isn't to silence dissent but to ensure it unfolds safely for everyone involved. Effective protest management is about enabling expression while maintaining peace." This philosophy increasingly shapes how law enforcement approaches public demonstrations globally and in India.

Dialogue Policing:

Dialogue policing, extensively practised in Sweden

and Norway, prioritises proactive communication between police and protest organisers. Liaison officers meet organisers before demonstrations to discuss routes, safety measures, and mutual expectations. This approach fosters trust and de-escalates tensions before they arise. Indian police have applied similar strategies during political rallies and cultural events, engaging community leaders to ensure peaceful outcomes.

Leveraging Technology:

Technology is transforming protest management globally. In countries like Singapore and South Korea, drones with high-resolution cameras monitor crowd density and movement, while artificial intelligence (AI) tools analyse data to predict potential flashpoints. This enables law enforcement to allocate resources proactively and prevent crises. Indian police are increasingly adopting these tools. Drones were



deployed during the farmers' protests and other large-scale events, offering real-time monitoring of crowd dynamics. Social media monitoring cells track misinformation and narratives, enabling swift corrective measures. Law enforcement enhances its situational awareness and credibility by integrating technology with traditional methods.

Non-Lethal Methods:

Germany sets a global

benchmark for using non-lethal tools like water cannons, sound devices, and barricades to manage large gatherings. Officers trained in crowd psychology focus on isolating disruptive elements while respecting the rights of peaceful protesters. In India, non-lethal methods have been employed during sensitive protests, such as barricading roads to control crowds or using water cannons to disperse tense gatherings. The

focus remains on proportionality—ensuring responses are measured, harm is minimised, and democratic freedoms are respected.

Transparency and Accountability

Transparency is crucial for public trust. In New Zealand, body-worn cameras document police actions during protests, ensuring accountability and protecting officers from false accusations. Oversight bodies review footage to ensure compliance with established protocols. In India, body-worn cameras have been introduced in several states, particularly during sensitive operations.

Multi-agency coordination for Large Protests

Managing large-scale demonstrations often requires multi-agency collaboration. In the United States, unified command centres integrate local police, state law enforcement, and federal agencies

for cohesive responses. These centres streamline resource sharing and operational alignment, which is critical for complex events. India's law enforcement regularly employs similar coordination during significant events, such as farmers' protests, political rallies, and national festivals. Central paramilitary forces often supplement state police, ensuring adequate workforce and resources. Clear protocols and seamless coordination are the backbone of these efforts.

Comprehensive Training:

Training is a cornerstone of effective protest management. Canadian police emphasise de-escalation, cultural sensitivity, and conflict resolution, with officers undergoing practical simulations to prepare for high-pressure scenarios.

In India, the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) has introduced advanced modules covering non-lethal tools, technology

integration, and crowd psychology.

Ethical Policing:

Ethical considerations are central to managing protests. Globally, technologies like drones and AI are governed by protocols that protect privacy and civil liberties. Similarly, the principle of proportionality—using the minimum force necessary—guides actions to ensure demonstrators' rights are respected. In India, police increasingly emphasise ethical practices. Engaging community leaders, addressing grievances, and prioritising dialogue reflect a commitment to balancing public safety with democratic freedoms. The shift towards a restrained, people-centric approach underscores the evolving role of law enforcement in a modern democracy.

(The writer is Director General of Police and Head of the Haryana State Narcotics Bureau; views are personal)

Action on 9 key health conditions can add 2.5 healthy days to women's lives: WEF report

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 21

Targeting nine key health conditions may be crucial for women's health and add the equivalent of 2.5 healthy days per woman per year, according to new research released at the ongoing World Economic Forum (WEF) on Tuesday.

The new report shows that compared to men, women live one-fourth more of their lives in poor health. Focussing on the nine conditions, categorised as lifespan and healthspan conditions may be key to boosting their lives and health.

"The nine conditions are divided into lifespan conditions, related to the total number of years lived (maternal hypertensive disorders, postpartum haemorrhage, ischemic heart disease, cervical cancer, and breast cancer) and health span conditions, related to how many of those years are healthy (endometriosis, menopause, migraine, and premenstrual syndrome)," said the report, published in collaboration with the



McKinsey Health Institute (MHI).

The report noted that targeted action around these nine key health conditions may help cut down the global disease burden by 27 million disability-adjusted life years as well as add the equivalent of 2.5 healthy days per woman per year.

It also highlighted the vast economic opportunities of investing in women's health. Targeting the nine conditions also has the potential to transform millions of lives and unlock

\$400 billion in global GDP annually by 2040, said the report.

"Measuring progress is essential for driving meaningful change and developing effective health-care strategies tailored to women," said Shyam Bishen, Head of the Centre for Health and Healthcare and member of the Executive Committee, WEF.

"Despite the opportunity to add 2.5 additional healthy days to women's lives, they are often overlooked due to a lack of sex-specific research -- only 10

per cent of clinical trials for ischemic heart disease and migraine report such data," she added.

As part of this initiative, the Forum, in collaboration with MHI, launches the Women's Health Impact Tracking (WHIT) -- a publicly accessible tool designed to measure and address global health gaps and promote equitable, scalable solutions worldwide.

By providing data-driven insights on health outcomes and economic opportunities, the platform highlights the urgent need for investment in three underfunded conditions: menopause, premenstrual syndrome, and migraine, representing a \$315 billion GDP opportunity.

Globally, there have been critical disparities in women's health outcomes, driven by gaps in data collection, research funding, clinical practice guidelines, and healthcare delivery systems. Notably, while 54 per cent of the women's health burden occurs in low- and middle-income countries, only 23

per cent of clinical trials focus on these regions.

The report emphasised that improving data accuracy, increasing research funding for women-specific conditions, and enhancing sex-based clinical guidelines could significantly reduce these disparities. "It is time to count women, study women, care for women, invest in women, and include all women," said Lucy Perez, Senior Partner at McKinsey & Company and Co-leader of the McKinsey Health Institute.

"Addressing these nine conditions can not only improve the lives of millions of women and unlock \$400 billion of economic uplift -- but it also provides a blueprint for scaling and tracking progress to close the broader women's health gap," Perez added.

The WEF Annual Meeting 2025 is being held in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland, from January 20 to 24. Global leaders are deliberating various issues under the theme 'Collaboration for the Intelligent Age'.

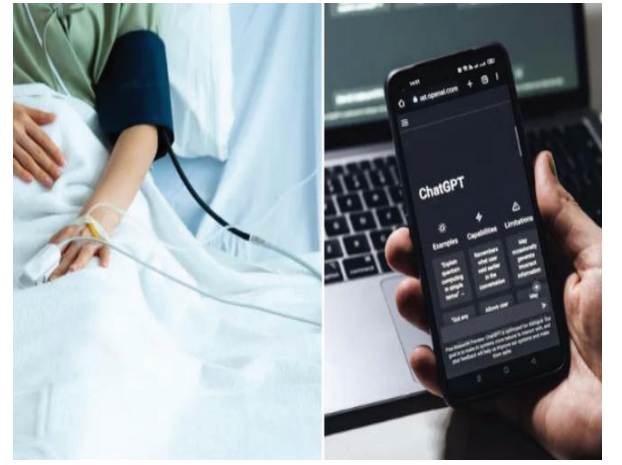
ChatGPT Saves Life: Man Credits AI for Diagnosing Critical Health Issue

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 21

A social media user shared a life-saving experience with ChatGPT, the artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot, after the AI correctly diagnosed a severe illness following a workout. The individual posted on Reddit, explaining that after a light workout a few days ago, he began feeling intense body soreness. Unsure about the unexpected health decline, he turned to ChatGPT for advice.

"I explained my symptoms to ChatGPT, and it recommended I immediately go to the hospital, as my symptoms aligned with moderate to severe Rhabdomyolysis," the user wrote in the post.

Rhabdomyolysis is a critical condition where muscle tissue breaks down rapidly, potentially leading to kidney damage, electrolyte imbalances,



and metabolic acidosis. If untreated, it can be fatal. Heeding the AI's advice, the man went to the hospital, where tests confirmed he was suffering from severe rhabdomyolysis.

"They performed lab work, and it turned out I had developed severe rhabdomyolysis," he explained. "I had to stay in the hospital for a week, getting constant IVs and being monitored."

The individual also

used ChatGPT to analyze his lab results, which were consistent with the medical team's findings. He was amazed that ChatGPT helped him understand his condition even before the doctor confirmed it.

The incident has gone viral on social media, with many praising ChatGPT for its potential to diagnose diseases based on symptoms and even provide medical advice, saving lives in the process.

WEF 2025: Rapid global access to new life-saving HIV medicines must to end AIDS, says UNAIDS

AGENCIES
DAVOS, JAN 21

Global leaders must urgently prioritise and work to provide access to new long-acting HIV prevention -- and potentially treatment -- medicines in all low and middle-income countries, to help end AIDS by 2030, said the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) at the World Economic Forum's annual meeting here on Tuesday.

Two drugs have in the recent past shown potential against HIV: Lenacapavir and Cabotegravir.

Lenacapavir, produced by Gilead Sciences, has proved to be more than 95 per cent effective in preventing HIV with just two doses a year. The company is now conducting trials of once-yearly shots.

ViiV Healthcare has the injectable medicine Cabotegravir, administered once every two months to prevent HIV. It is already

being used in some countries.

While these new medicines are not a cure or a vaccine, they could halt the HIV pandemic.

Other tools to fight HIV include month-long vaginal rings -- currently in use -- and longer-acting pills and vaginal rings -- under trial. "These new technologies offer us a real shot at ending AIDS by 2030," said Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of UNAIDS and Under-Secretary-General of the UN, at the WEF.

"But it comes with a caveat -- only if pharmaceutical companies, governments, international partners, and civil society unite around HIV prevention and treatment revolution, can we use these medicines to their full potential and end AIDS much sooner than we previously thought," she added.

The breakthrough long-acting medicines could stem new HIV infections

and are already being used to suppress the virus for some people living with HIV. But their potential can't be unlocked unless everyone, everywhere who could benefit has access.

UNAIDS urged pharmaceutical companies to move faster and ensure "affordable pricing and generic competition" in the market for the new HIV medicines, Byanyima said. While UNAIDS applauded Gilead and ViiV's move to license generics manufacturing to several countries, it said they are moving too slowly.

As a result, generics aren't expected until next year, and many countries have been left out. Nearly all of Latin America, a region of rising HIV infections, has been excluded.

