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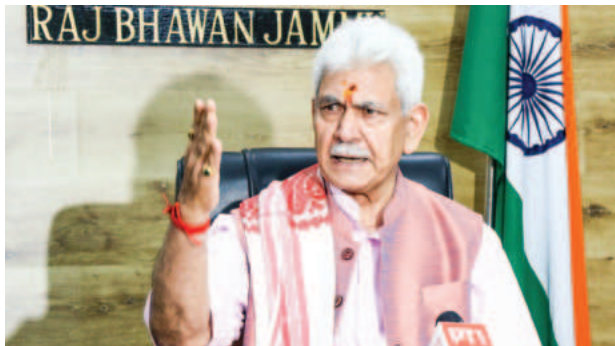
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## LG Sinha rebuts social media posts on JKPSC exam as 'misleading'

Says file received by Lok Bhavan on Dec 2 pertains to age relaxation only

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Dec 06: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday clarified that online posts about Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) examination are misleading, and that the file received by Lok Bhavan on December 2 pertained only to age relaxation. In a post on X, the Lt Governor, per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the Lok Bhavan returned the file the same day with a query whether it is logistically possible to conduct exam on December 7 by



incorporating modifications in eligibility criteria at such a belated stage.

"Social media posts with regard to JKPSC exam are misleading. Lok Bhavan had

received the file on 2nd Dec, 2025 which was categorically related to age relaxation only. File was returned the same day, 2nd Dec, 2025, with a query | [More on P6](#)

## JKAS prelims exam as per schedule: JKPSC Chairman

Rehan Qayoom Mir

The Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) Saturday clarified that the JKAS prelims examination will be held

tomorrow as per the schedule. Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), JKPSC Chairman Arun Kumar Choudhary said, "There is no change in the date of the exam. It will be | [More on P6](#)

## 'Doon Chetin', 'Sheermal' add Kashmiri flavour to Russian President's state dinner at Rashtrapati Bhavan

PM Modi gifts Kashmiri saffron, other items to Putin

Ahmad Taimur

Srinagar, Dec 06: From snow-capped mountains of the Kashmir Valley to the coastal flavours of South, India rolled out an elaborate culinary showcase for Russian President Vladimir Putin at a state dinner hosted by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Friday.

The menu, a copy of which lies with news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), included 'Gucci Doon Chetin' - a luxurious Kashmiri dish featuring stuffed morels (rare wild mushrooms) served with a walnut chutney in the appetiser course.

The menu, featuring exclusively vegetarian courses, opened with 'Murungelai Chaaru', a delicately spiced broth of



moringa leaves and moong beans, followed by a trio of appetisers — 'Kaale Chane Ke Shikampuri': Pan-grilled kebabs made from black gram, served with mint sauce and sheermal bread, and pelmeni-inspired vegetable jhol momo along side Gucci doon chetin.

For the main course, guests were served Zafrani Paneer Roll in saffron sauce, Palak Methi Mattar ka Saag, Tandoori Bharwan

Aloo, Achaari Baingan and Yellow Dal Tadka, paired with dry-fruit saffron pulao and an assortment of Indian breads including lachha paratha, missi roti and magaz naan.

The dessert spread featured Badam ka Halwa and Kesar-Pista Kulfi, alongside fresh fruits. The table also offered salads, traditional snacks like murukku and gur sandesh, and condiments such as gongura pickle and | [More on P6](#)

## In 10 years, we all must rid the country of slave mentality: PM

PTI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday urged people to completely rid the country of the slave mentality in the next 10 years, asserting that every sector today is shedding the colonial mindset and aiming for new achievements with pride. He also said the term Hindu rate of growth was used when India was struggling for 2-3 per cent of growth.

"The policy of Macaulay, which sowed the seeds of mental slavery in India, will complete 200 years in 2035. This means there are 10 years left. Therefore, in these very 10 years, we all must come together to free our country from the | [More on P6](#)

## Kashmir: Prevailing dry spell hits natural water supply sources



- Jal Shakti Dept steps up tanker supply
- Officials say no major crisis
- Recharge depends on rainfall

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Dec 06: The prevailing dry spell has led to sharp decline in discharge levels of water supply sources across Kashmir.

Chief Engineer Jal Shakti Kashmir, Er. Rakesh Kumar Gupta, while talking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "The persistent dry weather has affected most natural sources

feeding the supply lines." "Due to the dry spell, our water sources have been affected. Once the rainfall occurs or weather patterns change, these sources will be recharged," Gupta said.

He said while some areas are facing reduced water flow, the department has intensified its response to maintain supply. "The drinking water supply has got affected a bit, but we are coping with the demand through tanker services."

Er Gupta also said, the department is in continuous touch with the DCs and Divisional Administration and wherever there is a need, tankers are being provided. "There is no major shortage or crisis situation as of now," he said.

Meanwhile, Independent weather forecaster Faizan Arif Keng told KNO, Kashmir is currently | [More on P6](#)

IndiGo disruptions continue

## 21 flights cancelled across J&K airports on Saturday

- ◆ 14 IndiGo, 4 other airline cancellations in Sgr, 3 in Jammu
- ◆ Passengers advised to reconfirm flight status before travel

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Dec 06: Flight disruptions continued for the second consecutive day at Srinagar and Jammu airports on Saturday, with IndiGo operations again hit by widespread cancellations and delays.

Officials said that out of 64 scheduled flights for the day, 18 were cancelled, 14 operated by IndiGo and four by other carriers, including SpiceJet, while 10 other IndiGo flights experienced delays.

At Jammu airport, three flights were cancelled during the day due to the same operational disruptions affecting



IndiGo's nationwide network, taking the total number of cancellations across the Union Territory to 21 for the day.

An airport official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that Saturday's schedule at Srinagar airport comprised 64 flight movements with 32 arrivals and 32 departures.

"Of these, IndiGo had 36 flights for the day with 18 arrivals and 18 departures. Fourteen IndiGo flights, seven arrivals and seven departures were cancelled, and 10 others, five

arrivals and five departures reported delays," the official said.

He added that four SpiceJet flights - two arrivals and two departures - were also cancelled due to reasons known to the airline, while the remaining four flights scheduled for later in the evening operated normally.

"Passengers are advised to confirm their flight timings and reach the airport well in advance to avoid inconvenience," an airport authority official said.

At Jammu airport, officials confirmed | [More on P6](#)

## Tickets surge to over Rs 7,000–8,000

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Air travel woes deepened across the country, including Kashmir, on Saturday as IndiGo flight disruptions persisted for another straight day, sending airfares soaring to as high as Rs 7,000–8,000

on several routes.

Many tour and travel operators who spoke with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that while other airlines operated normally, the disruptions hitting IndiGo have triggered an unexpected spike in airfares, | [More on P6](#)

## MHA honours J&K's SDRF commandant, with DG's gold disc for 'exemplary service'

SSP Masroor Ahmed Mir recognised for meritorious contribution to disaster response

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Dec 06: The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has conferred the prestigious Director General's Gold Disc and Commendation Certificate upon Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Masroor Ahmed Mir, Commandant 1st Battalion, State Disaster Response Force

(SDRF) Srinagar, for his exemplary service and outstanding leadership in disaster management and civil protection.

The honour, as per the details collected by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), was announced during the 63rd Annual Day of Civil Defence & Home Guards, observed in New Delhi. | [More on P6](#)

## Police conduct court-mandated search in Pulwama, seize banned literature

KNO

Srinagar, Dec 06: Jammu & Kashmir Police on Friday carried out a court-supervised search at a shop in Litter Pulwama, leading to the recovery of banned literature and incriminating material, officials said.

In a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Police Spokesperson said that acting on a search warrant issued by the NIA Court Pulwama in case FIR No. 24/2024 U/S 10, 13 of the UAP Act, J&K Police carried out a search at the

shop belonging to Mohamed Amir Rather, resident of Litter Pulwama.

The search operation was conducted in the presence of a Magistrate and independent witnesses to ensure complete transparency and due process. During the search, police recovered incriminating material including JKDFP posters and banned literature books from the premises of the accused.

All seized items have been taken into custody for detailed scrutiny. Further investigation is in progress to ascertain the broader dimensions of the case and | [More on P6](#)

## Kishtwar road accident kills four of family

Umaisar Gull Ganie

Kishtwar, Dec 06: At least four members of a family, including an infant were killed in a road accident in Dada Sarthal area of Kishtwar district on Saturday, officials said.

Officials informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a Chevrolet vehicle (DL5CE-5634) on its way to Drabshalla skidded off the road and met with an accident.

"Three persons died on the spot, one critically injured was shifted to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared her brought dead," an official said.

The deceased have been identified as Ranjeet Singh (35), son of Poran Chand; Simran Thakur (21), daughter of Om Prakash; Ashu (6 months), daughter of Ranjeet Singh; and Jyoti Devi (30), wife of Ranjeet Singh—all residents



of Doda.

Police have registered a case and launched an investigation into the incident.

Meanwhile, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh expressed grief over the tragedy.

Taking to the microblogging site X, Jitendra said, "Just now spoke to DC Kishtwar Sh Pankaj Kumar Sharma. Saddened to learn about the tragic road accident on Sarthal road in which four occupants of the vehicle, hailing from Marmat area, unfortunately lost their life. My deepest condolences to | [More on P6](#)

## Worsening winter air quality in Kashmir raises health concerns

### Doctors warn of rising respiratory, cardiac ailments; experts call for sustainable measures

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Dec 06: As winter sets in and temperatures continue to dip, Kashmir is witnessing a steady deterioration in air quality, raising serious public health concerns.

Environmental experts and doctors said that prolonged dry weather, increased traffic emissions, biomass burning, and industrial pollutants have pushed pollution levels up, particularly in urban pockets.

Residents have reported a visible layer of haze over many parts of the Valley, while air quality monitors have repeatedly recorded PM2.5 and PM10 levels above safe limits in recent days.

The pollution levels remained high with PM10 ranging between 136 and 243 micrograms per cubic metre and PM2.5 between 86 and 167 micrograms per cubic metre, both far above



the World Health Organization's safe limits.

Speaking to the news agency - Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Dr Javid Ahmad Bhat, said that the worsening air quality is directly impacting public health. "Outpatient departments in hospitals have begun to see a surge in patients complaining of cough, breathlessness, chest

tightness, burning eyes, and throat irritation," he said.

"The number of patients with respiratory issues, especially chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma, has notably increased over the past few weeks," he added.

The doctor said that poor air quality aggravates existing conditions and triggers fresh

episodes of respiratory distress. Children, elderly, and people with pre-existing lung or heart conditions are especially vulnerable, he added.

Doctors warned that the impact is not limited to respiratory ailments.

A cardiologist working at GMC Srinagar said that prolonged exposure to polluted air increases the risk of heart attacks, high blood pressure, cardiac arrhythmias, and stroke. "Fine particulate matter enters the bloodstream and can cause inflammation, which puts additional strain on the heart," he said.

Studies have also linked poor air quality to fatigue, headaches, decreased immunity, anxiety, and disrupted sleep cycles.

Environmental officials attribute the worsening air quality to a combination of factors that include the lack of rainfall, which helps settle dust and pollutants, increased vehicular

emissions due to traffic congestion, burning of waste, including plastic and biomass, use of coal bukharis and wood for heating and dust generated from construction sites.

An official said the Valley needs stricter monitoring and long-term planning. "Without sustainable urban management and reduced emissions, we will continue to face worsening air quality each winter," he said.

Doctors have urged the public to take preventive measures to reduce exposure and avoid health complications by limiting outdoor exposure, avoiding morning and evening outdoor activities when pollution levels peak.

They advised keeping windows closed on hazy days, wearing N95 or KN95 masks while outdoors to filter harmful particles, drinking plenty of water to help flush toxins from the body, using air purifiers indoors, especially | [More on P6](#)



# CS leads inter-departmental drive to unlock MAP sector in J&K

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, DECEMBER 06: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Saturday chaired a joint meeting of the Forest and Agriculture Production Departments along with the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Jammu, to evolve a comprehensive roadmap for commercial cultivation, conservation and large-scale promotion of medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department; Commissioner Secretary, Forest Department; Director, CSIR-IIIM Jammu; senior officers of the Forest Department, SKUAST, and other concerned stakeholders.

During the deliberations, the Chief Secretary observed that Jammu and Kashmir is currently generating barely Rs 12 Cr annually from the MAP sector, which is significantly low compared to its immense potential estimated at nearly Rs 10,000 Cr at the national level and about Rs 2 lakh Cr globally. He emphasised the urgent need for a structured, scientifically driven and commercially viable strategy to unlock the sector's economic and livelihood potential, particularly for enhancing farmers' incomes.

Stressing inter-departmental coordination, the Chief Secretary directed the three key stakeholders of Forest Department, Agriculture Production Department, and agricultural research institutions to work with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. He underlined that the Forest Department must focus



on propagation of planting material in natural habitats through its nursery network, provide hands-on training to farmers, and develop replicable cultivation models.

