



Pahalgam attack probe will be studied by agencies around world, put Pakistan in dock: Amit Shah

Delhi blast, Pahalgam attack outstanding examples of watertight investigation

J&K police, agencies deserve all praise for thorough probe

Pahalgam terrorists aimed to disrupt harmony, tourism

Terrorism evolving with increased use of technology

Ahmad Taimur

New Delhi, Dec 26: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said that the probe into the Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 civilians dead will put Pakistan in the dock on international platforms and that the successful investigation will be studied by agencies around the world in coming days.

The Home Minister, per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), made the remarks after inaugurating the 'Anti-Terrorism Conference-2025' in New Delhi. The two-day conference is being organised by the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

The Home Minister also unveiled NIA's updated crime manual, Organised Crime Network Database and Lost/Looted and Recovered Weapon Database.

The Home Minister also commended Jammu and Kashmir Police for conducting a very thorough investigation into the



Delhi blast that claimed nearly a dozen lives and injured many others near the iconic Red Fort area. "All our agencies did an excellent job in investigating the entire network," he said.

Amit Shah said that the attack in Baisaran Valley was one that shook the entire country. "Through this attack, the terrorists wanted to disrupt communal harmony in the country and deliver a blow to the new era of development and tourism that

has begun in Kashmir," he said.

He said that based on extremely precise intelligence, security forces neutralised all three terrorists, delivering a stern message to Pakistan. "This is the first terrorist incident in which those who planned the terrorist act were punished by us through Operation Sindoor, and those who carried out the act with the weapons provided to them were neutralised through Operation Mahadev,"

he said.

The Home Minister said that at both ends, the Government of India, the Indian security forces, and the people of India have given a strong and befitting reply to Pakistan's terrorist masters through security forces and intelligence agencies.

He stated that agencies conducted a complete and successful investigation of the Pahalgam terrorist attack, which agencies around the world will study in the coming days. "The results of the investigation into the Pahalgam terrorist attack will put Pakistan in the dock on international platforms," he remarked.

He further said that the investigations into the Pahalgam and Delhi blast cases are not ordinary policing but outstanding examples of watertight investigation. "This is also a great example of how an alert officer can save the country from such a major crisis by remaining vigilant at all times," he said.

Amit Shah | [More on P6](#)

PM Modi ensured justice to victims of 1984 anti-Sikh riots: LG Sinha

Historic steps taken to honor legacy of Sikh Gurus, preserve Sikh heritage

KNO Desk

Jammu, Dec 26: Asserting that Prime Minister Narendra Modi ensured justice to the victims of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday said that under the leadership of PM Modi, historic steps have been taken to honor the legacy of Sikh Gurus.

While paying tributes to the Sahibzades, Mata Gujri Ji and Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji on the occasion of 'Veer Baal Diwas', LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "PM Modi ensured justice to the victims of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. The grant of FCRA approval to Sri Harmandir Sahib has enabled the global Sangat to participate in the service of the holy shrine."

He said, "The Sri Kartarpur Sahib corridor, rejuvenation of Jallianwala Bagh memorial and the promotion of academic research into the teachings of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji and many such historic steps have ensured that the Gurus'



message of universal brotherhood remains a guiding force for India's future."

The Lieutenant Governor praised the Sikh community's historical role in nation-building and their tireless efforts to eliminate social discrimination.

He called upon the citizens to honour the sacrifice of the revered Sikh Gurus by fostering a society rooted in unity and progress.

"There has been a new dynamism in our country and let us resolve today to stand together and stand firm in our determination to build Viksit

Bharat of our dreams," the Lieutenant Governor said.

"We remember Sahibzades' unparalleled bravery, sacrifice and courage, commitment of Mata Gujri Ji and Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Their lives and teachings are a source of inspiration for all citizens, the Lieutenant Governor said.

"The supreme sacrifice of our Sikh Gurus inspires all of us to uphold the unity and integrity of the nation. It should be our sincere endeavour to build a prosperous country which is united and strong in its diversity," the Lieutenant Governor said. | [More on P6](#)

KNO EXCLUSIVE

5-year clock ticks: DDCs to wind up on Feb 24, 2026

Law Dept opines their term begins from date of constitution, cites J&K Panchayati Rules

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Dec 26: Ending weeks of speculation over the fate of the District Development Councils (DDCs), the Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs has opined that the five-year tenure of the councils began on the day of their constitution—a ruling that sets their dissolution date at February 24, 2026.