In addition, Gilead has licensed just six companies to make generic versions of the medicine -- with no producer in sub-Saharan Africa.

22 suspected Guillain-Barré Syndrome cases reported in Pune; samples sent to ICMR-NIV

AGENCIES
PUNE, JANUARY 21

Doctors suspect that either a bacterial or a viral infection has led to an immunological complication in these patients.

At least 22 suspected cases of Guillain Barre Syndrome (GBS), a rare neurological disorder, have been reported to the Pune Municipal Corporation largely from the Sinhad Road area following admission of patients to the intensive care units of Deenanath Mangeshkar Hospital and Poona Hospital, among others.

Dr Vaishali Jadhav, Assistant Medical Officer, PMC, confirmed the development and said the civic body will send a team to the affected areas to monitor the situation. "Presently, we have collected the blood samples of six patients from areas under the PMC and sent



them to the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Virology (ICMR-NIV) for further investigations," she said.

However, several doctors that The Indian Express spoke to said that, over the past week, they have been seeing patients from Sinhad Road and surrounding areas coming in with symptoms of loose

motions and fever as well as weakness in the limbs. "These patients have been diagnosed with having GBS," said Dr Sameer Jog, consultant intensivist at Deenanath Mangeshkar Hospital.

Dr Jog said 16 such patients -- six paediatric and ten adults -- have been admitted to his hospital alone in the last week

after they complained of weakness in the limbs. These patients were from areas like Dhayari, Sinhad Road and Kirkatwadi. Eight of these patients have been put on ventilator support, he said.

Dr Ajit Tambolkar, consulting intensivist at Poona Hospital, said they have three such patients in their ICU. "These patients are

from Sinhad road and Manik Baug," he said.

Doctors suspect that either a bacterial or a viral infection has led to an immunological complication in these patients. They said GBS is a rare autoimmune disorder that occurs when the immune system mistakenly attacks the peripheral nerves. Intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg) is the proven effective treatment for GBS.

The World Health Organisation states that GBS can affect the nerves that control muscle movement as well as those that transmit pain, temperature and touch sensations. This can result in muscle weakness, loss of sensation in the legs and/or arms and problems with swallowing or breathing. Most people recover fully from even the most severe GBS cases although some continue to experience weakness for long.

UP govt to launch comprehensive drumstick campaign to fight anemia

AGENCIES
LUCKNOW, JAN 21

The Uttar Pradesh government is set to address anemia among women and adolescents by promoting the cultivation and consumption of drumstick (moringa) through a large-scale awareness campaign.

Targeting 35 blocks in Gorakhpur, Varanasi, and Jhansi, the initiative aims to tackle malnutrition, boost awareness, and improve health. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, a strong advocate for Moringa, is championing its plantation and use as part of this innovative project.

In collaboration with the State Family Planning Service Innovation Project Agency (SIFPSA) and the National Health Mission (NHM), Executive Director Dr Pinky Jowal launched the campaign during National Nutrition Month, unveiling the project logo.

An intensive online awareness drive, including a WhatsApp helpline (9569703306) for informa-



tion and suggestions on moringa, was initiated to highlight the benefits of its consumption.

SIFPSA Deputy General Manager Digvijay Trivedi said, "Awareness about moringa will be promoted through paintings in Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, 100 schools, and Anganwadi centers, highlighting its benefits. Besides, posters, banners, and informational leaflets on moringa's health advantages will be included in the 'Shagun Kit' for newlywed couples, encouraging its use during pregnancy."

Incentives will be offered at the district level to encourage survival rates and innovative practices related to moringa cultivation and usage. Awards for first, second, and third places, along with consolation prizes, will be distributed based on merit.

To foster community engagement, monthly and quarterly online meetings will be conducted with ASHA workers, BCPM representatives, partner organizations like UNICEF, and other stakeholders to share experiences and strategies.

The initiative aims to

address malnutrition and ensure better health for women and adolescents in UP. Moringa, often called a miraculous health tree, is renowned for its exceptional nutritional and medicinal properties.

Its leaves, fruits, and seeds are rich in essential nutrients like iron, calcium, vitamin C, and antioxidants, making it highly effective in addressing nutritional deficiencies and diseases, particularly anemia.

This condition disproportionately affects women, adolescents, and children. Regular consumption of moringa has been scientifically proven to alleviate anemia symptoms by promoting blood formation and boosting energy levels.

The National Family Health Survey-5 reports that nearly 50 percent of women aged 15-49 in UP are anemic, while approximately 66 percent of children aged 6 months to 5 years also suffer from anemia.

Japan sees record surge in mycoplasma pneumonia cases

AGENCIES
TOKYO, JAN 21

Japan is experiencing a significant rise in mycoplasma pneumonia cases, with patient numbers reaching the highest levels for this time of year in the past decade.

According to the National Institute of Infectious Diseases, the weekly average number of mycoplasma pneumonia patients per reporting medical institution reached 1.11 as of January 12, an increase of 0.34 from the previous week and the highest for this period in a decade.

Mycoplasma pneumonia, a common infection among children, causes symptoms such as fever, fatigue, headaches, and persistent coughing. In severe cases, it can lead to pneumonia and require hospitalisation. It can take 1 to 4 weeks for symptoms to appear after someone's been exposed to the bacteria. Symptoms can last for several weeks.

Meanwhile, erythema infectiosum, which begins with cold-like symptoms followed by red rashes on the cheeks, is also on the rise. Reports from approximately 3,000 medical institutions nationwide showed an average of 0.94 cases per



facility in the same week compared with 0.78 from the previous week, Xinhua news agency reported.

Experts stressed the importance of infection prevention measures, including wearing masks, as influenza also remains widespread.

M pneumoniae is the pathogen most commonly associated with disease in humans. M pneumoniae is now considered a common cause of community-acquired pneumonia and is transmitted from person to person via respiratory droplets during close contact. It has an incubation period that ranges between 2 to 3 weeks.

Like most respiratory pathogens,

infection usually occurs during the winter months but can happen year-round.

Estimates show that around 1 per cent of the population of the United States is infected annually. Incidence may be much higher since infection can be subclinical or cause milder disease that does not require hospitalisation.

Outbreaks of mycoplasma infection occur in military recruits, hospitals, nursing homes, and other long-term care facilities. Only five to ten per cent of people infected with mycoplasma develop pneumonia. It causes upper and lower respiratory tract infections in all age groups.

Another mighty blow: 14 Maoists killed in major operation on Chhattisgarh-Odisha border

AGENCIES

RAIPUR, JAN 21

In a major crackdown, security forces neutralised 14 Maoists in a fierce encounter that lasted over 24 hours in the dense forests along the Odisha-Chhattisgarh border, officials said on Tuesday.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah lauded the operation, calling it a "mighty blow to Naxalism." In a post on X, he stated, "Our security forces have achieved a major success towards

building a Naxal-free Bharat. The CRPF, SOG Odisha, and Chhattisgarh Police, in a joint operation, have neutralised 14 Naxalites along the Odisha-Chhattisgarh border."

He added, "With our resolve for a Naxal-free India and the joint efforts of our security forces, Naxalism is breathing its last today."

Police reported the recovery of a cache of weapons and Maoist material from the site. Preliminary findings reveal that several of the deceased

were female Maoist operatives.

On Monday, security personnel discovered two bodies, including that of a female Maoist. A jawan injured during the encounter was airlifted to Raipur for medical treatment.

This operation is among the largest anti-Naxal campaigns in recent times and is being hailed as a turning point in the fight against Maoism. It is seen as a major blow to the Maoist groups that have been active in the

region for years.

Sources indicate that the search operation is at the encounter site is still going on, with the possibility of discovering more bodies or weapons. However, official confirmation is awaited.

The operation was launched based on Intelligence inputs regarding Maoist activity in the Kularighat reserve forest of Chhattisgarh, near Odisha's Nuapada district. The encounter began Monday night and continued into Tuesday morn-

ing in the forest under the Mainpur police station area.

The police have suggested that the death toll may rise as the operation progresses.

This intensified crackdown follows a recent Maoist attack in Chhattisgarh, where eight security personnel lost their lives after their vehicle was ambushed. Union Home Minister Amit Shah reiterated the government's commitment to eradicating Naxalism in Chhattisgarh by 2026.

Society cannot have humanitarian approach towards an inhuman: CM Mamata Banerjee on RG Kar verdict

AGENCIES

KOLKATA, JAN 21

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Tuesday that society cannot have a "humanitarian" approach towards an "inhuman" individual.

She said this while expressing her opinion on the verdict by a special court in Kolkata on the ghastly rape and murder of a woman doctor of R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital. The special court on Monday sentenced Sanjay Roy, the sole convict in the case, to life imprisonment.

"What is the meaning of 'life imprisonment'? Often lifers get released on parole. If a convict is alive there is a chance that he might commit the same crime again. If anyone chooses to be 'inhuman', how can society be 'humanitarian' towards him? That is why we demanded a 'death sentence' for the convict in the R.G. Kar tragedy. It is really the rarest of rare crimes," the Chief Minister said while addressing a state government programme in Malda district.

Her observations came just a couple of hours after the state government approached a division bench of the Calcutta High Court challenging the January 20 verdict of the special court and seeking the death penalty for the convict in the case.

Commenting on the murder of Dulal Sarkar a.k.a. Babla, the Trinamool Congress councillor from ward number 22 of English Bazar Municipality in the same district earlier this month, the Chief Minister gave a strong note of caution that the miscreants

and mafias, even if associated with her party, will not be spared at any cost.

The murder is reportedly a fallout of infighting in the ruling party, sources had said.

Referring to the recent tension in neighbouring Bangladesh, having a stretch of international borders with Malda district, the Chief Minister emphasized that in case there are border skirmishes with the Border Security Force (BSF), the people residing in the bordering villages should refrain from going there during the period of tension.

"At the same time, the local people will have to be careful so that no terrorist can take shelter in the district either at any hotel or rent any room at a house in the bordering villages," the Chief Minister said.

AAP, BJP cross swords over Hindu voters' sentiments

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 21

With an eye on Hindu voters, the ruling AAP and the Opposition BJP on Tuesday crossed swords over characters of the 'Ramayana', with the latter accusing the former Chief Minister of disrespecting Hindu deities.

Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva visited the Hanuman Temple at Connaught Place to offer prayers to Shri Ram Darbar, Lord Hanuman, and Sant Tulsiadas and told Kejriwal to stop playing with Hindu sentiments.