The Agriculture Production Department was asked to identify the most commercially viable species from among over 1,100 MAP species found in the region. The department was also directed to undertake agro-climatic zonation for species-specific cultivation, develop scientifically validated packages of practices, strengthen extension services, and focus on value addition and market integration.

CSIR-IIIM Jammu and SKUAST were advised to provide technical expertise, facilitate technology transfer, and support knowledge dissemination for MAP cultivation. The research institutions were further encouraged to establish Centres of Excellence in Medicinal and Aromatic Plants and develop scientifically robust germplasm banks for preservation and research.

The Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production

Department, Shailendra Kumar, emphasized that the roadmap should be long-term and sustainability-oriented. He said the focus should be on creating a self-sustaining ecosystem that ensures attractive returns for farmers, with government support limited to initial handholding through inputs, capacity building and assured market linkages.

Commissioner Secretary, Forest Department, Sheetal Nanda assured full departmental support and highlighted efforts to make regulations more farmer-friendly. She informed that Forest Department nurseries would serve as key support hubs by supplying quality planting material and providing skill training to ensure successful implementation of the initiative.

Managing Director, HADP, Sandeep Kumar briefed the meeting on initiatives already undertaken under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP). He informed that 28 MAP clusters involving nearly 1,400 farmers have been established,

with cultivation of species such as Lavender, Harad, Wild Marigold

and Rosemary. He added that over 5,300 farmers have been trained during the past two years through field demonstrations, skill development programmes and marketing interventions. The meeting was also apprised about high-demand MAP species suitable for J&K, with market prices ranging from 100 to 1,00,000 per kg.

Director, CSIR-IIIM Jammu, Dr. Zabeer Ahmad highlighted the phytopharmaceutical and nutraceutical potential of medicinal plants found in J&K and outlined IIIM's role in translating research leads into market-oriented products. He also briefed the meeting on various CSIR Missions in bio-resources, medicinal and aromatic plants, floriculture, and smart agriculture aimed at improving soil and plant health. He informed that IIIM has developed and commercially released several MAP varieties and maintains extensive germplasm banks.

Dr Ahmad further stated that CSIR-IIIM envisions positioning Jammu and Kashmir as India's leading hub for a MAP-driven bio-economy, focusing on

high-value cultivation, processing and export promotion. Being a recognised biodiversity hotspot, J&K hosts more than 1,100 native MAP species, including around 25 high-value crops with strong global demand. With the global MAP market projected to exceed USD 650 billion by 2030 and India currently holding less than 10 per cent share, the region holds vast untapped potential.

The proposed transformation strategy includes land zonation and optimisation using degraded forest patches, fire lines and marginal government land; establishment of aroma and phyto-pharma clusters across Jammu, Kashmir and the Chenab Valley; and fostering strong community-institution-industry partnerships.

The meeting also discussed the need for suitable amendments to the J&K Minor Forest Produce Policy-2022 to encourage farmer participation, facilitate species identification and niche area development, strengthen R&D infrastructure, and improve market linkages across the Union Territory.

## Div Com Kashmir reviews handicrafts, handloom Sector

Calls for integration with tourism

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 06: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Saturday took a comprehensive review of the Department of Handicrafts and Handloom (H&H) in a meeting here.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Commissioner SMC, Director Handicrafts & Handloom, Director Tourism Kashmir, DD Planning, officers of Floriculture and H&H.

At the outset, Director H&H gave an overview of the envisioned projects and strategies to promote the H&H sector, including the operationalisation of Kashmir Haat on the Pattern of Dilli Haat, the fencing of DHHK land near the secretariat and PCR, Craft Gallery under Srinagar Smart City Project at Batmaloo, PM Unity (Ekta) Mall Proposal at Kashmir Haat, KnowYour Artisan Series under Soulful Kashmir Brand and proposed institutionalizing future events by integrating artisan stalls, live demonstrations, cultural showcases, and market linkages.

He also apprised land transfer issue for the development of Craft Tourism Village of Sonpah near Doodhpathri.

Speaking on the occasion, the Div Com emphasized on drafting holistic plan for 'Know Your Artisan' events to be held in Schools, colleges and other institutions.

address the car parking issue near Kashmir Haat, the Div Com instructed Director H&H to adopt a judicious mechanism for optimum utilization of available parking space to facilitate visitors to Exhibition Ground.

He also asked Commissioner SMC to earmark some shops for Hi-end craft entrepreneurs at Souq Market Batmaloo for the promotion and showcase of GI-tagged products.

The meeting also discussed the envisioned project of developing and operationalising Kashmir Haat on the Pattern of Dilli Haat with the objective to convert it into a vibrant cultural and commercial hub. Director H&H shared success of 'Know Your Artisan Series' under Soulful Kashmir Brand and proposed institutionalizing future events by integrating artisan stalls, live demonstrations, cultural showcases, and market linkages.

He also apprised land transfer issue for the development of Craft Tourism Village of Sonpah near Doodhpathri.

Speaking on the occasion, the Div Com emphasized on drafting holistic plan for 'Know Your Artisan' events to be held in Schools, colleges and other institutions.

## Saurabh Bhagat reviews Consumer Commissions across J&K

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 6: Commissioner Secretary Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), Saurabh Bhagat, Saturday convened a comprehensive review meeting to assess the functioning and ongoing initiatives of the Consumer Commissions across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting, as per an official statement was attended by President State Consumer Dispute Redressal Committee, along with the Presidents and members of the District Consumer Commissions besides senior officers from the department of FCS&CA, including Special Secretary, Director Finance, Deputy Directors, Senior



Law Officer and officials from Legal Metrology Department and National Informatics Centre were also present.

During the review, the Commissioner Secretary stressed the need to expedite identification and allotment of suitable land parcels for construction of permanent buildings for District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions. It was decided

that the matter would be followed up proactively with respective district administrations to ensure timely availability of land.

The meeting emphasised the need to expedite the preparation and approval of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for new DCDRC buildings in Srinagar, Anantnag, Baramulla and Kupwara.

The Commissioner Secretary directed that

these DPRs be treated as priority projects. He asked the Legal Metrology Department to collaborate closely to fast-track all related technical and administrative processes in this regard.

Further, a detailed overview of existing staff shortages in various Consumer Commissions was also taken up.

Saurabh Bhagat directed to initiate concrete measures to address these deficiencies at the earliest so that functioning of the Commissions remains smooth and efficient. He asked the concerned officers to take up digitisation of all case records, orders and judgments on priority basis.

A detailed review was held with the National Informatics Centre

regarding the fast track implementation of e-Jagriti platform, aimed at ushering in comprehensive e-governance across consumer courts. The platform will integrate mediation cells, online payment gateways and the corpus fund for fines and penalties.

Commissioner Secretary also directed for early finalisation and signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Union Ministry of Food, Supplies & Consumer Affairs for seamless integration and rollout of the system in J&K. Further, the meeting also held a threadbare discussion on implementation of Supreme Court judgments pertaining to functioning of Consumer Courts.

## SMC reviews snow, dewatering preparedness

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 6: Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haaseeb, Saturday chaired a high-level review meeting at the SMC Central Office, Karan Nagar, to evaluate the Corporation's readiness for snow clearance and dewatering operations ahead of the winter season.

The meeting, as per an official statement was attended by Joint Commissioners, Executive Engineers, Chief Sanitation Officer, Chief Transport Officer, Stores Officer, and other senior officials.

The Commissioner assessed a comprehensive deployment plan for workforce and machinery across all municipal wards to ensure timely and efficient snow clearance. He directed officers to prioritize key public routes, particularly those connecting hospitals, ration depots, shrines, and government institutions, to ensure uninterrupted accessibility during snowfall.

Highlighting SMC's enhanced capabilities, the Commissioner stated that the Corporation is equipped with state-of-the-art snow clearance machinery, advanced dewatering systems,

and modern mobility support, enabling SMC to respond swiftly and effectively to winter-related challenges.

To ensure seamless coordination, the Commissioner instructed the Snow Monitoring Committee and the 24x7 Control Room to maintain full operational readiness. "The 24x7 Control Room must remain proactive and responsive to public concerns, ensuring immediate action on snow clearance and related issues," he emphasized.

On dewatering preparedness, the Commissioner directed that all permanent dewatering stations be maintained in optimal working condition. He also stressed the rapid deployment of high-capacity mobile pumps in vulnerable and low-lying areas to mitigate waterlogging.

Reiterating the Corporation's commitment to public safety and service continuity, the Commissioner affirmed that SMC's modern infrastructure, proactive planning, and dedicated workforce form the core of its winter response strategy.

He noted that the Corporation is fully geared to keep Srinagar accessible, safe, and resilient throughout the winter season.

## Horticulture Dept warns against undercover auctions in markets

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 06: Director Horticulture Planning and Marketing, Jammu & Kashmir, has taken strong cognizance of reports circulating on social media alleging instances of undercover auctioning of horticulture and agricultural produce in certain Fruit and Vegetable Markets across the Union Territory.

In a circular issued, the Director, as per an official statement issued on Saturday reiterated that such practices are strictly prohibited and constitute a clear violation of the laws and regulations governing market operations. It has been emphasised that the trade of horticulture produce must be conducted only through open, transparent, and accountable auction procedures. The Director has categorically warned that any individual, trader, commission agent, or entity found engaging in or facilitating concealed auction activities shall face stringent legal action, including immediate cancellation of license along with any other penalties deemed appropriate under the law.

To ensure strict enforcement, the concerned officers of the department have been directed to monitor operations closely and ensure full compliance with the instructions in letter and spirit.

The Department is committed to safeguarding farmer interests, maintaining fair trade practices, and promoting transparency in the marketing system across all regulated markets of Jammu & Kashmir.

## JJB Kupwara inspects Harwan Observation Home

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 06: The Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) Kupwara Saturday carried out Inspection of the Observation Home at Harwan Srinagar, led by Principal Magistrate JJB, Mudasir Bashir along with the APP and Legal cum Probation Officer.

During the visit, the Superintendent of the Observation Home, as per an official statement guided the team through an extensive tour of all residential facilities, educational classrooms, recreational areas and medical facilities. The inspection team closely examined the living conditions to ensure they meet appropriate standards, assessed hygiene protocols, reviewed the overall infrastructure, and evaluated safety and security measures implemented within the facility.

The Principal Magistrate and the team conducted conversations with the juveniles to gauge their well-being and progress in rehabilitation programs.

Furthermore, the team meticulously reviewed the legal and administrative records of all juveniles housed in the facility.

## KASHMIR THUNDER



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## 11th Death Anniversary



Today was the day when left this temporary world for the eternal abode to meet the creator. You are and will be forever in our hearts. Your wisdom, kindness, and unwavering support continuous to inspire and guide us all. May Allah ( Subhana Wa Ta'ala) grant you highest place in Jannah.

Yasir Altaf  
Dr rumaisa Altaf  
Shah and Sofi family.



# Tral, Aripal set for official tourism transformation

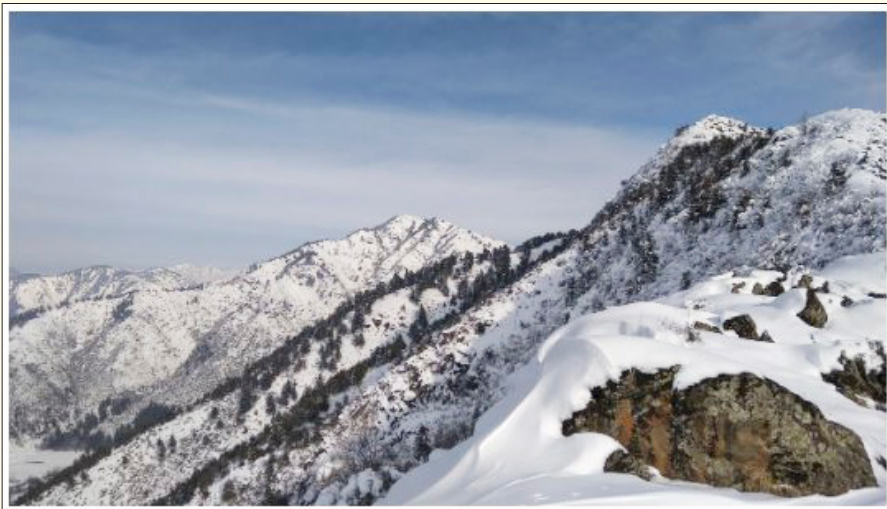
## Tourism Dept takes over facilities

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Dec 06: A team of officials from the Tourism Department Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation (JKTDC), and Jammu & Kashmir Cable Car Corporation on Saturday formally took over the charge of tourist facilities at Shikargah Tral and Naristan Aripal, to 'strengthen' tourism infrastructure in south Kashmir's Pulwama district.