Citing Sub-Rule (2) and Sub-Rule (3) of Rule 1082P of the Jammu & Kashmir Panchayati Raj Rules, 1996, the Department of Law has clarified that the District Development Councils shall be deemed to be duly constituted from the date of issuance of the notification for their constitution, sources told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Sub-Rule (2) provides that, upon receipt of the names of the elected members, Chairpersons, and Vice-Chairpersons, the Government shall, by notification, constitute District Development

Council(s) bearing the name of the concerned district. Sub-Rule (3) states that upon issuance of such notification under Sub-Rule (2), the District Development Council shall be deemed to be duly constituted.

The Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj issued notifications for their constitution on February 25, 2021. With the Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs opining that their term begins from the date of their constitution, the Councils will cease to exist on February 24, 2026. The Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj had sought clarification from the Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs on whether the five-year term should be counted from the date of their constitution (February 25, 2021) or from the oath-taking (December 28, 2020).

As per the Jammu & Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act, 1989, the term of a District Development Council shall be five years, except in | [More on P6](#)



Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

Minimum temperatures rise in J&K, Ladakh

Light snow, scattered rain expected next week

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Dec 26: Minimum temperatures across Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh rose on Friday compared to Thursday, offering slight relief from cold wave conditions.

According to the details collected by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) in Kashmir region, Srinagar recorded a minimum

temperature of 0.2°C, up from minus 2.2°C on Thursday. Qazigund also settled at 0.2°C, rising from minus 1.8°C, while Pahalgam improved to minus 1.6°C from minus 4.4°C.

Gulmarg recorded minus 4.5°C, compared to minus 5.4°C the previous night. Srinagar Airport registered minus 1.2°C, higher than Thursday's minus 3.4°C.

Pulwama recorded minus

3.4°C, up from minus 3.8°C. Sonamarg, which was the coldest on Thursday at minus 7.3°C, rose to minus 4.7°C.

In the Jammu region, Jammu city recorded a temperature of 10.0°C, up from 8.1°C, and Jammu Airport 10.2°C, compared to 7.3°C on Thursday.

Banihal was at 3.8°C against 4.8°C, Batote 6.1°C against 4.7°C. | [More on P6](#)

Reservation storm rocks J&K politics in 2025

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Dec 26: The issue of reservation rationalisation remained the most emotive concern for the youth in Jammu & Kashmir and the most contentious challenge for the elected government in 2025.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), if 2024 witnessed protests outside Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's residence over the demand for rationalisation of reservation, 2025 saw the issue take centre stage in Jammu & Kashmir politics. MP Aga Ruhullah Mehdi and Kashmir-based opposition leaders, especially Handwara MLA Sajad Gani Lone, took on Omar Abdullah-led government head-on over the matter. The issue became the biggest source of discord between the National Conference and its MP Ruhullah Mehdi during the Budgam by-election, resulting in the party's shock defeat in its traditional stronghold.

Disparity and 'no deadline' controversy

Data revealed by the J&K Government in the Assembly on March 15, 2025, showed that the current reservation



policy was heavily tilted in favour of Jammu.

The government's response to Lone's question—that it had not set a deadline for the Cabinet sub-committee to submit its report—was described by the opposition as backtracking on its commitment. This triggered a major controversy, with Ruhullah stepping in to question the government.

In a bid to stem the controversy, Omar Abdullah announced that the Cabinet sub-committee would submit its report within six months.

CSC submits report

On June 10, 2025, Minister for Social Welfare Sakina Ittoo, who headed the CSC, announced | [More on P6](#)

2025 toughest year for J&K's fruit industry, losses pegged at Rs 2,000 crore: Growers

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Dec 26: The year 2025 has gone down as the toughest and "most disastrous" year in recent memory for Jammu and Kashmir's fruit industry, according to growers and traders. They estimated losses of nearly Rs 2,000 crore due to prolonged highway closures, erratic weather, low market demand, "exorbitant" freight charges and the "absence" of any government compensation.