He sought forgiveness for Kejriwal who, according to Sachdeva, recently shared a misrepresentation of the Ramayana, thereby disrespecting Lord Sitaram and hurting the sentiments of millions

of Hindus.

Sachdeva also decided to observe a symbolic fast on Tuesday as an act of prayer while continuing with his regular activities.

Kejriwal countered by accusing the BJP of possessing traits like demon king Ravana and warned slum dwellers and the poor in Delhi not to trust the BJP. "If the BJP comes to power, it will swallow the poor like a demon," he said, addressing a press conference.

He said the BJP leaders were holding a protest outside his house because he had described the golden deer - central to 'Sita Haran' in Ramayana - as Ravana.

"They say the deer was not Ravana but Mareech and I have disrespected Ravana by calling him the golden deer. I am shocked

to see the BJP leaders' love for Ravana. I guess, it is so because they themselves have traits like demon king Ravana," said Kejriwal.

He also hit out at the BJP's Sankalp Patra Part-2 and warned poor families in Delhi that the BJP may stop free education for all in government schools and free treatment in Mohalla Clinics, adding that a withdrawal of welfare schemes will burden each family with an expenditure of Rs 15,000 a month.

The BJP accused Kejriwal of spreading lies and reiterated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guarantees of giving houses to slum dwellers and continuing all free welfare schemes, along with Rs 2,500 per month to women, when its government comes to power after the February 5 Assembly election.

Assam CM holds meeting with Vice-President of world's leading semiconductor vendor in Seoul

AGENCIES

GUWAHATI, JAN 21

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma held a discussion with top official of leading semiconductor in the world in Seoul on Tuesday.

Taking to X, CM Sarma wrote, "Began today's engagements in Seoul with a productive meeting with Dr Joon Choi, Vice President of @SKhynix, one of the world's largest semiconductor vendors. I shared my vision of establishing Assam as a global semiconductor hub and emphasised that enabling a corresponding semiconductor ecosystem is one of the major priorities of our government."

CM Sarma is in the South Korean capital Seoul to showcase Assam's



strength as a potential destination for investments. The state government will host an investment summit 'Advantage Assam' in Guwahati in February.

Addressing top industry players in Seoul, the Assam CM earlier said: "I am of the firm belief that if Assam can house an automobile manufacturing

ecosystem, we could transform the socio-economic landscape of the North East."

"Today, during my meeting with CEOs and Leaders from South Korea's automobile ancillary firms, I offered them the unstinted support of our State, should they choose to build a base in Assam.

With easy access to India's \$100 billion auto industry and that of South East Asia, Assam offers them unparalleled advantages," he said.

CM Sarma also met a delegation of the Korean International Trade Association (KITA) and discussed investment prospects in Assam.

He said: "Had a great meeting with the delegation of the Korean International Trade Association (KITA). It is the country's largest business organisation representing over 73,000 companies. We are especially exploring how Assam can leverage KITA's vast network to ensure newer markets for Assam's tea, silk and agri products among others."

The Assam Chief Minister also said: "I had an

excellent discussion with Kyungsung Kang, the President of Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) and his team in Seoul today. We discussed a shared strategy to explore avenues of partnership for growth and development in fields of trade, commerce, industry and skilling for mutual benefits of Assam and Korean businesses."

The Advantage Assam summit will highlight attracting investors across the globe to invest in the state. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will kickstart the summit.

According to Chief Minister Sarma, the event, scheduled for February 25 and 26, would also highlight the traditional Jhumur dance of the tea tribe communities.

Rajasthan Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani advised angioplasty in Jaipur, health better

AGENCIES

JAIPUR, JAN 21

Rajasthan Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani, who was rushed to the medical facility after he experienced chest pain, is scheduled to undergo angiography on Tuesday at Sawai Man Singh (SMS) Hospital in Jaipur.

Deepak Maheshwari, Principal of SMS Medical College and a senior cardiologist, stated that Devnani, 77, will be discharged if the angiography results are normal.

Maheshwari added, "Angiography will help determine if there is any cardiac issue. Devnani's health has significantly



improved since Monday night, but he remains under observation in the ICU."

State Health Minister Gajendra Singh Khinvsar visited SMS Hospital around 10 a.m. on Tuesday. He went to the ICU to

meet Devnani, enquired about his health, and spent 15-20 minutes discussing his condition with the doctors.

Devnani had travelled to Patna to attend the two-day All India Presiding Officers' Conference,

inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

During the conference, Devnani suddenly complained of chest pain and was taken to the Indira Gandhi Institute of Cardiology at Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH). Tests, including an ECG and 2-D Echo, were conducted. Although angiography was recommended, Devnani declined, saying that he underwent a similar procedure last year.

Upon learning of Devnani's condition, the Rajasthan government dispatched a special charter plane to Patna.

It carried Deepak Maheshwari, another doctor, nursing staff, and

members of Devnani's family.

They accompanied the Minister back to Jaipur late on Monday evening. On arrival at Jaipur airport, Devnani was transported directly to SMS Hospital and admitted to the Medical ICU for further treatment.

On Monday, Khinvsar said, "Vasudev Devnani has always been proactive about his health. He walks five kilometres daily and often encourages others to maintain an active lifestyle. He had no prior illness."

Earlier, Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma enquired about Devnani's health.

PM Cares Fund: Rs 346 Cr used for over 4,500 kids orphaned during Covid-19, says report

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 21

The PM CARES for Children Scheme, launched in 2021 to support children orphaned during the Covid-19 pandemic, has reportedly spent Rs 346 crore on the welfare of 4,543 children, according to the latest audited statement of the fund for 2022-23.

The Scheme, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 29, 2021, aimed to support children who had lost both their parents, legal guardian, adoptive par-

ents, or surviving parent to the Covid between March 11, 2020 and May 5, 2023.

It aims to ensure comprehensive care and protection of children in a sustained manner, enable their well-being through health insurance, empower them through education, and equip them for a self-sufficient existence with financial support on reaching 23 years of age. The scheme supported children from 558 districts in 31 states in the country.

The majority were from Maharashtra

(855), followed by Uttar Pradesh (467), Madhya Pradesh (433), Tamil Nadu (426), and Andhra Pradesh (351), according to media reports.

The scheme provides financial support of Rs 10 lakh for all children, support for boarding and lodging to ensure rehabilitation of all children, admission in schools, educational loans for higher education, health insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh, and a scholarship of Rs 20,000 per child per annum for all school-going children from Class 1 to Class 12.

BJP flays Cong for 'insincere' homage to Gandhi, Ambedkar

AGENCIES

BELAGAVI, JAN 21

In a sharp response to Congress party's recent rally in Belagavi, where the opposition invoked the legacies of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr BR Ambedkar, and the Indian Constitution, Karnataka BJP has accused the Congress party of offering an "insincere" homage to these national icons.

The BJP demanded that Congress address tough historical questions before continuing to raise these figures in its political discourse, questioning the authenticity of grand old party claims to honor their legacies.

The BJP's statement, issued on Tuesday, took aim at Congress' selective invocation of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr Ambedkar, accusing the opposition party of hypocrisy.

The rally, held under the banner of 'Jai Babu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan,' was described by the BJP as a mere "political tool" to garner electoral advantage, without genuine commitment to the principles represented by these figures.

The BJP's primary criticism focused on Congress' failure to heed Mahatma Gandhi's vision. Following India's independence, Mahatma Gandhi

expressed his desire for the Congress party to dissolve, believing that its role had concluded.

The BJP immediately pointed out that despite this, Congress continues to exist, questioning, "If Congress truly honours Gandhi's legacy, why has his wish to disband the party not been fulfilled?"

The BJP also took a dig at Congress' treatment of Dr Ambedkar, particularly its refusal to allow the Dalit leader's last rites to be held in Delhi, a matter still shrouded in controversy. The party raised the question, "Why did Congress deny Dr. Ambedkar the respect he deserved in

his final moments?" This served to underline the BJP's belief that Congress has historically sidelined Ambedkar's legacy for political convenience.

The BJP targeted Congress over the imposition of the Emergency in 1975, one of the darkest periods in India's democratic history. The opposition party demanded to know, "What unconstitutional reasons led to the declaration of Emergency in India?" The BJP noted the contradiction between Congress' professed commitment to democracy and the authoritarian actions taken during the Emergency.

SC dismisses Jharkhand appeals in Deoghar airport incident case

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JAN 21

The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed the appeals filed by the State of Jharkhand challenging Jharkhand High Court's decision to quash an FIR against BJP MPs Nishikant Dubey, Manoj Tiwari, and others in connection with the 2022 Deoghar Airport incident.

The Court, however, granted liberty to the State to forward the evidence collected during the investigation to the authorised officer under the Aircraft Act, 1934, within four weeks. Per the law, the officer has been directed to decide whether

a complaint needs to be filed under the Act.

A bench comprising Justice Abhay S. Oka and Justice Manmohan, which had reserved its judgment on December 18, 2024, delivered the verdict today. Justice Manmohan read the operative portion.

The FIR, registered in September 2022, alleged that the respondents coerced and threatened Air Traffic Control (ATC) officials to authorize the take-off of a private aircraft, potentially violating safety protocols. Charges under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) included Section 336 (endangering life or personal safety), Section 447

(criminal trespass), and Section 448 (house trespass), alongside Sections 10 and 11A of the Aircraft Act, 1934.

Jharkhand High Court had quashed the FIR, stating it lacked the requisite complaint or sanction under the Aircraft Act.

The court ruled that the provisions of the Aircraft Act take precedence over the IPC in such cases.

During the proceedings, the state argued that prior sanction was unnecessary for investigation under Sections 10 and 11A of the Aircraft Act. However, the Supreme Court observed that offences under the Act could only be acted upon after filing a formal complaint. The bench granted Jharkhand the liberty to submit evidence under the Aircraft Act.

Justice Oka also raised concerns about the applicability of IPC provisions like Sections 336 and 447, questioning the evidence for endangerment of life or criminal trespass.

While upholding the High Court's decision to quash the FIR, the Supreme Court allowed the materials gathered during the investigation to be submitted to the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). This ensures that the DGCA can evaluate whether a formal complaint under the Aircraft Act is warranted.

Not going to let friendly, unfriendly nations push us around: Trump

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON, JAN 21

US President Donald Trump attended the Commander-in-Chief inaugural ball, the first of three events scheduled after his swearing-in ceremony, where he expressed gratitude to service members and highlighted plans for military strength and national security.

Joined by First Lady Melania Trump, Vice President JD Vance, and Usha Vance, Trump danced on stage in front of an enthusiastic crowd.