The process was carried out under the supervision of Deputy Director Tourism Kashmir, Sheikh Enayat (JKAS), who oversaw the official handing-over of assets and facilities to the Tourism Department.

Officials said that the move is part of the government's renewed push to expand tourism activities in unexplored and scenic destinations of Kashmir,



particularly in offbeat areas like Shikargah and Naristan, which have recently gained attention for their natural beauty and adventure potential.

"We aim to strengthen facilities in these serene pockets of Pulwama so that they emerge as promising tourist hubs," a tourism official said, adding that streamlining administrative control will help ensure better maintenance, promotion, and service delivery.

Local residents and stakeholders expressed hope that the takeover will finally pave the way for systematic development, increased footfall, and new livelihood opportunities.

"Shikargah and Naristan have always had huge potential, but the lack of facilities kept tourists away. Now that the Tourism Department has taken over, we expect

better infrastructure, more visitors, and employment avenues for youth," said a resident of Tral.

Another shopkeeper from Aripal said that even small interventions—like improving pathways, sanitation, and signage—could dramatically change tourist movement in the area.

Officials said that the Tourism Department is likely to frame a development plan focusing on eco-tourism, village stays, trekking routes, and adventure-based activities. "With proper planning, these destinations can attract nature lovers, trekkers, and families looking for peaceful retreats," an official said.

The formal transfer of these facilities is expected to streamline coordination between different agencies and remove administrative delays that previously hampered development—(KNO)

# INDIA bloc on 'life support': CM Omar

## Says, BJP contests every poll like fight for survival

SAJID RAINA

New Delhi, Dec 06: Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday said the INDIA alliance is "on life support", warning that decisions taken without consensus have weakened the bloc ahead of upcoming elections.

Speaking at the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit 2025 in New Delhi, Abdullah said the Bihar election outcome exposed organisational and coordination gaps within the alliance. "Either we are a bloc, or we are not," he said, stressing that decisions must be taken collectively if the INDIA alliance wants to offer a national alternative to the BJP.

Abdullah said pushing constituents out of the seat-sharing framework in Bihar disrupted unity among alliance partners. "Look at Bihar. We consciously pushed one constituent out of the India bloc. If tomorrow that leader leaves, who is responsible?" he asked.

Referring to the handling of



Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, he added, "The entire thing with Hemant Soren and JMM was a disaster."

Omar said the bloc must decide whether it functions as a national platform or merely as state-specific alliances. "If we call ourselves a bloc, we must act like one. Otherwise, we are just stitching different alliances state by state," he said. Contrasting the INDIA bloc's internal gaps with the BJP's electoral strategy, the J&K CM said the ruling party has constructed an unmatched

election machinery. "They fight every election as if their lives depend on it, from a club election to the election of the President," he said.

According to him, the BJP immediately shifts its focus to the next state once polling ends, while opposition parties "begin preparations two months before voting". Abdullah said the opposition should draw lessons from the BJP's discipline rather than dismissing its success as purely resource-driven. "They also have an incredible work ethic.

It is possible to replicate some of what they do," he said.

He rejected suggestions that his working relationship with the Centre indicates any alliance with the BJP. "We maintain a working relationship because we have a responsibility toward the people of Jammu and Kashmir. It doesn't mean we are joining hands with the BJP," he said.

Omar said the National Conference will continue to pursue the demand for restoration of statehood and a voice in security-related decisions.

The Chief Minister further said recent election patterns show that Muslim voters are no longer guaranteed support bases for any party. "The Muslim voter has clearly said that you cannot take us for granted," he said. "They want someone who will espouse their cause for five years, not five months before elections."

"If leaders like Asaduddin Owaisi are gaining ground, it is because voters have found someone who speaks for them 365 days a year," Omar said—(KNO)

## 'Wandering' bear trapped, hunt ends after 11 days



REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, Dec 06 (KNO): The wandering black bear that had kept Srinagar residents on edge for over 11 days was finally trapped on Saturday evening at Nigeen here, bringing an end to an intense citywide search operation.

Wildlife officials said that the animal walked into a cage set up near the lake area. "The bear has been successfully trapped and will be relocated to a safe forest habitat after medical examination," officials said.

The bear had been on an unusual "city tour," spotted earlier at NIT Srinagar, Kashmir University, SKIMS Soura and finally around Nigeen Lake, prompting a massive multi-agency operation. Drones, tranquilliser teams, and rescue vehicles were deployed to monitor its movement and ensure public safety.

With the bear's capture, officials said surveillance and patrols would continue for the next 24 hours as the second bear spotted near the University of Kashmir, has not been trapped yet and search for him is continuing—(KNO)

# EOW charges duo in Rs 34.7 lakh Dubai export fraud



KNO

Srinagar, Dec 06: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Crime Branch Kashmir has filed a chargesheet in a high-value export fraud case against two accused persons, including alleged habitual offender Zahid Bashir Sofi alias Shagoo, before the Court of the City Judge, Srinagar.

In a statement, it said that the chargesheet in FIR No. 31/2023 under Sections 420 and 120-B RPC has been submitted in absentia under Section 512 CrPC, as both accused continue to remain absconding.

According to the EOW, Shagoo and co-accused Javed Ahmad Shah allegedly induced

the complainant to invest in a purported export business involving mutton, rice and other goods to Dubai.

The probe found that the complainant was taken to Punjab to sign a forged agreement with "Mahabir Rice Mill, Mahabir Solvent, Rice Market GT Road Karnal" and later to Dubai to create false credibility around the venture, leading to an investment of rupees 34.74 lakh, which was allegedly misappropriated.

The Crime Branch said the case involved forged documents, fabricated agreements and deliberate inducement, establishing offences punishable under Sections 420 and 120-B RPC.

It also said that Zahid

Bashir Shagoo and his wife are already named in earlier fraud cases — FIR No. 21/2022 and FIR No. 13/2018 — related to allegedly extracting money on the pretext of providing gas agencies. Those chargesheets too were filed under Section 512 CrPC after the accused evaded arrest, it added.

The agency said Shagoo's repeated involvement in multiple fraud cases reflects a pattern of persistent criminal conduct and his continued evasion remains a serious concern.

The Crime Branch has appealed to the public to share any information regarding the whereabouts of the absconding accused, assuring confidentiality of informants—(KNO)

## HG-CD Raising Day

# Director SDRF Kashmir hails courage of volunteers, first responders

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, Dec 06 (KNO): Director SDRF Kashmir, Imtiyaz Hussain, on Saturday lauded the exemplary courage and selfless service of volunteers and first responders during disasters and acts of terror.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 63rd Raising Day of Home Guards and Civil Defence in Srinagar, the Director said that the occasion is not only to commemorate the formation of these forces but also to honour the courage and dedication of individuals who rise to the occasion during disasters and acts of terror. "Their actions inspire us all to stand united in the face of any challenge," Director Hussain said.

He said that despite risking their lives, these individuals helped with rescue efforts amid chaos and destruction. "Each of them was awarded Rs 10,000 and a commendation certificate



by DGP A.G. Mir."

The Director also expressed gratitude to all volunteers and civilians who contributed to rescue operations, particularly during the Pahalgam terror attack. He emphasized the importance of collective courage and community response in times of disaster, urging everyone to emulate the dedication shown by these heroes.

"At times of disaster and challenge, we should all rise to the occasion and display the

commitment demonstrated by these individuals not only for Kashmir but for the entire nation," he said.

The celebrations also featured the reading of messages from the President of India, the Union Home Minister and other dignitaries, along with a grand parade. Civil Defence Wardens, Chief Wardens, volunteers from across Kashmir and numerous civilians attended the event.

The awardees included Syed Nazakat Shah, a civilian from Anantnag, who rescued a tourist family during the Pahalgam terror attack, in which 26 tourists lost their lives. Shah was presented a cash prize of Rs 10,000 and a commendation certificate for his bravery and prompt action. The event also honoured the courage of three civilians from Nowgam who acted as first responders during the recent accidental explosion at a local police station—(KNO)

## Govt reports over 230 enforcement drives on tainted fertilizer

RAJA SYED RATHER

Srinagar, Dec 05: In a crackdown on malpractices in fertilizer supply, authorities in Jammu and Kashmir have taken more than 230 enforcement actions against black marketing, hoarding, and the supply of substandard products during the current Kharif season, Union Ministry informed in the Lok Sabha. As per the data submitted by J&K to the Centre, the Union Territory conducted 3,694 inspections between April 1 and November 28, 2025, to check irregularities in the supply of urea, DAP and other fertilizers.

During this period, authorities issued 142 show-cause notices, cancelled 44 licences, and registered two FIRs for black marketing-related violations in the UT.

Under hoarding-related enforcement, the UT served

31 notices, cancelled two licences, and reported no FIRs. "J&K issued 55 show-cause notices for substandard quality cases, while eight notices were served in diversion-related checks, though no FIRs were lodged under these categories."

The Ministry further said that fertilizer availability across the country, including J&K has remained adequate during the ongoing Rabi 2025-26 season. "Any complaint received at the central level is forwarded to the concerned State/UT for action under the Essential Commodities Act and Fertilizer Control Order."

The Centre also informed that the fertilizer movement is continuously being monitored through the Integrated Fertilizer Monitoring System (IFMS) and States, UTs are advised to coordinate with manufacturers and importers to ensure timely supply—(KNO)

## A silent cry in the halls of birth

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, Dec 06: In a shocking incident the body of a newborn male infant was found inside a washroom at the maternity hospital under the Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) here on Saturday. An official said that attendants found the body in one of the washrooms and immediately alerted the administration, which subsequently informed the police.

"Upon receiving the information, a police team reached the spot and took possession of the body for medico-legal formalities," the official said, adding that the incident has triggered shock and concern among the staff and patients at the hospital.

He said the body was later shifted for concerns to ascertain the exact cause and timing of death. "We are verifying all aspects of the case, including how the infant ended up in the washroom area and who was responsible," the official added.

An investigation has been taken up to establish the circumstances surrounding the death and identify those involved, the official said—(KNO)

## ARTO B'la penalizes repeat offenders with license suspension, vehicle blacklisting

WARIS FAYAZ

Baramulla, Dec 06: Authorities in Baramulla have begun suspending driving licenses and blacklisting vehicles of repeat traffic violators, following the orders of J&K Transport Commissioner. Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Mudasir Wani said, "Around 8-10 driving licenses of repeat offenders have been suspended, besides we have issued 35-37 e-challans and collected fines of more than Rs 80,000 during the drive." He said the operations targeted undisciplined road behaviour despite widespread awareness via radio, TV, banners and posters,



with Deputy Commissioner backing strict measures against rising violations. ARTO Wani further said that the vehicles operating without No Objection Certificates (NOCs) or permits are being seized while driving licence of habitual violators are being suspended and blacklisted.

The MVD official also asked the purchase and resale dealers to register the requisite details as per

the recent circular with detailed guidelines and a 21-day timeline, 'or face establishment seizures post-deadline.'

Official also addressed complaints about scarce transport post 5-6 PM to several villages from major townships, promising a review to ensure late-hour services. Earlier, ARTO had notified that any vehicle having pending challans will not be entertained for fitness certification by the BOI under ARTO Baramulla. The notice further states that vehicles with more than three challans will be blacklisted and the concerned driver's licence will be suspended or cancelled—(KNO)



# Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025: Step Towards New Age Banking In India

The Act represents a significant stride towards modernizing India’s financial architecture. By aligning governance norms, depositor safeguards, and audit practices with current economic realities, the Act not only strengthens public confidence but also supports India’s vision of a secure, inclusive, and technology-driven banking system.

## Press Information Bureau

A nation's economic success depends largely on its financial system. Typically, banking institutions provide a variety of services, such as taking deposits, making loans, assisting with transactions, and providing different financial goods including credit cards, savings accounts, and loans to the public. India's banking system facilitates investment and individual financial needs and therefore, plays a crucial role in the country's economic development.

India's banking sector has indeed undergone a remarkable transformation, evolving from a paper-based, branch-centric system to a leading digital landscape driven by key technological and policy milestones. It has transformed from traditional banking and initial computerisation to biometric identity system – Aadhaar and brought millions of unbanked people into the formal financial system through Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana. Such initiatives of the government have been instrumental in promoting financial inclusion by bridging the gap between urban and rural populations and bringing formal banking services to millions.

The Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025 is a step towards strengthening governance standards in the banking sector by ensuring uniformity in reporting by banks to the Reserve Bank of India along with improved audit quality in public sector banks (PSBs). The act enhances depositor and investor protection by promoting customer convenience through improved nomination facilities.

### Evolution of India's Banking Laws

India's banking regulation has evolved alongside the country's economic and institutional development, guided by five cornerstone legislations that continue to define its financial architecture.