The industry, as per the growers who spoke to the news agency - Kashmir News Observer (KNO), is on the brink, and immediate steps need to be taken for its revival.

August rains trigger 'unprecedented crisis'

According to growers, the crisis began in the last week of August, when continuous and heavy rains triggered landslides at multiple locations, forcing the closure of

the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway for nearly a month, right at the peak of the apple harvesting season.

"This was the worst possible time for such a disaster. Apples were ready for dispatch, orchards were full of produce, but the highway remained shut. Thousands of trucks carrying fresh fruit were stranded for days and weeks. By the time they reached markets outside the Valley, a large portion of the produce had already rotted," they said.

Growers said apples continued to pile up in orchards and mandis as repeated highway closures due to landslides and repair works choked the only major all-weather surface link with the rest of the country. As supply chains collapsed, market arrivals became erratic, leading to a steep crash in prices.

"Farmers who invested their life savings, took loans and

worked the entire year were left with no option but to sell their produce at throwaway prices. Many couldn't even recover the cost of harvesting and packaging," Bashir Ahmad Basheer, President of Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers Cum Dealers Union, said.

Mughal Road no match for highway closure

With the national highway closed, the Mughal Road was used as an alternative route, but growers said it proved grossly inadequate.

"Only small trucks were allowed on Mughal Road, which made large-scale transportation impossible. Even then, vehicles were given turns after two or three days," Basheer said.

He said freight charges on the Mughal Road were three to four times higher than normal, further eating into already shrinking margins.

"In desperation, some



growers even used small load carriers to transport fruit up to Rajouri. From there, the produce was reloaded onto trucks for onward transportation. This not only increased costs but also damaged the quality of fruit," the Union leader said.

'2025 exposed structural vulnerabilities'

Growers said they had never witnessed such a bad year for the fruit industry.

They said that even during past disruptions or political turmoil, the losses were not

this massive. "In 2025, everything went wrong at once—weather, roads, markets and policy support," they lamented.

While the industry has been grappling with multiple challenges for years, 2025 exposed its structural vulnerabilities.

CONCERNS

- Low market demand
- Soaring freight charges
- Lack of compensation

"Every year, new diseases are emerging in orchards. Fake pesticides and substandard fertilisers have flooded the market, damaging crops instead of protecting them. Despite all this, apple prices continue to remain low year after year," growers said.

Cold storages a boon, but too few

Growers acknowledged that Controlled Atmosphere (CA) and cold storage units have emerged as a major relief for the sector, helping farmers store produce and avoid distress sales. However, they said the number of such units remains insufficient.

"Cold storages are a boon, but they are too few compared to the volume of production. Moreover, many units operate as per their own will rather than government guidelines," they said.

Growers demanded that cold storage | [More on P6](#)

Div Com Kashmir reviews traffic management proposals for Srinagar

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 26: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, Friday chaired a meeting of the Multi-Disciplinary Committee (MDC) on Traffic Management System to review the implementation of various proposals aimed at streamlining traffic movement in Srinagar city.

The meeting, as per an official statement was attended by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Akshay Labroo; CEO SSCL, Fazlul Haseeb, VC SDA, SSP Traffic, and officers from the Public Works Department, Waqf Board, and other concerned departments.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner reviewed the drawings of proposed traffic interventions, including the construction of a rotary at Exchange Junction, road widening at Sangarmal Junction, and improvements at Jahangir Chowk to facilitate smoother traffic flow on MA Road. After detailed deliberations, the committee approved the implementation of these proposals.

The meeting also reviewed the positive outcomes of introducing one-way traffic on several interior city roads and proposed extending the arrangement to additional areas.

It was informed that color coding of mini-buses has been completed in the western zone, while the process in the eastern zone will be initiated shortly.

To curb noise pollution, areas near JVC, Children's Hospital, and Karanagar were declared no-honking zones.

Regarding traffic accident black spots on the Parimpora-Narbal Highway, the Divisional Commissioner directed the PWD to conduct a joint inspection with BEACON to ascertain the causes of



frequent accidents.