Addressing the attendees, he said, "Today, we celebrate the enduring strength and resilience of our glorious Republic. It is highly appropriate that we honour the men and women who keep us safe. Your bravery inspires us, your service unites us, and



your sacrifice protects us all."

Trump took the opportunity to praise Pete Hegseth, his nominee for Secretary of Defence.

"Under the leadership of our next Secretary of Defence, Pete Hegseth -- who I just saw and is fantastic -- we will again build the most powerful military the world has ever seen," he stated.

Referring to his previous term, Trump said, "We did that four years ago, and then it dissipated a little, but we're going to do it again -- much bigger and stronger than ever before."

He assured the crowd that the military's sole focus would be on defending the nation. "You do not have to worry about political agendas. There is only one focus: defeating

America's enemies. We are not going to be defeated or humiliated; we are only going to win."

The President also emphasised economic strength and national security.

"The economy is going to be strong; we are not going to let our friendly and unfriendly nations push us around from many standpoints, including the economy because we have something that we do not have. We have the power that they don't have. We will measure our success not only by the battles we win but also by the wars we end and, perhaps most importantly, the wars we never get into; it's called peace through strength. We don't have to fight the wars if we can do it without fighting," Trump said.

Trump predicted a renewed global reputation for the United States, saying, "Our friends will respect us, our enemies will fear us and the world will admire the unrivalled greatness of the US military."

"This is going to be a golden age of America," he added.

During the event, Trump spoke via video with troops stationed in South Korea, addressing the situation with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. "Hello everybody, how's Kim Jong Un doing?" Trump asked sarcastically before commenting, "He's a tough cookie, but I developed a pretty good relationship with him. How's it going over there?"

The evening concluded with a cake-cutting ceremony featuring the Trumps and the Vances before they left to attend the Liberty Inaugural Ball.

Cuba condemns Trump's decision to reinstate it on state sponsor of terrorism list

AGENCIES
HAVANA, JAN 21

Cuba's President Miguel Diaz-Canel has condemned US President Donald Trump's decision to put the island back on the US list of state sponsors of terrorism, calling Trump's actions "an act of arrogance and disregard for the truth".

"President Trump, in an act of arrogance and disregard for the truth, has just reinstated the fraudulent designation of Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism," Diaz-Canel wrote on Monday on X.

"This is not surprising. His goal is to continue strengthening the cruel economic war against Cuba for the purpose of domination."

"The result of the extreme economic siege measures imposed by Trump has

been to cause shortages among our people and a significant increase in the migratory flow from Cuba to the United States," the Cuban President said in a separate post.

Cuba's Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez also issued a scathing response to the decision.

"Drunk with arrogance, President Trump decides without reason that Cuba sponsors terrorism. He knows that he is LYING. His determination is to increase the punishment and the economic war against Cuban families. It will cause harm, but it will not break the firm determination of our people. We will win," Rodriguez said in a post on X. The Biden administration announced on January 14 that it would remove Cuba from the state sponsor of terrorism list.

Former US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo designated Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism in January 2021, saying at the time that Havana was "providing support for acts of international terrorism in granting safe harbour to terrorists" after refusing to extradite leaders of a Colombian guerrilla organisation who were in Havana for peace talks when a deadly bombing took place in the South American nation.

Cuba has been one of just four nations designated as state sponsors of terrorism, along with North Korea, Iran, and Syria.

Cuban officials have advocated for their country's removal as a state sponsor of terror, which triggers stringent economic sanctions in addition to more than the six decades-old US embargo.

Putin 'destroying Russia' by refusing to negotiate war with Ukraine, says Trump

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON, JAN 22

US President Donald Trump said that Russian President Vladimir Putin is "destroying Russia" by refusing to negotiate an end to the ongoing war with Ukraine, which began in February 2022.

Speaking to reporters upon his return to the Oval Office on Monday, Trump urged Putin to seek a peace deal, emphasising the toll the prolonged conflict is taking on Russia.

"He should make a deal. I think he's destroying Russia by not making a deal," Trump stated. "I think Russia's going to be in big trouble."

Trump revealed that plans for a meeting with Putin are already underway, expressing optimism



about the possibility of reaching a resolution.

Reflecting on his earlier interactions with the Russian leader, Trump said, "I got along with him great, I would hope he wants to make a deal."

Commenting on the unexpected duration of the war, Trump remarked, "Most people thought that war would have been

over in about one week, and now you're into three years, right?"

He also noted the strain on Russia's economy, including the impact of inflation.

Trump claimed that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is also interested in negotiating peace. "Zelensky wants to make

a deal," he said, despite his previous criticisms of the Ukrainian leader.

During his campaign, Trump promised to swiftly end the conflict, even suggesting he could achieve peace within 24 hours of taking office.

Addressing reporters, he reiterated his determination, stating, "We're going to try and get it done as quickly as possible. You know, the war with Ukraine and Russia should have never started."

Trump's nominee for Secretary of State, Senator Marco Rubio, echoed the sentiment for peace but emphasised the challenges of negotiations.

"Each side would have to concede something," Rubio said while acknowledging Russia as "the aggressor" in the conflict.

Cambodia's trade with ASEAN rises to \$15.69 billion in 2024, up 12.4 pct

AGENCIES
PHNOM PENH, JAN 21

Cambodia's trade volume with its fellow ASEAN member states reached \$15.69 billion in 2024, up 12.4 per cent from 13.96 billion dollars in the year before, said a Ministry of Commerce's report on Tuesday. The kingdom exported products total worth 5.07 billion dollars to other ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries last year, up 7.6 per cent from 4.71 billion dollars a year earlier, the report said.

Meanwhile, the country's total import from its fellow ASEAN countries amounted to 10.62 billion dollars, up 14.8 per cent from 9.25 billion dollars, it added.

Cambodia's trade

volume with the ASEAN accounted for 28.3 per cent of the kingdom's total trade volume of 55.3 billion dollars in 2024, the report said.

Cambodia's top five trading partners in ASEAN during the above-mentioned period were Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia, Xinhua news agency reported.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet has said that the country stood as a vibrant partner within the ASEAN, adding that made-in-Cambodia products, such as garments and bicycles, were recognised in ASEAN and worldwide for their quality and competitive pricing.

"Cambodia's strategic membership in key regional and global trade agree-

ments, including ASEAN and the World Trade Organization (WTO), positions it as a highly integrated player within the dynamic global market," he said.

ASEAN comprises Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Additionally, Cambodia exported garments, textiles, footwear and travel goods worth \$13.92 billion in 2024, up 23 per cent over a year earlier, the ministry said.

Garments exports stood at 9.79 billion dollars last year, a year-on-year increase of 24 per cent, the report said, adding that textiles worth 499 million dollars were shipped to international markets, up 17 per cent.

Also, 1.68 billion dollars worth of footwear was exported, up 23 per cent, while travel goods equivalent to 1.95 billion dollars were sold to international markets, up 19.6 per cent, the report added.

Hoe Ee Khor, chief economist of the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO), said the garment, footwear and travel goods sector remained one of the key drivers for Cambodia's economic growth.

"Growth in the sector rebounded steadily in 2024, driven by stronger demand for consumer goods in major advanced markets," he wrote to Xinhua in a recent e-mail.

The industry is the largest foreign exchange earner for the Southeast Asian country.

South Korea: Yoon attends impeachment trial at Constitutional Court

AGENCIES
SEOUL, JAN 21

South Korean detained President Yoon Suk Yeol appeared at the Constitutional Court on Tuesday to attend a trial deliberating his impeachment over his short-lived imposition of martial law.

Yoon left the Seoul Detention Centre in Uiwang, just south of the capital, in a convoy escorted by the Presidential Security Service and entered the court through an underground parking lot, out of view of the public. At 2 p.m., he entered a courtroom dressed in a suit to attend the third hearing of his trial, where he is expected to defend his December 3 declaration of martial law.

Yoon is the first President to attend his or her own impeachment trial as



former Presidents Roh Moo-hyun and Park Geun-hye were absent from theirs. Yoon was impeached by the National Assembly on December 14 and remains suspended from duty while an investigation is underway into charges he led an insurrection and abused his power through declaration of martial law.

The Constitutional Court has 180 days from the day it received the case on December 14 to uphold the impeachment and remove him from office or dismiss the impeachment and reinstate him, Yonhap news agency reported.

If Yoon is ousted, the country will be required to hold a snap presidential election within 60 days.

Hundreds of people gathered outside the court to show their support for the President, holding up signs that read "Impeachment Invalid."

Police surrounded the court's perimeter and beyond, and parked buses along sidewalks to prevent any violence among protesters. Yoon's appearance at the court was the first time he appeared in public since the day he imposed martial law.

Meanwhile, South Korea had been thrust into a period of political uncertainty following Yoon's short-lived martial law declaration on December 3, 2024, and his subsequent impeachment on December 14, 2024.

Bangladesh Foreign Advisor visiting China to discuss boosting economic, bilateral ties

AGENCIES
DHAKA, JAN 21

Bangladesh's Foreign Affairs Advisor Touhid Hossain is visiting China on his first official bilateral trip, adding a new dimension to Dhaka-Beijing relations.

The Foreign Advisor's visit, which began on Sunday, is set to span five days during which he will hold talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi that will include several issues, chief being boosting economic partnership between the two countries and enhancing bilateral ties.

Other issues include lowering interest rates on loans, exchanging hydrological information, advancing medical treatment cooperation,



and encouraging greater Chinese involvement in resolving the ongoing Myanmar situation. Another issue expected to be discussed is China's potential role in Bangladesh's crucial Teesta River project, according to The Business Standard BD.

Aside from official talks with the Chinese foreign minister, Hossain

is also scheduled to meet with Chinese Communist Party leaders and deliver speeches at the China Institute of International Studies and the Shanghai Institute of International Studies, as well as engage with business representatives in Shanghai to attract Chinese investments in Bangladesh, according to foreign ministry officials.

This is the first official exchange between Bangladesh and China since the interim government of Chief Advisor Mohammed Yunus took office, following the ouster of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in August last year. This move marks a significant change in Bangladesh's foreign policy, as every foreign minister prior to this always visited India as their first stop.

However, the Yunus government's relations with India have not been particularly warm. Dhaka's foreign policy can also largely be expected to be more Beijing-friendly. The interim government has also markedly warmed up towards Pakistan, with the two countries not just discussing greater economic collaboration, but

also joint defence ventures, and Dhaka terming Islamabad as a "brotherly" nation.