The Reserve Bank of India is the central bank of the country. The Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 (II of 1934) establishes the legal foundation for the Bank's operations. It was constituted to primarily regulate the issue of banknotes, maintain reserves in order to secure monetary stability and operate the credit and currency system of the country. In order to strengthen the nation's financial infrastructure, the bank also played a key role in the establishment of organizations

such as the Unit Trust of India, the Industrial Development Bank of India, the National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development and others.

The Banking Regulation Act, 1949 followed soon after independence, consolidating control over banking activities under a uniform legal structure. It is one of the most significant legislative frameworks in India, regulating the banking sector to ensure stability, security, and growth.

The State Bank of India Act, 1955 marked the formal establishment of the State Bank of India (SBI), transforming the undertaking of the Imperial Bank of India, with a mandate to expand banking facilities on a large scale, more particularly in the rural and semi-urban areas, and for diverse other public purposes.

In order to better serve the needs of development of the economy in conformity with the national policy objectives, 14 significant Indian Scheduled Commercial Banks with deposits over Rs 50 crores were nationalized in 1969. Further, a fresh Ordinance was issued which was later replaced by the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970. To promote the welfare of the people, The Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1980 was passed to provide for the acquisition and transfer of the undertakings of certain banking companies.

In addition to these, several important amendments to the RBI Act such as the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Act, 1994, the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Amendment Act, 1994 and the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Act, 2007, the Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2012 relating to governance, capital flexibility, Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) or Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) based liquidity management were introduced, reforming India's banking framework.

With The Banking Regulation (Amendment) Act, 2020, additional powers were provided to the Reserve Bank of India for enhanced effective regulation of Co-operative banks. Continuing this momentum, in a recent reform, The Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025 amends five acts viz. the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, the State Bank

of India Act, 1955, the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970 and the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1980. The move aims to enhance banking governance, improve audit transparency, strengthen depositor protection, and bring cooperative banks under a more robust regulatory framework.

Addressing Emerging Challenges: Need of the Banking Amendment Act, 2025  
Focus: Why Nomination Matters?

Huge amount lies across banks, as unclaimed deposits, often because no nominee was recorded. The new rules are targeted to cut this delay by ensuring smoother claim settlements and faster access for families.

Household reliance on the banking system has intensified in the recent times with the Government aiming to extend financial services to the large hitherto un-served population of the country to unlock its growth potential. In order to keep pace with the rising complexity as financial inclusion deepens and access to banking expands nationwide, it becomes essential to reduce manual work, match operations with industry scale and technology and shift statutory deadlines for better compliance.

The Banking Amendment Act, 2025 has been introduced amid rapid digital growth and evolving financial challenges. The reform seeks to align governance and compliance frameworks with contemporary industry dynamics and evolving technology. The provisions are primarily needed to:

Gain Clarity in assets succession for smoother transfer of assets for both banks and depositors, minimizing disputes and reducing the need for judicial intervention.

Ensure Uniform terminology to streamline regulatory compliance and facilitate adaptation to emerging technologies within the banking ecosystem.

Revise statutory deadlines aligned with accounting cycles to reduce manual workload, promote automation, and strengthen systemic efficiency.

Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025: Key Reforms

The Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025 introduces key reforms focused on depositor security, governance strength, and faster resolution of stress. Beyond structural

updates, the 2025 Act reinforces India's ongoing efforts to enhance banking oversight and governance. The changes are rooted in practical challenges visible over the last decade. The provisions of the act were notified in two stages: Section 3 to 5 and 15-20 were covered in Stage 1 (1st August, 2025) while Sections 10 to 13 were covered in Stage 2 (1st November 2025).

The key reforms are described in detail below, outlining the major improvements that have been implemented to improve current systems and processes.

The key reforms are described in detail below, outlining the major improvements that have been implemented to improve current systems and processes.

Modernised Nomination Framework (Sections 10 - 13)

Depositors can nominate up to four persons for their bank accounts via either simultaneous or successive nominations

Simultaneous nominations allow percentage-wise allocation totalling to 100%

Successive nominations ensure seamless succession in case of a nominee's death for articles in safe custody and safety lockers

Redefinition of 'Substantial Interest' (Section 3)

Threshold increased from 5 lakh (1968 limit) to 2 crore

This regulatory change is designed to revamp governance standards

Governance in Co-operative Banks (Section 4 & 14)

Maximum tenure of directors (excluding chairperson and whole-time directors) increased from 8 to 10 years. Tenure for directors in other banking companies remains unchanged.

Aligns co-operative banks with the 97th Constitutional Amendment, which mandates democratic governance and elevates status in the country's political and economic framework.

Audit Reforms in PSBs (Sections 15-20)  
Empower PSBs to fix auditors' remuneration.

Permitted to transfer unclaimed shares, interest, and bond redemption amounts to the Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF), bringing them in line with practices followed by companies under the Companies Act.

### Procedural Efficiency of the System

Amendments pertaining to definitions related to the operations revised significantly, shifting the statutory reporting dates for banks and co-operative banks.

In particular, reporting requirements that earlier referred to "last Friday" or "alternate Fridays" have now been aligned to the last day of the month or the last day of the fortnight, as applicable.

Impact of the Banking Reforms with National Vision

A major step in fortifying the legal, regulatory, and governance structure of the Indian banking sector has been taken with the implementation of these laws. The 2025 amendments shall have a transformative impact on depositors and service providers.

Depositor-centric: The Act includes robust measures to safeguard public trust in banking institutions by simplified claim settlement for their families.

Enhanced Governance: The revised threshold for "substantial interest" reflects inflation and growth. The maximum tenure for cooperative bank directors (excluding the Chairperson and whole-time directors) now aligns with the 97th Constitutional Amendment indicating the democratic outlook.

Improved Financial Transparency: Transfer to the Investor Education and Protection Fund aims at creating a more transparent system for fund management.

Enhanced Audit Quality: The PSBs will now be able to attract more qualified professionals and improve audit quality by paying better auditor remuneration.

Improved Operational Efficiency: The Act simplifies certain procedures, such as updating certain operational definitions.

### Conclusion

The Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025 represents a significant stride towards modernizing India's financial architecture. By aligning governance norms, depositor safeguards, and audit practices with current economic realities, the Act not only strengthens public confidence but also supports India's vision of a secure, inclusive, and technology-driven banking system. These reforms reinforce stability, transparency, and efficiency essential pillars for sustaining growth in an increasingly digital economy.

# Poll Reforms In India: Ensuring Democratic Integrity

This article reflects on over 50 years of India's electoral history, highlighting the resilience of the election process amid challenges, the innovations introduced by the Election Commission, and the need for ongoing reforms to uphold democracy

## Swapan Dasgupta

More than 50 years ago, a venerable British scholar of Indian politics wryly observed that elections are one of those things “Indians do rather well.” Coming in the backdrop of fears—not entirely illegitimate—of India's democracy being put on permanent hold or becoming ‘guided’, the sanctity of the electoral process was perceived as a redeeming feature of public life. This basic pillar of democracy secured its ultimate endorsement in 1977 when, despite the shadow of the Emergency, India's electorate voted out an authoritarian regime.

The ability of the Election Commission (ECI) to ensure that popular will is reflected in the legislatures has been tested over and over in the past seven decades of Independence. Although there have been instances of derailment—the West Bengal Assembly election of 1972 and the Jammu and Kashmir election of 1987 being two notable examples—India's overall experience with elections has helped maintain the legitimacy of the political system.

As happens in a first-past-the-past that exaggerates legislative majorities, there have also been instances of incredulous losers whose anecdotal experiences of the campaign didn't quite correspond with the outcome. In 1971, a defeated side insisted that the use of Soviet-made ‘invisible ink’ helped Indira Gandhi win handsomely. Similar incredible claims of satellite manipulation of EVMs were heard after the



2009 general election.

What was once the prerogative of conspiracy theorists has become less of a fringe preoccupation in the past year. Encouraged by number-crunchers in his party whose predictions were at variance with the popular mood, the Leader of Opposition has challenged the veracity of the electoral rolls. There have been loud assertions that the ECI is contemplating using the Special Intensive Revision of the electoral rolls to exclude minority voters on the ground that they may not be Indian. The controversy has become a subject of jousting between the political parties in West Bengal and this may spill over to Assam and other

North-eastern states.

Since Article 321 of the Constitution and the Representation of People's Act gives the ECI 'exclusive jurisdiction' over the conduct of elections, the electoral process has been kept out of political interference. Over the decades the ECI has introduced many innovations to ensure the fairness of elections. Among the most important are the Model Code of Conduct that imposes curbs on untoward political behaviour and the EVMs which have made manipulation of votes more difficult—although not impossible. There are now norms guiding the deployment of police and paramilitary forces at polling booths. Additionally, with

the spread of technology, the ECI is insisting on CCTV cameras in polling booths to ensure that decorum is maintained, and officials and voters aren't subjected to intimidation.

It is, of course, true that none of these innovations are foolproof. Crude muscle power often prevails at the local level, including at counting centres, and these have potentially perverted outcomes. Anecdotal evidence of manipulation by Returning Officers cannot be disbelieved entirely. When Parliament discusses electoral reforms in the Winter Session it is possible that the country may hear of many more deviations from exemplary democratic conduct that need to be addressed by the ECI. As an important stakeholder in the democratic project, Parliament needs to collate its vast experience of elections for the public good. However, the larger cause of good politics is not served if the political executive issues crude threats, including bodily harm, against the ECI and prevents lesser government officials—on whose decorous conduct the system is completely dependent—from carrying out their Constitutional obligations. The conduct of the ruling party in West Bengal over the ongoing SIR is shameful.

It goes without saying that the existence of accurate voter lists is a basic precondition of democracy. There is an understandable outcry if members of underprivileged communities are coerced into staying away from the polling stations. Unfortunately, the outrage is significantly less when

large numbers are either not included in the rolls or there are duplicate and triplicate entries that could potentially distort the outcome. The ECI has tried to address the issue of. Impersonation through Voter Identity cards and photographs. However, the cheats have also found ways to short-circuit the system by voting on behalf of people who are either dead or have relocated permanently. In eastern India there is the additional problem of the voter rolls having been padded by individuals who are ineligible to vote in Indian elections.

The ongoing SIR exercise isn't the first time the ECI is undertaking a thorough voter inventory. Although there is no stipulated time schedule, say once in 10 years or so, for this large-scale exercise, it is well recognised that unless this periodic audit is undertaken, the outcome of elections will not accurately reflect the popular will.

In the early decades of the 20th century it used to said, in the context of Ireland, that people were advised to ‘vote early and vote often.’ An enterprising scholar may find it worthwhile to document how innovative practices such as dead men voting or the votes of one candidate being effortlessly transferred to the tally of his rival are prevalent in parts of India. SIR won't turn all these examples of creative politics into history, but it will add some more conviction to the global belief that India does its elections well. The hope is that in the coming decades, it will not be said about any state or locality that elections there aren't conducted, they are managed.

*The views expressed by contributors on this page are their own and do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of the newspaper*



## J&K Tourism bags Eco-Tourism Hotspot Award

KT News Desk

HYDERABAD, DECEMBER 06: The J&K Tourism has bagged the Eco-Tourism hotspot award at the India International Tourism Mart being held here at Hyderabad.

The tourism fest, as per an official statement issued on Saturday, was inaugurated on December 04, 2025 and it is witnessing participation of many states and Union territories besides delegations from Malaysia, Nepal, Botswana and other countries.

The J&K Tourism was awarded for its eco-tourism practices having been adopted for sustainable tourism across J&K by the Department. Besides this also coincides with the continued thrust and series of promotional activities carried by the department across the tourism markets in the country in recent months.

The stall set up by the J&K Tourism department evinced keen interest among the members of travel trade and customers who showed a great interest in the products on display particularly related to adventure,



MICE and Wedding.

The delegation comprised Chief Executive Officer, Kishtwar Development Authority, Kaiser Ahmad Bhawani; Chief Executive Officer, Wullar-Manasbal Development Authority, Ahsanul Haq Chishti; General Manager, JKTDC, Riyaz Ahmad, Assistant Director, Tourism, Jammu, Arif Ahmad Lone and

Assistant Tourist Officer, Sajid Kirmani besides many travel operators from J&K.

Meanwhile on the sidelines of the tourism fest, the delegation had a series of meetings with tour operators' bodies from Hyderabad and other parts of the country besides facilitating proactive B2B sessions between the tourism stakeholders from J&K and their counterparts

from other states. These include meetings with Tour Operators Association of Telangana, FITCCI, UFTC, representatives of SKAL International besides heads of prominent travel companies of the country. The discussions underscored the importance of more synchronised and cohesive approach between the local stakeholders and their counterparts across the country.

## Home Guards, Civil Defence celebrate 63rd Raising Day



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 06: 63rd Annual Raising Day of Home Guards & Civil Defence was celebrated in the premises of SDRF 1st Battalion Srinagar with a march past by contingents of Home Guards, Civil Defence from Srinagar and Budgam, SDRF, NDRF and Pipe Band.