The country's Principal Staff Officer (PSO) Lt. Gen SM Kamrul Islam - head of the Bangladesh Armed Forces Division - recently visited Pakistan Army's General Headquarters in Rawalpindi to discuss military partnership.

In his pre-departure briefing last week, the Foreign Advisor had said "Economic issues will dominate the discussions. Bangladesh's trade and economic relations with China are vital", adding that they "will explore how China can provide budgetary support and accelerate loan disbursements for various projects in Bangladesh," according to Business Standard BD.

Seoul says will continue to push for denuclearisation after Trump calls North Korea 'nuclear power'

AGENCIES
SEOUL, JAN 21

The South Korean government said Tuesday it would continue to push for the North's denuclearisation after US President Donald Trump called North Korea a "nuclear power" as he returned to the presidency for a second term.

Trump made the remark to reporters shortly after his swearing-in ceremony

in Washington on Monday (local time), noting he and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un "got along very well," Yonhap news agency reported.

When asked about President Trump's comments, Seoul's Defence Ministry said the government would continue to seek North Korea's denuclearisation and work closely with the international community toward the goal.

"Denuclearisation of not only the Korean Peninsula but also North Korea should be continually pursued as a prerequisite for permanent peace and stability in the world," Jeon Ha-kyou, the ministry's spokesperson, said in a regular briefing.

An official at Seoul's unification ministry in charge of inter-Korean relations separately said South Korea and the US have

both maintained a "unified" position for North Korea's denuclearisation.

"South Korea and the US have maintained a firm and unified stance on the goal of North Korea's complete denuclearisation," the official told reporters.

"The government will establish a close cooperative system with the new US administration."

Trump's remarks came after his Defence Secretary nominee Pete Hegseth also described North Korea as a "nuclear power" in written answers to the Senate Armed Services Committee ahead of his confirmation hearing last week.

Most US officials have generally been reluctant to openly call Pyongyang a nuclear power as it could be viewed as accepting and legitimising what they have called an illicit weapons program.

Trump undoes Obama's order; renames North America's tallest peak

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON, JAN 21

US President Donald Trump has signed an executive order to restore the name of North America's tallest peak to 'Mount McKinley,' reversing the decision made by former President Barack Obama to rename it 'Denali.'

However, the surrounding national park will continue to be called 'Denali National Park and Preserve,' according to the order signed on Monday.

Announcing the decision during his inaugural speech on Monday, Trump stated, "We will restore the name of a

great president, William McKinley, to Mount McKinley, where it should be and where it belongs."

The executive order was championed by Republican Senator Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, who played a key role in the effort to make the name change official.

India, Belgium to deepen trade and investment ties: Piyush Goyal

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 21

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal and Bernard Quintin, Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Affairs and Foreign Trade, held bilateral talks in Brussels to boost trade and investment ties across the spectrum, it was announced on Tuesday.

The meeting reinforced the longstanding relationship between India and Belgium, built on shared values of democracy, rule of law and independent judiciary, according to a statement by Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The two leaders discussed ways to expand economic cooperation, and explored new avenues to advance this partnership.



"We had fruitful discussions on the upcoming Belgian Economic Mission to India and explored avenues to deepen mutual trade and investment ties, with a focus on sustainable technologies, semiconductors, gems and jewellery, healthcare, and agricultural products," Goyal posted on X social media platform.

Both the leaders

acknowledged Belgium's significant reliance on foreign trade and India's dynamic, growing economy as key factors for leveraging mutual opportunities.

"Recognising the potential of trade as a cornerstone of their partnership, they emphasised the importance of diversifying trade relations and deepening economic diploma-

tion-linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, are providing an easy entry route for manufacturing operations.

ty to achieve sustainable growth," according to the ministry.

The leaders also discussed the progress of the EU-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations and emphasised the importance of prioritising trade issues to streamline negotiations and strengthen economic relations.

The India-Belgium trade is estimated at over \$15.07 billion in 2023-2024 while foreign direct investments (FDIs) from Belgium into India was estimated at over \$3.94 billion.

Emerging sectors such as renewable energy, life sciences, infrastructure, digital technologies, and food products were highlighted as key areas of collaboration.

Belgium recognised the importance of engaging

with India as a strategic partner to diversify its trade relationships. Regulatory barriers, particularly in the approval processes for pharmaceuticals and agri-products, were also discussed, with both sides agreeing to tackle these challenges through continuous dialogue.

The meeting concluded with a commitment to establish stronger mechanisms for resolving trade issues. Both leaders affirmed their dedication to fostering a robust and mutually beneficial trade partnership.

"This high-level engagement marks a significant step in advancing India-Belgium trade relations, strengthening their shared vision for economic growth and sustainable development," the ministry noted.

Quick-commerce to remain hot sector for VC investments in India this year

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 21

Global VC investment rose from \$349.4 billion across 43,320 deals in 2023 to \$368.3 billion across 35,684 deals in 2024, as quick-commerce remained a hot sector of investments in India in the fourth quarter last year and will continue in 2025, according to a report on Tuesday. An encouraging trend in India has been the increasing number of tech startups looking at IPO exit opportunities – either filing their listing paperwork or beginning the process to do so, according to KPMG Private Enterprise's Venture Pulse.

Over the last 18 months, there has been growing acceptance of these companies by India's capital markets, stock exchanges, the retail public, and institutional investors.

"With more institutional investors subscribing

to IPOs and more active trade happening, more startups are seeing IPOs as a real exit option," the report mentioned.

The VC market activity is expected to pick up through 2025 in India, with more pre-IPO rounds, more IPOs, and more exits in general.

"When you look at the results year-over-year, 2024 has been a much better year compared to 2023 for VC investment in India – and 2025 could be even better," said Nitish Poddar, Partner and National Leader, Private Equity, KPMG in India.

"While Q4 saw us hit a bit of a speed bump, we're still seeing a lot of activity in the VC market here, especially in the area of quick-commerce. Over the last year, a few of these companies have held successful IPOs, which is giving VC investors' confidence to make bolder bets given the expansion

of potential exit routes," Poddar noted.

Globally, a record number of multi-billion dollar deals in the AI space propelled both the positive Q4 results and the year-on-year rise in VC investment.

Five US-based AI companies attracted a total of \$32.2 billion in Q4. Only two companies outside of the AI space saw \$1 billion+ deals in the quarter.

"The level of funding flowing into the AI space continues at an impressive pace," said Conor Moore, Global Head, KPMG Private Enterprise, KPMG International.

"VC investors are becoming more discerning however in doubling down on the truly disruptive companies with game-changing solutions. In a year that was full of uncertainty and somewhat lacklustre deal-making, AI was far and away the standout superstar," Moore added.

Grade A warehousing stock surges 170 pc in India in last 5 years

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, JAN 21

Grade A warehousing stock in India surged 170 per cent in the last five years, reaching an all-time high of 238 million square feet last year, a report showed on Tuesday.

The total logistics and industrial real estate sector stock across the top eight cities reached 438 million square feet, with projections suggesting it could hit approximately 700 million sq ft by 2028, according to the report by JLL.

This growth is driven by the occupiers increasingly looking for good quality and compliant spaces as well as rising traction from the institutional investors in the sector.

Demand remained strong, with net absorption for 2024 reaching an all-time high of 50.4 million sq ft, up from 40.6



million sq ft in 2023.

The 3PL/logistics and manufacturing sectors led the absorption in the market accounting for more than 65 per cent. The year 2024 also witnessed revival of demand from the e-commerce sector, especially from quick commerce companies, said the report.

"Manufacturing leased factories demand scaled a new peak in 2024 accounting for more than 30 per cent of the demand pro-

viding manufacturers faster and efficient entry/expansion options," said Yogesh Shevade, Head-Logistics and Industrial, India, JLL.

The manufacturing sector has seen significant leasing activity, with approximately 40-45 million sq ft leased in the top eight cities over the past three years (2022-2024). This trend, along with the government push-through initiatives such as Make in India 2.0 and the Produc-

tion-linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, are providing an easy entry route for manufacturing operations.

Grade A warehousing is taking centre stage with close to 80 per cent of net absorption under this category, driven by availability and superior infrastructure.

Looking ahead, the demand for Grade A warehousing spaces, distinguished for their superior infrastructure, is expected to remain buoyant. Institutional developers and investors are actively prioritising resources for the development of high-quality Grade A warehousing spaces.

"The growing preference among occupiers and investors for technology adoption & sustainable logistics facility for optimising long term operational cost efficiency and achieving net-zero ambitions," said the report.

Large-sized deals dominate industrial and warehousing demand in India in 2024

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 21

The year 2024 saw over 28 million square feet of new supply, highest in the recent years, indicating improved developer confidence and an optimistic outlook for this year, as large-sized deals drove 40 per cent of industrial and warehousing demand last year, according to a report on Tuesday.

With 25.6 million square feet of gross leasing in 2024, industrial and warehousing demand across the top five cities remained healthy, witnessing a marginal 2 per cent YoY growth, said the Colliers report.

Delhi-NCR led the demand with 26 per cent share, closely followed by Chennai at 23 per cent share.

On a quarterly basis, Q4 2024 saw about 5.5 million square feet of industrial



and warehousing demand across the top five cities. Pune, closely followed by Bengaluru, cumulatively accounted for over half of the quarterly demand.

While third-party logistics (3PL) players drove overall demand during the year, and accounted for 33 per cent share in overall leasing, demand from Engineering and Electron-

ics segments gained traction.

"Concurrently, space uptake by occupiers from other demand segments continued to pick pace. Engineering and Electronics segments cumulatively accounted for almost one-third of the annual warehousing space uptake in 2024, significantly up from their combined one-fourth

demand share in 2023," said Vijay Ganesh, Managing Director, Industrial and Logistics Services, Colliers India.

Moreover, with the rise of Q-commerce, demand from segments like FMCG and Retail are seeing an uptick and are poised for long-term growth across major urban centres, Ganesh added.

Large deals (200,000 sq ft and above) accounted for about 40 per cent of the overall demand.

With 35 per cent share, 3PL players continued to account for majority of the large ticket transactions.

Interestingly, in the electronics segment, the quantum of large deals rose significantly, 4.5X in 2024 as compared to 2023.

At the city level, space uptake from large-sized deals was highest in Delhi NCR during 2024, said the report.

Dixon Technologies' net profit rises over 100 pc in Q3, revenue up 119 pc

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 20

Homegrown electronics manufacturer Dixon Technologies on Monday doubled its net profit in Q3 FY25, as earnings rose to Rs 216 crore from Rs 97 crore in the same period last fiscal.