DIG (Director Home Guards Kashmir), Ramesh Angral, as per an official statement was Chief Guest, who presided over the function and took over the Salute of the March Past.

DIG (Director Civil Defence & SDRF Kashmir), Imtiyaz Hussain Mir, was Guest of Honour on the occasion. The function was also attended by Commandant SDRF 1st Bn Srinagar, Masroor Ahmad Mir, DySPs and other officers Wardens, volunteers and prominent citizens.

The chief guest while addressing the gathering commended the role of Civil Defence and Home Guard volunteers during various exigencies like Operation Sindoor, Flash Floods, Cloudburst,

Floods and other exigencies.

On the occasion, Commendation Certificates with Cash Reward of Rs 10,000 each from Commandant General HG, CD & SDRF J&K were distributed among the civilians who has shown exemplary bravery and commendable effort in saving human lives after Pahalgam attack on 22nd April 2025 and powerful explosion in Police Station Nowgam Srinagar on 14th November, 2025.

Besides, Commendation Certificates with cash reward of Rs 5,000 each from Commandant General HG, CD & SDRF J&K were distributed among the Civil Defence Wardens and Volunteers who have shown extraordinary performance while conducting Civil Defence Training/ Awareness Camps and Rescue Activities.

At the conclusion of the function, DIG (Director Civil Defence & SDRF Kashmir) commended selfless services of volunteers towards the nation and its citizens and emphasised upon them to work for the society with greater enthusiasm, zeal and zest in future also.

## Sakeena Itoo visits GHSS Hawal Pulwama

KT News Desk

PULWAMA, DECEMBER 06: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo Saturday visited Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Hawal, Pulwama and attended the Annual Day celebrations of the school.

MLA Rajpoora, Ghulam Mohidin Mir; Principal GHSS Hawal Pulwama, senior officers of district administration, faculty of institution, large number of students and their parents were present on the occasion.

Delivering keynote address at the Annual Day celebrations, Minister Sakeena, as per an official statement, lauded the efforts of the school in promoting academic excellence and nurturing holistic development among students. She emphasized the government's commitment to strengthening the education sector and ensuring that institutions, especially in rural and semi-urban areas, receive adequate infrastructure and academic support. "Omar Abdullah led government is modernising education and establishing best facilities in government schools to enhance enrolment in Government schools", the Minister stated.

She further added that education is not only about textbooks, it is about empowering young minds to think, innovate, and lead. "Our youth are



our greatest strength, and it is our responsibility to provide them with opportunities and make them confident, capable and compassionate citizens", Minister Sakeena said.

On the occasion, the Minister also interacted with students and staff, acknowledging the hard work of teachers and encouraging students to pursue their aspirations with dedication. She praised the school's achievements in academics, sports, and extracurricular activities, and assured support for further development of facilities at the institution.

MLA Rajpoora, Ghulam Mohidin Mir also spoke on the occasion and said that demands raised by students and school management will be addressed soon by the

## Dy CM reviews development projects in Nowshera

KT News Desk

RAJOURI, DECEMBER 06: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Saturday conducted an extensive visit to Nowshera division to review the progress on various major development projects being executed across key sectors.

The Deputy Chief Minister, as per an official statement, assessed the status of works taken up by PWD (R&B), PMGSY and the Education sector. He emphasised timely completion and adherence to quality benchmarks in all ongoing projects.

Issues pertaining to the Forest sector were also discussed, with directions issued for addressing the pending matters in a time-bound manner.

The Deputy Chief Minister, later, inspected the ongoing works at the PWD Dak Bungalow Nowshera and reviewed the progress on construction of the Sub-District Hospital (SDH) building. He instructed the concerned executing agencies to fast-track the remaining works



and ensure that facilities are made operational at the earliest.

During his visit to SDH Nowshera, the Dy CM interacted with the patients and staff to assess service delivery. He directed the health functionaries to maintain high standards of patient care.

Surinder Choudhary also reviewed the works being

executed under the Rural Development Department (RDD). He assessed the progress on projects being executed by BRO, reiterating the importance of connectivity and rural infrastructure in overall development.

The Deputy Chief Minister was accompanied by SE PWD (R&B), ACD, DFO besides other district and sectoral officers.

## IHIP & Outbreak Management training held in Shopian



KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, DECEMBER 06: A district-level Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP) and Outbreak Management Training Programme was conducted on Saturday by the District Surveillance Unit Shopian in coordination with the State Surveillance Office (SSO) Kashmir.

The programme, as per an official statement, aimed at enhancing real-time digital reporting and strengthening disease surveillance mechanisms across the district.

The training programme was inaugurated by CMO Shopian, Dr. Arshad Hussain Tak, who underscored the critical importance of accurate, timely and coordinated reporting for effective public health action. He highlighted that digital surveillance under IHIP has become an indispensable tool for early detection and rapid response to potential outbreaks.

CMO appreciated the efforts of the District Surveillance Unit and urged all participants to apply the

training effectively to improve public health preparedness in Shopian.

State Training Consultant, Dr Omar Aziz, delivered a detailed and informative session on the IHIP workflow, case-based reporting procedures and the system's vital role in early outbreak identification.

State Data Manager, trained the participants on digital reporting protocols, data quality improvement and optimal utilization of the IHIP portal. He stressed the need for standardized reporting to ensure accuracy at all levels of the health system.

Microbiologist, DPHL, highlighted the role of laboratory services in disease confirmation, quality assurance and timely outbreak investigation, emphasizing coordinated laboratory-field reporting for effective surveillance.

During the training programme officers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening digital surveillance, ensuring timely data flow and enhancing rapid response mechanisms across the district.

## DC Kishtwar reviews works under District CAPEX Budget 2025-26

KT News Desk

KISHTWAR, DECEMBER 06: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma Saturday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of developmental works being executed under the District Capex Budget 2025-26.

At the outset, the DC, as per an official statement reviewed in detailed the ongoing works as well as the projects allotted in the current financial year. He emphasized the need to accelerate the pace of execution to ensure timely physical and financial completion of all developmental initiatives.

The DC issued strict directions to all line departments to expedite their activities and avoid any delays.

Stressing the importance of optimal utilization of the limited working season, the DC directed all departments to immediately start all pending allotted works.

The Executive Engineers



were directed to submit 100% bills of completed works and 70-80% bills of new works in the treasuries in the current month itself. It was further instructed that the salaries of the concerned DDOs will be withheld in case of non-compliance with these timelines.

He also called upon all Engineering divisions and concerned departments to intensify their efforts to meet public expectations by achieving 100% completion of targets within the stipulated timelines.

The CPO was directed to share a complete list of all works with the SDMs so that

they can physically verify the projects and submit weekly progress reports to the office.

He was also instructed to share a Google Sheet with the concerned officers and dealing assistants, incorporating details such as actual expenditure, bills submitted in treasuries and pending or uncleared bills, so that the matter may be taken up with the Finance Department for timely clearance.

The meeting was attended by CPO Akhil Thakur, ACD Manoj Kumar, EO MC, Mirza Mumtaz Iqbal, CEO Sanjay Dogra, Executive Engineers and other concerned.

## 2-day rabies control training concludes in Jammu

KT News Desk

JAMMU, DECEMBER 06: The State Surveillance Unit, IDSP Jammu Division on Saturday successfully concluded two-day Divisional Level National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP) Training for districts of Jammu division held in the Conference Hall Gandhi Nagar Hospital.

The programme was organized under the guidance and support of Mission Director National Health Mission J&K Baseerul Haq Chaudhary and overall supervision of Director Health Services Jammu Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar.

The programme, as per an official statement, was conducted under the One Health Approach to strengthen intersectoral coordination across Human health, Animal health and Municipal administration.

Addressing the participating medicos, State Epidemiologist / State Surveillance Officer IDSP Jammu Division Dr Harjeet Rai emphasized the importance of robust rabies surveillance, timely case management and coordinated multisectoral response. He highlighted India's



commitment to achieving the "Zero by 2030" National goal for rabies elimination, urging districts to ensure synchronized efforts with animal husbandry and municipal agencies.

Dr. Narinder Bhutyal, Medical Superintendent, Gandhi Nagar Hospital Jammu graced the event and expressed appreciation for the efforts of the surveillance team and participating districts. He reaffirmed the hospital's support for ongoing training, awareness initiatives, and rabies control activities.

The event was attended by Dr Simmi Thakur, Assistant Director, Health and Education Bureau (HEB), Directorate of Health Services Jammu who acknowledged the importance of capacity-building and

intersectoral collaboration for rabies control.

Technical sessions were delivered by expert faculty including Dr. Rashmi Sharma, Associate Professor, Community Medicine, GMC Jammu; Dr. Gourav Chowdhary, Animal Welfare Officer, Jammu Municipal Corporation; Dr Sandeep Pandita, Technical Assistant to Joint Director, MS Institute of Animal Health & Biological Products, R.S. Pura and Dr. Prem Lata, Medical Officer, Epidemiologist Office, Directorate of Health Services Jammu.

Key topics included human Rabies surveillance, bite management protocols as per NRCP Guidelines, ABC/ARV strategies, dog population control and

integrated One Health approach to prevention and control.

As part of the practical component, Vishal Patil, Supervisor Pharmacist conducted a hands-on training session on correct administration techniques for Anti-Rabies Vaccine (ARV) and Anti-Rabies Serum (ARS), covering dosing, intradermal route and special case considerations.

The training was attended by District Nodal Officers (DNOs), Medical Officers, Pharmacists and Vaccinators representing all districts of the Jammu division. The programme aimed to strengthen district-level capacities for effective NRCP implementation and to accelerate Jammu & Kashmir's progress toward the national target of rabies elimination by 2030.



# Chief Secy reviews dev scenario, govt schemes in Samba

KT News Desk

Samba, Dec 06: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Saturday visited Samba and took comprehensive review of developmental scenario and implementation of key government schemes across the district in a meeting held at District Administrative Complex here.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar; Deputy Commissioner Samba, Ayushi Sudan; Chief Conservator of Forests Jammu; Chief Engineers of CPWD, Jal Shakti (PHE), Flood Control, and PWD; Directors of Agriculture, Command Area, Geology and Mining departments, Director Colleges, all district-level and sectoral officers of Samba district attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary undertook a detailed appraisal of targets and achievements across multiple sectors and flagship programmes. The review encompassed critical schemes like Jal Jeevan Mission, PMGSY, AMRUT 2.0, NABARD works, school education initiatives, solarisation of government buildings, Swachh Bharat Mission, National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme, Nasha



Mukt Abhiyan, Mission Youth, HADP targets, IWMP, agriculture and horticulture schemes, Poshan Abhiyan, and various health sector indicators. Progress under major infrastructure projects, particularly the Amritsar-Katra Expressway was also assessed during the meeting.

The Chief Secretary directed all departments to strengthen inter-departmental coordination, expedite ongoing works, and submit monthly progress reports on priority schemes to ensure their timely completion and effective implementation.

He emphasized on the need for expanding coverage under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, encouraging higher enrolment in government

schools, and accelerating flood-control measures across the district. He also directed officials to ensure completion of pending works under PWD, irrigation, and road infrastructure departments.

Progress under Mission YUVA and vibrant village initiatives was thoroughly reviewed during the meeting and special emphasis was laid on timely delivery of public services and transparent implementation of welfare schemes.

The Chief Secretary further called for breaking the nexus between illegal mining, arms trafficking, and drug smuggling. He underscored the need for strict enforcement, proactive intelligence-sharing, and coordinated field action,

directing the district administration to intensify vigilance and ensure that illegal operations are curbed through systematic and sustained crackdowns. He stressed that strict action must be taken against all forms of unlawful activities to maintain law and order in the district.

While reviewing issues regarding delays in land allotment and resolution of land-related cases, particularly those affecting developmental projects and essential public services, the Chief Secretary directed officials to expedite the disposal of such cases and remove procedural bottlenecks that hinder project implementation.

He also reviewed the

progress of beneficiary-oriented schemes and directed the district administration to significantly ramp up disbursement numbers under Kisan Credit Cards, Mission Youth initiatives, livelihood schemes, and other citizen-centric programmes. He stressed on saturation and coverage of eligible beneficiaries, removing procedural delays that hinder effective outreach.

Regarding health sector, the Chief Secretary instructed officers to strengthen institutional deliveries, upgrade maternal and child health monitoring systems and address gaps in rural health infrastructure. He called for better coordination between the Health department, ICDS, and field-level officers to ensure timely service delivery and improved health outcomes across the district.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the Chief Secretary handed over sanction letters under Mission YUVA to selected beneficiaries, encouraging youth engagement, self-employment opportunities, and capacity-building initiatives. The gesture reflected government's commitment to empowering the youth and fostering entrepreneurship in the district.

# Delegations call on LG Sinha to discuss dev, social issues



KT News Desk

Jammu, Dec 06: Ravi Kumar, Spokesperson BJP Kisan Morcha J&K called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday.