According to the company's exchange filing, the revenue also doubled to Rs 10,553.7 crore from Rs 4,817 crore in the year-ago period -- a jump of nearly 119 per cent.

Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation (EBITDA) stood at Rs 390.6 crore in Q3 which was Rs 184 crore last year.

However, the margin slightly declined to 3.7 per cent from 3.8 per cent on a year-on-year basis.

The company's mobile business played a key role

in this performance. Revenue from the mobile segment almost tripled to Rs 9,305 crore, while earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) from this segment more than tripled to Rs 322 crore, up from Rs 104 crore last year.

As per the filing, the mobile business now contributes 89 per cent to Dixon's total revenue, up from 67 per cent in the same period a year ago.

The shares of Dixon Technologies went up 1.72 per cent on Monday. However, it has declined by 3 per cent so far this year.

In September last year, consumer electronics majors HP Inc and Padgett Electronics, a subsidiary of homegrown Dixon Technologies, signed an MoU to manufacture HP laptops, personal computers, and All-in-One PCs at a factory in Tamil Nadu.

Threats, new horizons loom for South Korean industries as Trump 2.0 begins

AGENCIES
SEOUL, JAN 21

As Donald Trump took office for his second term as US president, South Korean industries were closely watching for potential changes in Washington's economic and trade policies, which could significantly impact their American businesses, industry observers said on Tuesday.

While concerns abound over possible rollbacks of key U.S. legislation, such as the CHIPS and Science Act and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), some sectors anticipate opportunities for deeper collaboration with the United States, particularly in shipbuilding, reports Yonhap news agency.

South Korean tech giants Samsung Electronics Co. and SK hynix Inc. are grappling with uncer-

tainties over the CHIPS Act, which provides subsidies to semiconductor companies.

Both firms have announced major U.S. investments -- Samsung with a US\$17 billion semiconductor plant in Texas and SK hynix with a \$3.87 billion advanced packaging plant for artificial intelligence (AI) memory chips in Indiana.

Samsung and SK hynix have secured pledges of \$6.4 billion and \$450 million, respectively, in grants from the U.S. for their investments in the country.

Despite bipartisan support for the CHIPS Act during its passage, industry experts caution that executive actions under the new Trump administration could alter its implementation, potentially affecting the subsidies.



Battery manufacturers face similar concerns under the IRA. Companies such as LG Energy Solution Ltd. and SK On Co., which heavily rely on IRA tax credits to sustain profitability, could see their margins squeezed if the legislation is scaled back.

In the third quarter alone, LG Energy Solution received 466 billion won (US\$321.2 million) and SK On 60.8 billion won in IRA-related tax benefits.

Without such benefits, both companies would effectively be operating at a loss.

Some industry watchers in South Korea believe the complete repeal of the IRA is unlikely, but say the eligibility requirements for subsidies received by battery companies could face significant changes.

Koo Ja-min, an attorney at Covington & Burling LLP and a member of the IRA advisory team of the Korea Battery Indus-

try Association, said in a recent seminar in Seoul, "It would be difficult to pass a bill repealing the IRA."

He highlighted that the IRA has driven over \$100 billion in clean energy investments and created more than 100,000 jobs in districts largely represented by Republicans. "Of the top 10 districts receiving the most IRA-related investments, eight are Republican-led," he explained.

Trump's campaign hinted at rolling back federal mandates for electric vehicles (EVs), a move that could slow South Korean automakers' EV exports. Hyundai Motor Group, which holds the second-largest market share for EVs in the U.S. after Tesla, could face significant challenges in expanding its foothold.

South Korea's shipbuild-

ing industry, meanwhile, sees Trump's return to power as an opportunity. During a phone conversation with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol following his election in November, Trump expressed interest in collaborating with South Korean shipyards, particularly in naval shipbuilding, repairs and maintenance.

While South Korea had long held the top spot in shipbuilding orders, China overtook it in recent years, claiming 60 per cent of the global market share in 2023.

"South Korean businesses are closely monitoring these developments, as they could introduce additional costs and disrupt supply chains, particularly for key industries like automotive, electronics and steel," an official at the Korea International Trade Association said.

January 21: Indian stock market trades flat as new US President avoids tariffs on Day 1

AGENCIES
MUMBAI, JAN 21

Indian benchmark indices traded almost flat on Tuesday morning, tracking gains in Asia, after Donald Trump took over as the 47th US President and did not immediately impose

trade tariffs as widely expected.

The Nifty 50 was up 0.25 per cent while the 30-stock BSE Sensex was higher by 0.09 per cent, as of 9:18 a.m. At pre-open, the S&P BSE Sensex Index was up 188 points, or 0.24 per cent, at 77,261 while the

NSE Nifty 50 was 76 points or 0.33 per cent higher at 23,421.

According to market watchers, Trump 2.0 has kicked off without much clarity on his likely economic decisions.

In his inaugural address he was clear on immigra-

tion but sounded vague on tariffs. The indication of a likely 25 per cent tariffs on Canada and Mexico suggests that the tariff hike policy will be implemented gradually.

The currency market has reacted with a cut in the dollar index to 108.43

and the 10-year bond yield has declined to 4.54 per cent.

"This is the classic case of 'buy on rumours and sell on news.'"

It is likely that further delays in tariff hikes will weaken the dollar and bring down the bond

yields. If this happens, it will be good for emerging markets like India," said experts.

Seven out of the 12 sectors on the NSE advanced, with Nifty IT and Nifty Pharma rising the most on Tuesday. Nifty Realty and PSU Bank fell the most in

early trade.

The broader markets traded alongside the larger peers, with the BSE midcap climbing by 0.21 per cent and the smallcap rising by 0.51 per cent.

Seven out of the 20 sectors compiled by BSE declined, with Consumer

durables and realty falling the most.

"After a positive opening, Nifty can find support at 23,250 followed by 23,100 and 23,000. On the higher side, 23,400 can be an immediate resistance, followed by 23,500 and 23,700," said experts.

U19 WC: INDIA CRUSH HOST MALAYSIA BY 10 WICKETS

AGENCIES
KUALA LUMPUR, JAN 21

Defending champions India continued their dominance in the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup as they thrashed host Malaysia by 10 wickets to secure their second successive win in Group A on Tuesday. India won the toss and elected to bowl yet again to make the most of the overcast conditions. Riding on Vaishnavi Sharma's scintillating bowling show, India bowled out the hosts for a mere 31 in 14.3



overs. She also clinched a hat-trick and was named Player of the Match. In reply, openers G

with all wickets intact.

Bowling first seamer Joshitha VJ backed her skipper's call, trapping Malaysia's opener Nuni leg before for a duck. A run out off a no-ball ended Nur Aliya's stay at the crease before Aayushi Shukla's double strike in the fifth over got Malaysia to four down before they had crossed even 15.

Vaishnavi continued the left-arm spin dominance, getting skipper Nur Dania Syuhada (1) caught and bowling Nuriman (2) off her first seven balls. Vaish-

navi continued to menace the hosts, getting a hat-trick in her final over, to finish with the figures of 5-5. Malaysia were bowled out for 31.

Last week, the defending champions India kicked off their title defense with a thumping nine-wicket win over the West Indies.

Brief scores: Malaysia 31/10 in 14.3 overs (Nur Aliya Hairun 5; Vaishnavi Sharma 5-5) lost to India 32/0 in 2.5 overs (Gongadi Trisha 27, G Kamalini 4) by 10 wickets.

Premier League: Chelsea beat Wolves to move up to fourth

AGENCIES
LONDON, JAN 21

Chelsea ended their five-match winless streak in the Premier League with a 3-1 victory over Wolverhampton Wanderers at Stamford Bridge and moved up to fourth in the table.

Tosin Adarabioyo, Marc Cucurella and Noni Madueke were all on target as the Blues climbed back into the top four.

Chelsea enjoyed a positive start and took a deserved lead through Tosin Adarabioyo midway through the first half when the centre back scored with a composed finish.

Tosin became Chelsea's 13th different Premier League goalscorer this season (excluding own goals) only Arsenal (14) have had more in the competition in 2024/25.

Matt Doherty pulled level from a corner in first-half injury-time but the Blues regained control with two goals around the hour mark.

Marc Cucurella scored with a close-range finish to put us back in front before Noni Madueke applied the final touch after Trevoh Chalobah looked set to score on his Chelsea return five minutes later.

Enzo Maresca's side leap-

frogged Newcastle United and Manchester City to fourth place, while Wolves remain 17th and only outside the relegation zone on goal difference.

"The first 40 minutes we were top. The performance was excellent and we dominated the game. We scored and created many more chances," Chelsea manager Maresca said after the match.

"Then in the last five minutes what has been happening in the last five games happened again. Wolves had a little bit of confidence and got their goal and then we started to struggle a little bit.

SKY recalls KKR days and 'mishti doi' ahead of T20I series opener in Kolkata

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 21

Ahead of the first T20I against England at Eden Gardens on Wednesday, India T20I captain Suryakumar Yadav recalled his playing days for IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) under head coach Gautam Gambhir and his fondness for Bengali delicacy 'mishti doi'.

After making his IPL debut with Mumbai Indians in 2012, Suryakumar joined KKR and represented the franchise from 2014 to 2017.

Under Gambhir's leadership, KKR lifted their maiden title in 2014, and Suryakumar was part of that winning team.

"When I came to Kolkata at that time people offered me a lot of 'mishti doi'. Now, when we travel here I try to include that in my cheat meal. It is a vintage type feeling and it feels good when you come



here. The weather is nice here. There will be fireworks from both teams so it will be good," Suryakumar said in a video posted by BCCI on X.

The Indian captain revealed that he never

thought of leading India at Eden Gardens when it used to be his home venue in IPL. Suryakumar also added that he knows the ground well and learned a lot of tricks and traits from Gambhir.

MESMERISED BY CULTURE, INTERNATIONAL KHO KHO STARS LAUD INDIAN HOSPITALITY

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JAN 21

The inaugural edition of the Kho Kho World Cup in New Delhi came to a close with both the men's and women's Indian teams lifting the trophy. However, the memorable tournament that mesmerised the nation and captured the imaginations of global audiences left unforgettable memories behind for many.

The tournament kicked off with a vibrant cultural festival welcoming the 23 participating nations from across six continents.

An unforgettable opening ceremony that highlighted the extravagant nature of Indian hospitality, featuring captivating musical and dance performances, kicked off the competition, and the thrilling nature of the sport left the audiences glued to their seats.

"It was our first time in



India and we had a great time. The Indian hospitality was very good. From the first time we reached here, we had everything provided for us. The hotel that we stay in and the food we had was customised for us, so we had no problems. It was also our first time to witness Indian culture and we really enjoyed the cultural celebrations. It was amazing," Iran's Amir Ghiasi said on being asked about his experiences in India.

Amanadeep Kaur, a native Indian, who was a

part of the New Zealand women's team further said, "We thoroughly enjoyed it. The main thing was we never thought the competition would be that tough. So now we are excited to prepare for the next level."

The tournament organisers led by Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) and International Kho Kho Federation (IKKF) president Sudhanshu Mittal, KKFI General Secretary MS Tyagi, and IKKF General Secretary Rohit Haladania took the onus on

themselves to ensure that all facilities are provided to the travelling nations, customised to their native needs. The herculean task was completed with much success, as the foreign stars praised the facilities available.

"Everybody just loved the atmosphere here in India, and even the players from other teams. The hospitality offered by India to the other nations was just absolutely amazing. It's great to see the whole world under one shade.

If there is any problem, we get support immediately. Doctors and physios are available, and any food or drink items required by players were immediately handled. India is the best country to have hosted this tournament," Amanadeep added.

The international Kho Kho players were also able to soak in the cultural environment of India, getting

a chance to visit the Taj Mahal in Agra, and also getting a taste of Indian street food.

"Everything from the hospitality, from the food was amazing. I really enjoyed the dance shows, the dresses, and the music. Over here, you do not know where to look because you want to see everything and you want to be everywhere all at once. The experience has been excellent of the World Cup," Peru men's team head coach Silvana Patricia said.

"Everything is so different from our culture. I am just looking at every single detail in every place. I am super happy and glad that I came here. The people here are so nice and the hospitality is the best thing ever. I want to learn some dance moves here as well and carry that back with me," Brazil men's team head coach Laura Doering signed off.

MAHARASHTRA WOMEN GET A SCARE IN NATIONAL TT CHAMPIONSHIP

AGENCIES
SURAT, JAN 21

Maharashtra, last year's women's team bronze medalists, narrowly avoided

a shock exit in the pre-quarterfinals of the UTT 86th Senior National Interstate Table Tennis Championships, overcoming a spirited challenge from Assam to scrape through 3-2 at the Pandit Dindayal Upadhyay Indoor Stadium.

The defending champions Railways Sports Promotion Board (RSPB), the top seed and another bronze medalist from last year, also faced unexpected resistance but managed a 3-1 win over Telangana to secure their quarterfinal spot in the Day 2 here on Monday night.

Meanwhile, the second-seeded Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB),

who had faltered last year, displayed renewed determination with an authoritative 3-0 victory against Uttar Pradesh, sending a strong signal to their rivals.

West Bengal made light work of Kerala, cruising to a 3-0 win, while Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, and Delhi all secured identical 3-0 victories over Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh, Odisha, and Karnataka, respectively, to join the big names in the quarterfinals.

In the clash between Maharashtra and Assam, it all came down to the final rubber, where Senhora D'Souza, battling immense pressure, overcame Bhavna Kashyap in a nail-biting finish. Bhavna, who led 7-4 in the decider and later held two match points at 10-8, faltered as her inexperience surfaced at critical moments. Senhora clawed her way back to deuce and eventually

sealed the match 12-10, delivering relief to her teammates on the Maharashtra bench.

Earlier in the tie, Taneesha Kotecha gave Maharashtra the lead, but Trisha Gogoi levelled the score with a gutsy 11-9, 4-11, 4-11, 11-5, 12-10 win over Senhora. Sampada Bhiwandkar restored Maharashtra's lead with a clinical performance against Gargi Saikia, only for Trisha to reignite Assam's hopes with a hard-fought victory over Taneesha. The decider, however, proved a step too

far for the young Assam side.

For RSPB, Sutirtha Mukherjee proved instrumental, winning both her singles in commanding fashion. Her victories against Varuni Jaiswal and Nikhat Banu were crucial in securing a 3-1 result after Moumita Datta's loss

to Nikhat briefly put the top seeds under pressure.

Anusha Kutumbale steadied the ship with a dominant performance against Naina, setting the stage for Sutirtha to close out the tie. Meanwhile, Gujarat had a smooth run into the quarterfinals, where they are set to face Tamil Nadu.

In the men's category, TTFI-1 (Rajasthan) delivered a surprising performance, advancing to the pre-quarterfinals with a clean 3-0 sweep against West Bengal and a gritty 3-2 win over Mizoram. The defeat hit Bengal hard as they subsequently bowed out in the quarterfinals, losing 2-3 to Tamil Nadu, with P.B. Abhinand starring in the latter's victory. The Bengal squad now faces an uphill battle in the 9-16 classification matches, needing two consecutive wins to keep their

hopes alive for qualification in the next National Games.

TTFI-1 extended their winning streak by knocking out hosts Gujarat in the pre-quarterfinals. Their quarterfinal entry was a dramatic feat, with Anukram Jain leading the charge and Harsh Srivastava sealing the deal in a nail-biting five-game thriller, highlighted by an intense 18-16 win in the second game.

The remaining men's pre-quarterfinal matches were more straightforward, with PSPB, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, TTFI-1, Assam, Maharashtra, and RSPB advancing without much trouble.

As the tournament heads into the quarterfinals and semifinals today, the intensity is expected to peak as teams edge closer to the championship's decisive stages.

Sabalenka-backed Badosa reaches QFs, beats Gauff

AGENCIES
MELBOURNE, JAN 21

Paula Badosa, inspired by Aryna Sabalenka's unwavering support, upset world No. 3 Coco Gauff 7-5, 6-4 in a high-stakes clash, securing her best-ever Grand Slam result and a first Top 10 win at this stage.

The 25-year-old Spaniard's emotional victory marked a significant step in her comeback after a tumultuous year.

Badosa, who had been forced to contemplate retirement due to a back injury in 2024, expressed her joy after the match: "This is a dream come true," she said, reflecting on the journey that brought her to the Australian Open quarterfinals.

Showcasing aggressive baseline play, Badosa broke Gauff's serve four times and held firm when the American, riding a nine-match win-



ning streak, threatened a comeback in the second set. Gauff, burdened by 41 unforced errors, could not find her rhythm and faltered in her bid for back-to-back major titles.

"I'm super proud of the level I gave today. Coco, at the beginning, was playing insane tennis. But I've been through a lot, and I think I'm a better, more mature player now," Badosa remarked.

The victory is a testament to Badosa's resilience after a season marred by injury. Following successful cortisone treatments,

she rebounded with remarkable form, clinching the WTA's Comeback Player of the Year award. Badosa's recent triumphs include titles in Washington, DC, and a semifinal run in Cincinnati, propelling her back into the upper echelons of tennis.

Now projected to rise to No. 9 in the WTA rankings, Badosa is poised for a potential breakthrough at this major. She will face the winner of the quarterfinal match between world No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka and Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova.

Soorma Hockey Club register comprehensive 5-1 victory over Delhi SG Pipers

AGENCIES
RANCHI, JAN 21

JSW Soorma Hockey Club returned to winning ways with a comprehensive 5-1 victory over Delhi SG Pipers in the Women's Hockey India League (HIL) 2024-25 at the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Astro Turf Hockey Stadium here.

Charlotte Englebert (6') and Sonam (9', 10') gave Soorma a comfortable lead in the first

quarter.

Charlotte Stapenhorst (36') further extended the lead in the third quarter but Sangita Kumari (38') pulled a goal back soon after. But Penny Squibb (60') found the back of the net in the last minute to round off a five star performance for Soorma on Monday evening.

JSW Soorma Hockey Club started strong, pressing the Delhi SG Pipers deep into their half. Their early pressure paid off when Maria Verschoor set

up Charlotte Englebert on the left wing, who bypassed Bichu Devi Kharibam in goal with a low reverse sweep to open the scoring.

Shortly after, Englebert and Charlotte Stapenhorst unleashed a flurry of shots. A save by Bichu fell to Sonam, who bundled the ball over the line to double Soorma's lead.

In the very next minute, Englebert dodged past defenders around the circle and picked out Stapenhorst, who

lobbed the ball across goal and Sonam was alert to touch the ball in and make it 3-0 for Soorma in the first quarter.

The onslaught on the Pipers' goal continued in the second quarter with Englebert and Stapenhorst combining to unleash a couple of attempts on goal. The Pipers found some rhythm, with Preeti

Dubey making a run into the circle and lifting the ball across the goal, but no teammate could connect. Verschoor

and Englebert controlled the midfield, generating more opportunities for Soorma, but Bichu and the Pipers' defence held firm to prevent further damage.

The Pipers employed aerial passes to bypass the Soorma press as the third quarter began and found Sangita Kumari on the baseline but she was shut down quickly by the goalkeeper, Savita.

The game became more end to end with the Pipers commit-

ting more players forward but five minutes into the quarter, Englebert pinched the ball from the Pipers and unloaded to Stapenhorst, who lifted the ball past Elodie Picard to make it 4-0. The Pipers were quick to respond as Navneet Kaur found Sangita high up the pitch and without any defender in front of her, she rocketed the ball past Savita to score their first goal. They surged ahead in search of a second goal but Soorma remained

tough in defence for the rest of the quarter. Soorma slowed down the tempo to maintain possession of the ball but Navneet Kaur went on to earn the first penalty corner of the match for the Pipers five minutes into the last quarter. However, Manisha Chauhan's flick was easily swatted away by Savita.

Pipers showed more intent after that chance with Charlotte Watson barging into the circle but her shot was tame.

One-day Capacity Building Workshop on National Rabies Control Programme held at Doda

J1 NEWS SERVICE
DODA, JANUARY 21

A one-day capacity-building workshop cum orientation programme on the National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP) for healthcare professionals, including Medical Officers & MLHPs, was successfully organized here today at the Make Shift Campus of Government Medical College.

The event was organized by the District Surveillance Unit (IDSP) under the banner of the District Health Society.

Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh was the Chief Guest and inaugurated the workshop in the presence of Principal GMC Dr. Rakesh Bahl; Chief Medical Officer Dr. Om Kumar, and other guests including Umar

Anayat (Epidemiologist), Dr Hamid Parry, Mohammad Shafi Attu (HE), Sanjeev Rana, Mashhood Latif and staff of CMO office and Government Nursing College Doda.