A delegation of District Development Council Chairpersons called on LG Sinha and discussed various development issues of their respective Districts. The delegation comprised Col. Mahan Singh (Retd.) Chairman, DDC Kathua; Keshav Dutt Sharma, Chairman, DDC, Samba; Bharat Bhushan, Chairman, DDC, Jammu and Lal Chand,

Chairman, DDC Udhampur. Anuj Vaid, Chairman, Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI), J&K Chapter, also called on the Lieutenant Governor.

Subsequently, a delegation of Shaheed Kisan Baba Jitto Sangarsh Samiti led by its President Partap Singh Jamwal and representatives of Rice Mills Association J&K called on Manoj Sinha.

Dr Manorama Bakshi, Founder and Director, Triloki Raj Foundation called on LG Manoj Sinha. She was accompanied by Co-Founder of the foundation, Er Patanjali Dhar.

# Lavasa inspects MVD Tax Collection Post at Lakhanpur

Calls for cashless transactions, action against overloaded vehicles

KT News Desk

Kathua, Dec 06: Secretary Transport, Avny Lavasa on Saturday conducted a surprise visit to MVD Tax Collection Post at Lakhanpur and had a detailed review of its functioning.

During the inspection, the Secretary interacted with the staff on duty and directed the RTO Kathua to ensure complete discontinuation of manual cash transactions. She instructed that all tax collections must be carried out strictly through the POS machines installed at the post.

Lavasa asked the officers to ensure that vehicles from outside the UT without valid documents are not allowed entry into Jammu and Kashmir through the Lakhanpur post.

The Secretary inspected



the non-functional weighing bridges presently under the control of the State Taxes Department at the entry point. She directed the RTO Kathua to prepare an estimate and DPR for repair and upgradation of at least two weigh bridges. The functional weighing facility, she emphasised, will help in ensuring strict action against the overloaded goods vehicles.

RTO Kathua, Surinder Paul Sharma, apprised the Secretary of the need for real-time data sharing by the

National Highways Authority of India regarding overloaded vehicles passing through NHAI weigh bridges at Lakhanpur.

The Secretary assured that the matter will be taken up with NHAI.

Later, speaking to media persons, the Secretary said that regular checking drives will be intensified across the UT to curb traffic violations. She said that the department is committed towards providing hassle-free services and ensuring safe transport facilities for the commuters.

# BJP never compromised on its ideology: Nadda

PTI

Deoghar (Jharkhand), Dec 06: BJP President J P Nadda on Saturday claimed that the party has never compromised on its ideology.

Addressing party workers at Deoghar, he exhorted them to work hard to make the lotus bloom in Jharkhand.

"All parties have become dynastic, but the BJP is untouched by it. Even among dynastic politics, there are family feuds. However, I can proudly say we are the only party that operates purely on ideology," said Nadda in his first visit to the state after the 2024 assembly polls.

"I was not born in 1952. But there were people in this country who shared the idea that there will not be two flags, two constitutions, two heads in one country. That leader was Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, who became the first president of the Jan Sangh. From 1952 to 2019, approximately four to five generations passed. But we didn't give up on our idea," added Nadda.

"We remained focused on our goal. The day the people of India empowered us, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's willpower and Amit Shah's strategy demolished

Article 370 and, in the process, established one nation, one constitution, and one leader. We were able to do this because we are connected by our ideas," claimed Nadda.

Further elaborating on the party standing firm on the ideology, Nadda said, "We resolved in 1989 during our executive committee at Palampur (Himachal Pradesh) to pave the way for Ram Mandir. Three generations have passed, and the Congress party mocked us. We didn't lose heart. You all know that Prime Minister Narendra Modi handed over the grand Ram Temple to us in January 2024. The flag was also hoisted there just a week ago."

He also credited the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for abolishing triple talaq and claimed that it liberated Muslim women.

"We are a party with ideals; we are made for the country. We work for the development of all, for the progress of all, and this has made us (BJP) the largest mass-based party and the largest party in the world. Today we have 240 MPs, 103 Rajya Sabha MPs, 1,654 MLAs across the country," said Nadda.

He also said that the party has

hundreds of mayors, deputy mayors and thousands of councillors.

"BJP and the NDA rule in 20 states. BJP alone holds the government in 13 states. Soon, this number will reach 14 and 15. When Jharkhand's turn comes, our workers will make the lotus bloom here too," stressed Nadda.

Coming down heavily on the Hemant Soren-led JMM-Congress-RJD coalition government in Jharkhand, Nadda alleged that the law and order situation has worsened in the state.

"During the current regime, Jharkhand has attained second place in terms of murders and the first place in honour killings," claimed Nadda.

He alleged that the current government was patronising Bangladeshi infiltrators, leading to demographic changes in tribal areas.

"The Adivasi population has decreased from 45 per cent to 28 per cent due to Bangladeshi infiltrators marrying tribal girls. We have a Jamai Tola in Pakur comprising such Bangladeshi infiltrators who have married tribal girls," alleged Nadda.

He threatened that through Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of

electoral rolls, these Bangladeshi infiltrators will be identified and deported.

He also accused the present Jharkhand government of not fulfilling any of its poll promises.

Nadda, who is also the Union Health minister inspected AIIMS Deoghar.

The minister also visited the CT scan facility, modular OT, and emergency observation ward, and interacted with resident doctors, nursing staff, paramedical staff, patients, and their families.

Executive director and CEO of AIIMS Deoghar Dr Nitin Ghawane, gave a detailed presentation on the institute's development, achievements, and current challenges before the minister.

Nadda addressed the faculty, officials, and students of AIIMS Deoghar and announced the approval of a trauma center for AIIMS Deoghar, which will significantly strengthen emergency medical services in the entire region, including Santhal Pargana.

Earlier in the day, Nadda offered prayers at the Baba Baidyanath Temple in Deoghar.

Nadda paid obeisance to Lord Shiva at the sanctum sanctorum of the temple.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### LG Sinha rebuts

whether it is logistically possible to conduct exam on 7th Dec, by incorporating modifications in eligibility criteria at such a belated stage," it said.

The LG said the advertisement notice for the examination was published on 22.08.2025. "The exam was notified to be conducted on 07.12.2025 through a notice on 06.11.2025," he said.

The clarification comes amid widespread confusion and misinformation being circulated online, raising concerns among aspirants regarding eligibility criteria and age relaxation provisions.

The Combined Competitive (Preliminary) Examination is scheduled to be conducted by the JKPCS as part of the recruitment process for various administrative posts in Jammu and Kashmir. (KNO)

### JKAS prelims

conducted as per the schedule." Meanwhile, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has issued a clarification on microblogging site X—calling social media posts about the exam defunct as 'misleading.'

It has said the age-relaxation file sent by the government was received at Lok Bhavan on December 2 and returned the same day with a query on the feasibility of changing eligibility criteria just days before the exam.

Earlier, Office of Chief Minister J&K on microblogging site X has expressed concern over the travel chaos issues saying "Chief Minister expressed deep concern over the travel chaos caused by the ongoing airline issues, compounded by the uncertainty resulting from Lok Bhavan's delay in approving age relaxation, a provision granted multiple times in the past. He urged JKPCS to take note of the unprecedented stress on aspirants and consider postponing the exam in the interest of fairness and equal opportunity for all." (SIC)

Minister Sakina Itoo also expressed concern over the situation and had appealed to the Commission to reconsider its stand in view of the hardships faced by aspirants.

She said that many students are unable to travel due to severe flight disruptions and they deserve

a fair opportunity to appear in the examination. "It is not about delay, it is about fairness." (KNO)

### 'Doon Chetin', 'Sheermal'

mango chutney. Beverage options included pomegranate, orange, carrot-ginger and beetroot coolers. Putin had arrived in New Delhi on Thursday evening for a two-day state visit to India during which he held summit-level talks with PM Modi. This was his first visit to India since Russia's war with Ukraine began in 2022.

Putin was warmly welcomed by PM Modi at Delhi's Palam airport with a handshake and a hug. The two leaders later travelled in the same car after coming out from the airport. They straightaway drove to Delhi's Lok Kalyan Marg, where PM Modi hosted a private dinner for President Putin at his official residence.

On Friday, Putin was accorded a ceremonial welcome at the Rashtrapati Bhavan before formal talks began. PM Modi and President Putin later made a statement to the media. Putin also laid a wreath at the Mahatma Gandhi memorial on Friday.

PM Modi also gifted flavourful Assam black tea, Kashmiri saffron, a handcrafted silver horse, an ornate tea set and a Russian edition of the Bhagavad Gita among other things to President Putin. (KNO)

### In 10 years, we all

slave mentality," he said.

"Linking the growth of the country with the faith of its people, with their identity... this was the symbol of the mindset of colonialism," he said addressing the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit.

An attempt was made to prove that the reason for India's slow growth was Hindu culture, Modi said. "Today's intellectuals who keep searching for communalism in all things did not see communalism in the use of the term Hindu rate of growth. This term was made part of books and research papers during their time," he said.

Asserting that India is a model of high growth

and low inflation, he said the country's 8.2 per cent growth in the second quarter of this fiscal shows that it is becoming the growth driver of the global economy.

Modi said that at a time when the world is full of uncertainties, India is seen in a different league. The changes happening in India are not just about possibilities but are a saga of changing thinking and direction, he said.

"We are standing at a juncture where one fourth of the 21st century has passed. The world has seen many ups and downs: financial crisis, global pandemic, technological disruptions, world falling apart, we are seeing wars, these situations in one way or the other are challenging the world," Modi said.

The world is full of uncertainties but India is being seen in a different league altogether, he said.

"India is full of self confidence. When there is talk of slowdown, India writes the story of growth. When there is trust deficit in the world, India is becoming a pillar of trust, when the world is moving towards fragmentation, India is becoming a bridge builder," Modi said.

Pointing out Q2 GDP figures being more than 8 per cent, he said it is the symbol of our pace.

"This is not just a number but is a strong macroeconomic signal. It is a message that India is becoming the growth driver of the global economy," Modi said.

Global growth is around 3 per cent while G7 economies are growing at an average of about 1.5 per cent, he pointed out. "At such a time, India is a model of high growth and low inflation," Modi said. There was a time when people, especially economists in our country, used to express concern over high inflation but the same people now talk of inflation being low, he said in his address.

India's achievements are not ordinary, it is not about numbers but about fundamental change brought about in the last decade, Modi asserted.

### Kashmir: Prevailing

witnessing unusually low water levels across its rivers and springs, raising concerns

among farmers, environmentalists and local communities.

"Water levels in the Jhelum, its tributaries, and several springs across Kashmir have dropped sharply because we haven't seen any strong Western Disturbance in the last nearly 40 days," he said.

"Whatever systems did arrive were very weak and failed to bring the kind of rainfall or snowfall needed to sustain the rivers. Without a proper weather system, the natural recharge has slowed down significantly and that's why we are seeing such low flows everywhere," added Faizan. (KNO)

### 21 flights cancelled

three IndiGo cancellations during the day. It is worth mentioning that the disruptions come just days after 41 flights, mostly operated by IndiGo, were cancelled across Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday.

The ongoing delays and cancellations have been attributed to crew shortages following new DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) safety directives, which have prompted airlines to recalibrate rosters and schedules nationwide. (KNO)

### Tickets surge to

especially on short-notice bookings.

"The fares have shot up to Rs 4,000-6,000 on the Delhi and Jammu routes and even higher on some others, due to cancellations and limited seat availability," said Tawqeer, a travel operator and owner of Connect Kashmir Mobile.

Echoing the concern, Wahid Ahmed, another Srinagar-based travel agent, said the sudden hike has left passengers "frustrated and helpless," especially those with medical or urgent travel needs. "The airfare has abruptly gone up to over Rs 7,000-8,000 on multiple routes," he added.

Meanwhile, Rouf Trambo, President of the Travel Agents Association of Kashmir (TAAK), told KNO that the situation underscores the need for stronger airline contingency planning. "Such disruptions hit tourism and passenger confidence hard. Authorities and airlines must coordinate to

prevent a repeat," he said.

He added that the disruption has also led to cancellations of other pre-booked flights and tourist arrivals. "The surge in airfares has forced many visitors to cancel or reschedule their winter bookings," he said, expressing hope that the issue is resolved at the earliest.

Meanwhile, airport officials maintained that the remaining operations were running on schedule but urged passengers to verify flight timings before heading towards the airport. (KNO)

### MHA honours J&K's

SDRF personnel from across the country were recognised for distinguished service in the fields of fire safety, civil defence and home guards.

Officials, said the award acknowledged SSP Mir's significant contributions to strengthening SDRF's operational preparedness, quick response and rescue capabilities in Jammu and Kashmir. (KNO)

### Police conduct

verify any additional connections linked to the seized material.

J&K Police reaffirms its firm commitment to upholding law and order and taking stringent action against unlawful and anti-national activities in the district, reads the statement. (KNO)

### Kishtwar road

the bereaved families." (KNO)

### Worsening winter

important for patients with asthma, heart disease, or chronic lung issues.

"Avoid burning trash or biomass, as this is one of the major contributors to harmful pollutants; ventilate rooms during afternoon hours when pollution levels are relatively lower," the doctors said. They called for taking extra care of vulnerable groups. Environmental activists and health experts have asked the administration to intensify pollution monitoring, regulate construction dust, promote cleaner heating solutions and increase green cover. (KNO)



# ‘Historic blunders’ on J&K, China are Nehru’s legacy: BJP hits back at Sonia Gandhi

PTI

New Delhi, Dec 06: The BJP on Saturday alleged that “historical blunders” like “allowing” Pakistan and China to occupy Indian territory and giving special status to Jammu and Kashmir are Jawaharlal Nehru’s legacy, as it hit out at Congress leader Sonia Gandhi over her accusation that the ruling dispensation’s main objective is to vilify him.

Hitting back at the Congress parliamentary party chairperson over her allegations that the ruling BJP’s goal is not just to “erase” the legacy of the country’s first prime minister but to “destroy” his social and political foundations, BJP national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia said the word destruction that Sonia Gandhi used in her accusation is “synonymous with” her son Rahul Gandhi.

“If there is any Bhasmasur in Indian politics today, he is Rahul Gandhi. He destroyed the parties of Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray in Maharashtra, then Arvind Kejriwal



by forging an alliance with his party during the Lok Sabha polls in Delhi,” Bhatia charged. “After destroying Tejashwi Yadav recently in Bihar (polls), he is now heading for Uttar Pradesh to destroy Akhilesh Yadav in the state,” he added. Bhasmasur

is a demon in Hindu epics known for a boon he received from Lord Shiva that allowed him to turn anyone into ashes (bhasma) by touching their head. However, this power ultimately led to his destruction.

Sonia Gandhi on Friday alleged

that a systematic attempt is being made to denigrate, distort, demean and defame Nehru, which was not acceptable.

Addressing an event to launch the Nehru Centre India at Jawahar Bhawan, she said that the project to vilify Nehru is the main objective of the ruling dispensation.

She said the sole objective of this is to not only diminish Nehru as a personality but also his universally recognised role in India’s independence struggle and to demolish his legacy in a crude and self-serving attempt to rewrite history.

Reacting sharply to her charge, Bhatia asked, “What is Nehru’s legacy?” “Nehru’s legacy includes inclusion of Article 370 in the Constitution, turning down an offer to become UN Security Council member for China and allowing both Pakistan and China to capture Indian territory,” the BJP spokesperson alleged, and demanded a response from Sonia Gandhi on these “historical blunders”.

## Circular economy to boost dairy farmers' income by 20 pc in 5 years: Amit Shah



PTI

Sanadar (Gujarat), Dec 06: Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Saturday expressed confidence that implementation of the circular economy model across the country will increase dairy farmers’ income by 20 per cent in the next five years.

Shah was addressing cattle rearers associated with Banas Dairy at an event held at Sanadar village in Gujarat’s Vav-Tharad district to mark the inauguration of the dairy’s bio-CNG and fertiliser plant and ground-breaking of its milk powder plant.

He praised Banas Dairy’s management for successfully developing a model for a circular economy in the dairy sector, which includes generating extra income for farmers through various means, such as converting cattle dung into biogas and bio-fertiliser.

Shah informed the audience that he has brought several members of Parliament to Banaskantha to understand the circular economy model of Banas Dairy.

“So far, our cooperative dairies have received huge success in procuring milk from farmers and giving

back the income generated from selling milk products. Now, the time has come to focus on the circular economy. You will get your share from the income generated by the dairy by selling biogas and fertiliser produced from cattle dung procured from farmers,” he said.

A concrete plan for the implementation of this circular economy model across the country will emerge from the meeting of MPs in Banaskantha in the evening, the minister said.

Shah also informed the gathering that chairpersons and managing directors of all the major cooperative dairies will visit Banas Dairy in January 2026 to understand more about the initiatives taken by the dairy, considered Asia’s largest dairy with a turnover of Rs 24,000 crore.

“Apart from the usual milk products like paneer and curd, there are many products that are in demand across the globe, but they are not produced in India. If we focus on those products, dairy farmers can earn extra income,” he said.

Shah said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has created a system wherein dairies will get the required finance and technology to

adopt this circular economy model, which also includes leather production from the hide harvested from the cattle that died naturally.

“Our government has created three cooperatives for the agriculture sector and three for the dairy sector. I want to assure you that the circular economy will increase dairy farmers’ income by 20 per cent in the next five years,” he said.

Shah said his ministry and the Centre have done detailed planning for implementing the circular economy model in the dairy sector.

He expressed confidence that targets set by PM Modi under the ‘White Revolution 2.0’ initiative will be achieved through collective efforts.

On the occasion, Shah praised women dairy farmers for their contribution and efforts in strengthening the sector in this arid region of Gujarat.

“Women dairy farmers of this region sent a message to NGOs around the world that advocate for women’s empowerment. Without any agitation, you worked hard to create a system where your earnings are deposited directly into your bank account,” he noted.

## ‘Warm and engaging atmosphere reigned’, Shashi Tharoor on Putin banquet



PTI

New Delhi, Dec 06: Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, who on Friday attended a banquet for Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, on Saturday described the atmosphere there as “warm” and “engaging”, and said he enjoyed his conversations with many of the attendees.

Tharoor’s remarks came a day after President Droupadi Murmu hosted a banquet for the visiting Russian president at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here.

“Attended the @rashtrapatibhvn banquet for President Putin last night. A warm and engaging atmosphere reigned. Enjoyed my conversations with many of the attendees, especially my dining companions from the Russian delegation!” Tharoor said in a social media post.

Murmu, while welcoming President Putin and his delegation at the banquet, had said that his visit marked an important milestone -- the 25th anniversary of the India-Russia strategic partnership, which was established in October 2000 during his first visit to the country as president.

Murmu also appreciated Putin’s support and personal commitment to the India-Russia special and privileged strategic partnership.

The Congress on Friday said that the leaders of the opposition, Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi, were not invited to the banquet, and took a swipe at Tharoor for accepting the invite.

The party’s media and publicity department head, Pawan Khera, accused the government of breaking protocols daily and not believing in democratic principles. “There is no invite to both the LoPs, Mr (Mallikarjun) Kharge and Mr (Rahul) Gandhi. This comes as a surprise, but I don’t think we should be surprised. This government is known to be breaching all protocols. What else to say, ask the government,” Khera said on Friday.

Asked about Tharoor accepting the invite for the banquet, Khera said, “Ask Mr Tharoor. All of us who are in the party, if our leaders don’t get invited and we get invited, we need to question our own conscience and listen to our conscience. Politics has been played in inviting or not inviting people, which in itself is questionable, and those who accept such an invite are also questionable.” “We would have listened to our voice of conscience,” he added. Earlier, Tharoor had said that there was a time when the chairman of the external affairs committee was routinely invited, but that practice seems to have stopped some years ago. On Thursday, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleged that the government tells visiting foreign dignitaries not to meet the leader of opposition due to its “insecurity”. His remarks came hours ahead of Putin’s two-day visit to India.

## ‘India, US trade team to start three-day talks from Dec 10’

PTI

New Delhi, Dec 06: India and the United States will commence three-day talks on the first phase of their proposed bilateral trade agreement here from December 10, sources said. The visit is crucial as India and the US are working to finalise the first tranche of the pact.

“The three-day talks will start on December 10. It will conclude on December 12, and it is not a formal round of talks,” said one of the sources.

The US team will be led by Deputy United States Trade Representative (USTR) Rick Switzer.

This visit of the US officials marks their second trip since the imposition of a 25 per cent

tariff and an additional 25 per cent penalty on Indian goods entering the American market due to the purchase of Russian crude oil.

On September 16, the US officials last visited India.

On September 22, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal also led an official delegation to the US for trade talks. Goyal had also visited Washington in May.

While the USA’s chief negotiator for the pact is Assistant US Trade Representative for South and Central Asia Brendan Lynch, the Indian side is led by Joint Secretary in the Department of Commerce Darpan Jain.

The talks are also important as Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal has recently stated

that India is hopeful of reaching a framework trade deal with the US this year itself, which should address the tariff issue to the benefit of Indian exporters.

While noting that the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) will take time, Agrawal has added that India is engaged in protracted negotiations with the US on a framework trade deal that will address the reciprocal tariff challenge faced by Indian exporters.

India and the US are having two parallel negotiations -- one on a framework trade deal to address tariffs and another on a comprehensive trade deal.

In February, leaders of the two countries directed officials to negotiate an agreement.

# Low water intake not only reason behind kidney stones

Nephrologist reveals hidden causes

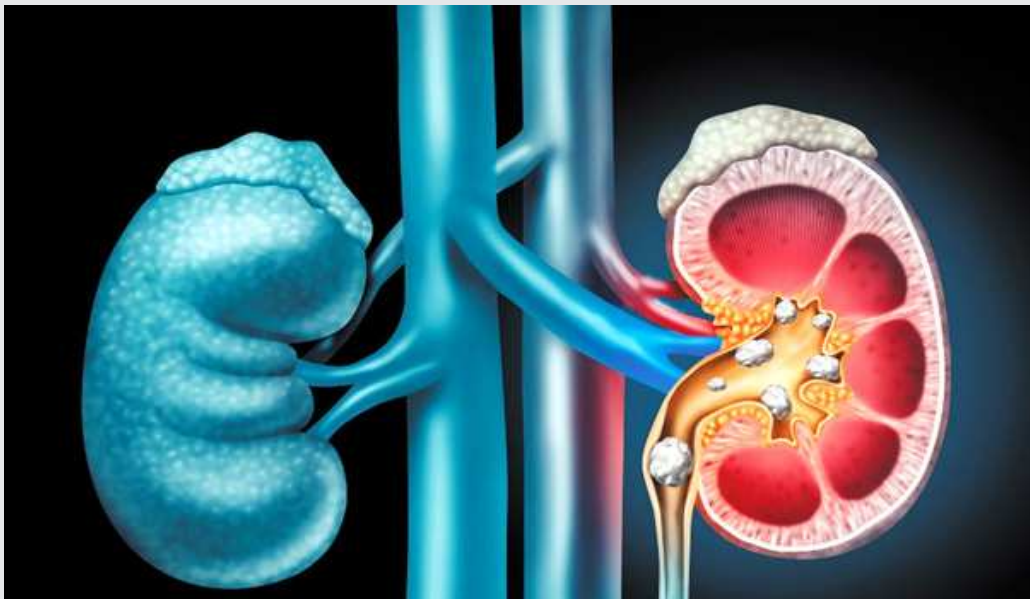
TOI HEALTH

New Delhi, Dec 06: Kidney stones cause sharp pain in the back or side, blood in urine, and nausea when they block urine flow. Many people blame low water intake, but stones form from a mix of metabolic, dietary, genetic, and medical factors. Low water does concentrate urine and raise risk, but recurrent stones need a full check with 24-hour urine tests to find the real causes.

When it comes to kidney stones, the most common perception is that they are caused by insufficient water consumption, however, that is not always the case. Dr Arjun Sabharwal, MBBS and nephrologist, recently posted an IG video in which he highlighted that kidney stones are not just caused by low water intake, but a host of other reasons. He said, “Kidney stones are not caused by low water intake alone. They form due to a combination of metabolic, dietary, genetic, and medical factors” this has been clearly shown in multiple large studies published in The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), American Journal of Kidney Diseases (AJKD), and Nature Reviews Nephrology.

**The most common causes include:**

- High urine calcium (hypercalciuria)
- High oxalate (from diet or gut absorption)
- Low urine citrate (a natural stone protector)
- High uric acid (often linked to red meat & gout)
- High salt and animal protein intake
- Low dietary calcium
- Oxalate-rich foods (spinach,



nuts, chocolate)

- Excess vitamin C supplements
- Obesity, diabetes, gout, thyroid and bowel disorders
- Recurrent urine infections
- Family history & genetic risk
- And even some long-term medicines (diuretics, migraine drugs, calcium antacids)

Low water intake does increase stone risk by concentrating urine, but studies clearly confirm that recurrent stones always need full metabolic evaluation, including a 24-hour urine test to identify the true cause.

If stones keep coming back, don’t just increase water-find your stone type and treat the root cause.”

Let us now examine that in detail.

Problems that arise because of kidney stones

Kidney stones cause sharp pain in the back or side, blood in urine,

and nausea when they block urine flow. Many people blame low water intake, but stones form from a mix of metabolic, dietary, genetic, and medical factors. Low water does concentrate urine and raise risk, but recurrent stones need a full check with 24-hour urine tests to find the real causes.

Treating the root fixes the problem better than water alone. Let’s examine reasons highlighted by Dr Sabharwal...