In his inaugural speech, the DC highlighted the importance of the National Rabies Control Programme in combating this preventable yet deadly disease. He emphasized the critical role of healthcare professionals in ensuring timely interventions, raising public awareness, and strengthening community-level disease surveillance. "It is imperative that we work together to ensure no life is lost to rabies, which is entirely preventable. This workshop is a step towards empowering our healthcare workforce to achieve that goal," he said.



He also encouraged participants to utilize the knowledge gained to create a robust healthcare delivery system in the district. The workshop witnessed participation from Medical Officers and Mid-Level Health Providers (MLHPs) representing all medical blocks of the district, including Assar, Bhaderwah, Gandoh, Ghat, and Thathri.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Dr. Om Kumar Chief Medical Officer extended warm greetings to the participants and highlighted the sig-

nificance of the NRCP. He emphasized the importance of case evaluation and preventive measures in controlling rabies.

The workshop featured expert sessions by experts.

Principal GMC Dr. Rakesh Bahl provided in-depth insights into the clinical aspects of rabies management, while Dr. Naveed Anjum, Veterinary Assistant Surgeon from the Animal Husbandry Department, discussed the understanding of rabies and prevention, followed by a lecture given

by Incharge Anti Rabies Clinic GMC Doda Dr Anzer Majeed who discussed the zoonotic transmission of rabies, treatment and preventive strategies.

Among others, the workshop was also attended by HOD Microbiology GMC Doda Dr Safia Khan and Dr Garima Charak from Department of Physiology. The workshop aimed to enhance the capacity of healthcare professionals in rabies prevention, early diagnosis, and management, thereby contributing to the overall public health goals of the district.

The event concluded with an interactive session, where participants discussed various challenges and shared their experiences, ensuring a productive and engaging programme.

1st UTRC meeting at Ganderbal recommends release of 03 eligible prisoners

J1 NEWS SERVICE
GANDERBAL, JANUARY 21

Principal District & Sessions Judge (PD&SJ) Ganderbal, Abdul Nasir, today chaired the 1st meeting of the Under Trial Review Committee (UTRC), 2025, at District Court Complex Ganderbal.

The meeting attended by all members of UTRC Ganderbal including Public Prosecutors and Legal Aid Defense Counsels, discussed to expedite the identification and review of prisoners who are eligible to be considered for release, as well as to accelerate the regular functioning of UTRC.

During the meeting, three cases of prisoners were taken up for review,



and the committee examined the eligibility of Under Trial Prisoners (UTPs) for release.

The committee reviewed the cases and made recommendations for the release of eligible three prisoners.

The UTRC meeting is a regular review mechanism to ensure that prisoners who are eligible for release are considered for release in a time bound manner

and to ensure that UTPs covered under 15 categories get benefit without delay, in terms of directions passed by supreme court of India, in WP(C) No 406./2013, titled Re-Inhuman conditions in 1382 prisoners and NALSA's SOP for UTRC.

The committee's efforts aim to reduce the number of undertrial prisoners and ensure justice is done efficiently.

Sakeena Itoo visits GMC Kathua, chairs induction ceremony of BHMS's 1st batch

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KATHUA, JANUARY 21

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, today visited Government Medical College, Kathua and presided over the induction ceremony of the first batch of students of Bachelors of Homeopathic Medicine and Surgery (BHMS).

MLA Kathua, Dr. Bharat Bhushan, Principal Government Medical College, Kathua, Dr. Surinder K. Attri, Registrar J&K Homeopathy Board and Nodal Officer Government Homeopathy Medical College Kathua, Dr. B.R. Dubb, heads of different specialities, medical professionals, senior officers and large number of students were also present on

the occasion.

Addressing a large gathering on the occasion, Sakeena Itoo congratulated the first batch of 63 students of BHMS and their parents present there. She said that the institution will help in producing the able medical faculties to serve the local population and help in improving the healthcare facilities across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister highlighted that this is the first Government Homeopathy Medical College in North India. She added that the profession of doctors is a noble vocation as it is meant to serve the ailing people.

While speaking on the occasion, Dr. Bharat Bhushan congratulated



the students and agencies who worked hard for establishment of Homeopathy Medical College in Kathua. Dr. Surinder K. Attri, in his welcome address, expressed gratitude to the Minister for her whole hearted efforts

to start the Government Homeopathy Medical College in Kathua. He said that the 30 bedded Homeopathy Hospital is already functioning and facilitating the people of Kathua in terms of medical facilities. Registrar J&K Homeopathy

Board and Nodal Officer Government Homeopathy Medical College Kathua, Dr. B.R. Dubb, while addressing on the occasion, said that presently 600 Homeopathy doctors are registered in the Union Territory and serving the people. On the occasion, the first batch of BHMS students were also administered an oath to work for welfare of patients with dedication and zeal. The apron ceremony was also held in which the Minister made the students wear the white apron. Later, the Minister inaugurated hostel for Senior/Junior Residents of GMC Kathua. She also inaugurated STIC of Fire Fighting system in GMC Kathua.

Chairperson DDC Ramban reviews progress under District Capex Plan 2024-25

J1 NEWS SERVICE
RAMBAN, JANUARY 21

The District Development Council (DDC) Ramban today reviewed the developmental progress under the District Capex Plan 2024-25 here at a meeting chaired by Chairperson Dr. Shamshad Shan to.

The meeting was attended by Vice-Chairperson Rabia Beig, DDC members, Additional District Development Commissioner Roshan Lal, Chief Planning Officer Dr. Shakeeb Ahmed Rather, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat Ashfaq Ahmed and the sectoral officers.

Taking sector wise review, the Chairperson emphasized achieving 100% targets and directed officials to expedite project implementation. The DDC members highlighted critical priorities, seeking



augmentation of healthcare and education infrastructure, construction of new roads to strengthen connectivity, acceleration of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) implementation and enhanced power infrastructure.

A strict deadline of 20 days was set for all departments to demonstrate measurable progress by expediting the allotment and initiation of works, particularly under the Area Development Fund (ADF).

The Chairperson directed the Rural Engineering Wing (REW) to work with

full dedication and zeal to achieve tangible results, as a major chunk of the work pertains to the Rural Development Department (RDD). She expressed displeasure over the slow pace of progress by the RDD engineering wing and instructed the functionaries to liaise with all Block Development Officers (BDOs) to ensure swift progress on pending projects.

Earlier, the CPO provided a detailed presentation on the district's developmental achievements across various departments.

Month-long Healthy Baby competition concludes in Kishtwar

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KISHTWAR, JANUARY 21

The month-long Healthy Baby Competition, launched on January 1, 2025, concluded today with a vibrant District-Level Healthy Baby Competition held here in the Conference Hall of the DC Office.

Babies selected from all ICDS Projects of the district participated in the grand finale of this health-focused initiative in today's District Level event.

The initiative was taken by Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan to promote the health and well-being of mothers and children aged 6 months to 6 years.



HB Level as per the given standards and SOPs.

Judges evaluated the participants, selecting winners in various categories, who were presented certificates and Gift Packs. The DC also announced that these winners will be felicitated during the Republic Day 2025 celebrations.

The collaborative efforts of the ICDS Department, Health Department, Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), Medical officers, and parents played a pivotal role in the success of this initiative, ensuring enthusiastic participation across the district.

The Healthy Baby Competition was designed to

spread awareness about the importance of early childhood health, proper nutrition, and parental care. It encouraged mothers to adopt best practices for improving their children's well being, overall development and nutritional needs, fostering a healthier future generation. Speaking at the event, the DC appreciated the collaborative efforts of the departments involved and commended mothers for their awareness of childcare and nutritional needs. He said that for having good health, the district organised awareness under the Food Safety & Standard Act. The farmers are being encour-

aged to have organic farming and getting knowledge to eat right.

The DC said that there is a dire need to educate the young generation to discard junk food and make mothers aware about the value of breastfeeding.

The event also witnessed the participation of PO, ICDS Kishtwar Dr Rishi Kumar, DSWO Kishtwar Zubair Ahmed Lone, AD FCS&CA Shafkat Husain Keen, CDPO Nagse- ni/Paddar Najeeb Latief- JKAS, CDPO Inderwal/ Marwah/ Warwan Dr Kul- deep Kumar, CMO Kishtwar Dr Rajinder Kumar, Supervisors besides AWWs and Mother Parents.

Delegation from Padder, AoI Gangyal call on Deputy Chief Minister, highlight key issues

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JANUARY 21

A delegation from Padder, led by Pooja Thakur, Chairperson District Development Council (DDC) Kishtwar, called on Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Chaudhary here today.

The delegation apprised the Deputy Chief Minister of the pressing issues faced by the residents of Padder-Nagseni, seeking immediate redressal. The key demands presented included improving road connectivity, addressing power supply issues, enhancing healthcare facilities and expediting completion of pending developmental projects in the region.

The Deputy Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to the delegation and assured them of prompt action. He issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned departments for early resolution of several highlighted issues.

Later, a deputation of Association of Industries (AoI) Gangyal, Jammu led by Virendra Jain, Presi-



dent and other functionaries met the Deputy Chief Minister.

The delegation apprised the Deputy Chief Minister of current state of Micro/Small Industrial sector, Jammu in particular and J&K in general.

The Association urged for initiating a new industrial policy and package of incentives, the operation part of which must be at par for new and the existing industry as well.

The deputation laid emphasis on compensating local Micro/Small sector through timely

reimbursement of fiscal incentives at least equivalent to the quantum of amount prevalent before adoption of GST regime in J&K by way of VAT remission, CST and Toll Tax exemptions besides Central Excise Duty refund and other demands.

The Deputy Chief Minister assured the deputation that the issues projected by them would be looked into and redressed properly. He said the government is committed for ensuring sustained industrial growth in Jammu & Kashmir.

DC Samba inspects arrangements for Republic Day celebrations

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, JANUARY 21

Deputy Commissioner Samba, Rajesh Sharma today visited Rani Suchet Singh Sports Stadium to finalize preparations for Republic Day 2025.

Accompanied by SSP Samba, Varinder Singh Manhas and senior officials, the DC reviewed key arrangements, including barricading, pavilion decoration, ground leveling, seating, and rehearsals by school contingents and J&K Police.

The DC directed timely completion of stage construction, sanitation, road beautification, and security arrangements. The Municipal Committee was tasked with beautifying the town and illuminating government buildings, while Social Forestry was instructed to plant trees. Departments were told to organize cultural programs, ensure uninterrupted power supply, and hoist the National Flag in every Panchayat.

SSP Samba assured robust security and traf-