**High urine calcium**

High urine calcium, or hypercalciuria, affects 30-60% of stone formers. It happens when kidneys leak calcium, or the body absorbs too much from food. This leads to calcium oxalate or phosphate crystals, that grow into stones. Studies show these imbalances cause supersaturation in urine, even with good hydration. A 24-hour urine test spots it, and drugs like thiazides

lower calcium output.

**Oxalate overload from diet and gut**

High oxalate in urine comes from foods like spinach, nuts, chocolate, or excess vitamin C supplements. It binds calcium to form sharp oxalate stones, the most common type. Gut issues like low Oxalobacter formigenes bacteria, and boost absorption by 10-50%. Even though primary hyperoxaluria is genetic and rare, but severe. Even normal eaters get hit if urine volume drops, or calcium is low. To tackle this, limit high-oxalate foods, and pair with calcium-rich meals to bind it in the gut.

**Low citrate lets stones form easily**

Citrate acts as a natural blocker, by binding calcium and raising urine pH to dissolve crystals. Low urine citrate, or hypocitraturia, hits 20-60% of patients. Causes include

chronic diarrhea, high animal protein, potassium lack, or infections. Without it, calcium stones grow fast. Acidic urine from exercise or drugs worsens this. Large studies link low citrate to recurrence even in hydrated people.

**Uric acid and excess protein**

High uric acid forms acidic stones in 5-10% of cases, often from red meat, seafood, or gout. It lowers urine pH and seeds calcium oxalate stones too. Metabolic syndrome boosts this, via insulin resistance. High animal protein adds acid load, dropping citrate. Obesity and diabetes double odds. NEJM reviews show purine-rich diets raise risk 2-3 times. To counter this, reduce meat consumption, and add veggies for balance.

**Salt, low calcium, and hidden diet traps**

High salt intake pulls calcium into urine; over 6g daily doubles stone risk. Low dietary calcium fails to bind oxalate in the gut, raising absorption. To prevent this, get 1,000-1,200mg from dairy or greens, and not supplements, since excess vitamin C turns to oxalate. Studies confirm these dietary shifts cause stones beyond dehydration. Track sodium under 2,300mg, and eat calcium with meals.

**Medical conditions and genetics play big roles**

Obesity, diabetes, gout, thyroid issues, IBD, and UTIs change urine chemistry, while family history raises odds 2.5 times, via genes like those for hypercalciuria. Drugs like diuretics, topiramate, or calcium antacids too, can lead to kidney stones.

Disclaimer: This article is informational only and not a substitute for medical advice



## FIFA awards first-ever peace prize to US President Trump ahead of World Cup draw

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New York, Dec 06: FIFA, the global governing body for international football, on Friday named American President Donald Trump as the first winner of the newly-created FIFA Peace Prize, during the draw ceremony for next year's FIFA Men's World Cup to be jointly hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Trump proclaimed that "the world is a safer place now" as he received the award at the draw for the 2026 World Cup in Washington, DC. FIFA will be distributing the teams. Gianni Infantino, the FIFA president and one of Trump's closest sporting allies, presented the honour onstage at the Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts on Friday, saying Trump had been selected "in recognition of his exceptional and extraordinary actions to promote peace and unity around the world".

Trump, who has been openly campaigning for the Nobel Peace Prize but has not been nominated this year, was heavily favoured to receive the newly created award because of Infantino's support.

The certificate that Infantino handed Trump recognises the U.S. president for his actions to



"promote peace and unity around the world." FIFA says the prize is for "individuals who help unite people in peace through unwavering commitment and special actions".

"This is what we want from a leader — a leader that cares about the people," Infantino said about Trump, who wore a gold medal around his neck and was presented with a gold trophy with his name on it that depicts hands holding up the world, as it does in the FIFA World Cup. In his bid to win the

Nobel Peace Prize, Trump has laid claim to various peace initiatives, including brokering peace between Israel and Palestine and India and Pakistan when they engaged in an arms exchange after India launched Operation Sindoor to destroy terror infrastructure across the border in Pakistan following a terror attack in Pahalgam in Jammu & Kashmir.

India has repeatedly denied that a ceasefire during Operation Sindoor was agreed because of American intervention.

## Pope says won't be 'bystander' to human rights abuses

AFP

Vatican City, Dec 06: Pope Leo XIV told new ambassadors to the Holy See on Saturday that the Vatican would not be a "silent bystander" to human rights abuses around the world.

The comments are one of the clearest yet in revealing the philosophy of the US pope, who was elected head of the world's Catholics in May following the death of Pope Francis.

"I wish to reaffirm that the Holy See will not be a silent bystander to the grave disparities, injustices and fundamental human rights violations in our global community, which is increasingly more fractured and conflict-prone," he told the group of 13 ambassadors.

The Holy See is the governing body of the Church led by the pope, who has spiritual authority over 1.4 billion Catholics.

The diplomacy of the Holy See, the pontiff said, was "consistently directed toward serving the good of humanity, especially by appealing to consciences and by remaining attentive to the voices of those who are poor, in vulnerable situations or pushed to the margins of society."

With his focus on inequality, Leo is building on the priorities of his predecessor Francis, who championed the rights of migrants and other vulnerable populations during his pontificate.

Leo — who spent nearly 20 years as a missionary in Peru — has spoken up against the treatment of migrants in the United States under President Donald Trump, last month calling it "extremely disrespectful."

The new ambassadors accredited on Saturday, and welcomed with an audience within the Vatican, were from Uzbekistan, Moldova, Bahrain, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Liberia, Thailand, Lesotho, South Africa, Fiji, Micronesia, Latvia and Finland.

## Israeli defence firm says it plans to supply first batch of LMGs to India early next year



PTI

Jerusalem, Dec 06: A leading Israeli defence firm has said it intends to supply the first batch of 40,000 light machine guns (LMGs) to India starting early next year, while it is in the final stages of signing a contract to supply nearly 1,70,000 new-age carbines.

Shukri Schwartz, CEO of Israel Weapon Industries (IWI), also said that his firm is currently collaborating with various agencies within India's Ministry of Home Affairs to market their products, including pistols, rifles, and machine guns.

"We're now involved in three significant programmes. First is the contract for 40,000 light machine guns, which was signed last year. We have completed all tests, trials,

and government checks, and we have received the license for production. We intend to supply the first batch at the beginning of the year," Schwartz told PTI in an interview.

"LMGs supply is for five years. We can do it faster, but the first supply will be at the beginning of the year," he said when asked about the timeline of the supply.

Schwartz said the second programme involves the CQB (Close Quarters Battle) carbines tender, where the firm was the second bidder. Bharat Forge is the primary bidder. "We intend to supply 40 per cent of the contract. We are in the stage of pre-signing of the contract, and I believe it will be finalised by the end of this year or the beginning of next year," he said.

## US drops South Africa from 2026 G20, invites Poland to join

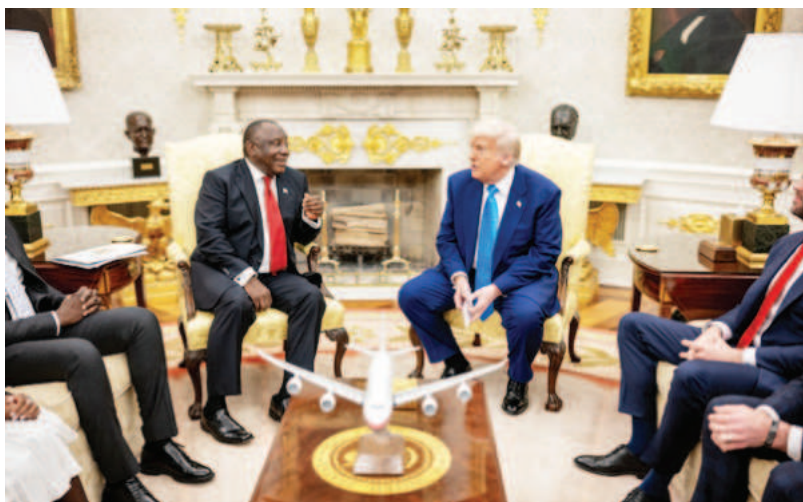
IAN S

Washington, Dec 06: The United States, which assumed the presidency of the Group of 20 on December 1, said it will not invite South Africa to participate in the 2026 G20 Leaders' Summit in Miami, accusing the ANC-led government of sabotage, hostility toward the United States, and an agenda that undermined the forum's economic mission.

New Delhi is expected to follow the development closely, given India's own recent presidency and sustained role in shaping G20 priorities.

Outlining Washington's plan for the 2026 cycle, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the G20 would return to core priorities focused on economic growth.

In a sub-stack post, Rubio said the



United States will highlight "innovation, entrepreneurship, and perseverance" during America's 250th anniversary year, and will centre its presidency on "removing regulatory burdens, unlocking affordable and secure energy supply chains, and pioneering new technologies and

innovation." The first Sherpa and Finance Track meetings will take place in Washington on December 15-16. The year-long calendar will culminate in the G20 Leaders' Summit in Miami in December 2026.

Rubio said the US would "be inviting

friends, neighbors, and partners to the American G20," including Poland, which he said now "ranks among the world's 20 largest economies." Poland's inclusion, he argued, reflects the success of a country that embraced reforms and "a focus on the future."

In sharp contrast, he

issued a sweeping indictment of South Africa's leadership, saying that after the Mandela era, its government "replaced reconciliation with redistributionist policies that discouraged investment and drove South Africa's most talented citizens abroad." He said "racial quotas have crippled the private sector, while corruption bankrupts the state," leaving the country "firmly outside the group of the 20 largest industrialized economies."

Rubio accused the ANC of scapegoating minorities and the United States, alleging "an appetite for racism and tolerance for violence against its Afrikaner citizens." He cited South Africa's ties with Iran, "its entertainment of Hamas sympathizers," and closeness to "America's greatest adversaries."

## Goa beat J&K by 7 wickets in Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy



PTI

Kolkata, Dec 06: Skipper Suyash Prabhudessai led from the front with an unbeaten 28-ball 51 as Goa handed a seven-wicket defeat to Jammu and Kashmir in their Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy's Group B clash here on Saturday.

Goa were also bolstered by a

fine 44-ball 59 with eight fours and a six by Kashyap Bakhale in the chase as they responded with 167 for three in 19 overs after keeping Jammu and Kashmir to 161 for six earlier.

Goa used as many as six bowling options and it was Shubham Tari who was the pick among them, returning 4-0-30-3 while Deepak Gaonkar and Vikash

Singh claimed one wicket apiece.

At the iconic Eden Gardens here, J&K batters Yawer Hasan (48) and skipper Shubham Khajuria (45) made key contributions while Abdul Samad provided a late surge with a nine-ball 22 which included two fours and as many sixes. J&K pacer Auqib Nabi and Sunil Kumar bowled identical spells of 1/31 but could not avert a defeat for their side.

At the Jadavpur University Ground, Bihar suffered a crushing seven-wicket defeat to Hyderabad who won a low scoring match with more than eight overs to spare.

Teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi fell for a run-a-ball 11 as Bihar could not find any momentum with the bat. Piyush Singh scored 34 with the fours and Bipin Saurabh hit three late sixes to make 31 not out, as they crawled to 132 for eight.

In reply, Tanmay Agarwal cracked 11 fours and a six to make 67 not out off 42 balls as Hyderabad responded with 134 for three in 12.5 overs.

## Shubman Gill cleared by CoE to play 1st T20I



PTI

Cuttack, Dec 06: India's T20I vice-captain Shubman Gill has been cleared by the Sports Science team of the BCCI's Centre of Excellence to play the opening T20I against South Africa after successfully completing his rehabilitation from a neck injury sustained during the Kolkata Test.

Gill was selected in the squad subject to fitness and had to undergo all rehabilitation and

skill-training protocols required for Return To Play (RTP).

"Shubman Gill has successfully completed his rehabilitation at CoE and has met the requisite criteria to be declared fit for all formats of the game," a communication from the CoE has gone to the team management's Sports Science and Medicine (SSM) team, comprising physio Kamesh Jain, strength and conditioning coach Adrian Le Roux and sports doctor Dr Charles.

Gill had suffered a whiplash on

the second day of the Kolkata Test and had to be hospitalised for a couple days and administered injection.

He missed the ongoing ODI series but all doubts over his availability for the T20 leg were dispelled as he completed his rehabilitation and also performed his skills training — batting and fielding — in a match simulation at CoE.

On Saturday, all those who only play T20Is will be linking up in Cuttack to start their first session from Sunday.

INOX  
SRINAGAR

## MOVIES WATCHLIST

Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> December



DHURANDHAR (A)  
HINDI ATMOS - 01:15 PM, 05:30 PM  
HINDI - 10:05 AM, 11:15 AM, 02:20 PM, 06:35 PM



TERE ISHK MEIN (U/A 16+)  
HINDI - 10:00 AM, 03:25 PM, 06:45 PM



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