On the development of a multi-level parking facility at Jamia Masjid Srinagar, the Divisional Commissioner instructed the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar and CEO SSCL to take up the matter with the Auqaf Committee.

The meeting was informed that tenders for IT-based parking facilities at Harwan, Nehru Park, and Makai Park have already been floated.

Divisional Commissioner also

reviewed the Action Taken Report on issues related to realignment of e-bus routes, establishment of e-bus charging stations, and construction of a vehicular underpass at Momina-bad Junction.

Emphasizing the importance of effective traffic monitoring, the Divisional Commissioner directed the CEO SSCL to expedite the installation and operationalization of all ITMS cameras across the city.

DC Kupwara chairs NCORD meeting

KT NEWS DESK

KUPWARA, DECEMBER 26: Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, Friday chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee under the Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) to review the measures undertaken by various departments for the ongoing anti-drug measures and the overall response to drug abuse and trafficking in the district.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by SSP Kupwara, Syed Tahir Al Geelani; SSP Handwara, Sahil Sarangal; ADC Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan; ASP Handwara, ACR, CEO, CMO, and other concerned officers. Principals of Government Degree Colleges (GDCs) and Tehsildars participated in the meeting virtually.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner sought detailed feedback from all departments on the progress made on various important agenda points like functioning

of ATF & DDRC, ongoing awareness drive, CCTV surveillance monitoring in hot spot areas, Nasha mukta Panchayat, rehabilitation etc. SSP Kupwara and SSP Handwara briefed about enforcement action and preventive initiatives undertaken including registration of cases, arrests, seizures, licence suspensions, and attachment of properties related to narcotics offences.

While addressing the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need for sustained and coordinated efforts to eradicate drug abuse and addiction in the district. He directed the concerned departments to work proactively and aggressively, with special focus on the rehabilitation by facilitating self-employment opportunities.

CEO Kupwara and all Principals of GDCs were instructed to submit status of working of CCTV cameras to ensure strict surveillance and deter drug-related activities.

Tehsildars, in coordination with SHOs, were directed to monitor drug hotspot areas on regular basis.

DC Srinagar reviews revenue services, orders clearance of pendency



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 26:- Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar on Friday chaired a comprehensive meeting of senior Revenue Officers here at Conference Hall of the DC Office to review Tehsil wise delivery of revenue service, pendency status and implementation of various citizen-centric revenue related services initiatives across the district. The DC also took stock of the infrastructure upgradation of Revenue Offices and progress achieved in digitization and management of Revenue records.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz-Ul-Aziz; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed; SDM West, Irfan Bahadur; SDM East, Zuber Ahmad; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar, all Tehsildars and Assistant Revenue Attorney(ARA) with DC and other concerned.

During the meeting, the DC reviewed Tehsil wise progress and

performance of Revenue Officers, with stress on timely disposal of Revenue Service under Public Service Guarantee Act(PSGA), Digitization of Revenue records, disposal of migrant grievances, replies to Court cases, modernization of Revenue Offices and other revenue related matters.

On the occasion, the DC emphasized the importance of seamless, timely and efficient public service delivery across all Revenue offices of the district. He stressed the need for maintaining a comprehensive and transparent land records management system to strengthen public trust and administrative efficiency.

The DC directed all concerned Officers to clear pending cases on priority and ensure strict adherence to timelines prescribed under the Public Services Guarantee Act (PSGA). The DC also took stock of the infrastructure upgradation of Revenue Offices and reviewed the progress achieved in construction of new Revenue Offices in the district.

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NAME CORRECTION IN PASSPORT

I have changed my name from(old name) **ROOHI SULTAN** to(New Name) **ROOHI SULTANA**. In future I will be known as **ROOHI SULTANA**. If anybody is having any objection he/she may Contact Passport office, Srinagar with in & 7 days. After Seven days no objection will be accepted.

ROOHI SULTANA
W/O SUHAIL AHMAD BHAT
R/O DANGERPORA TAILBAL, SRINAGAR

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM

E-mail: artobudgam1@gmail.com
Pin Code: 191111, Ph. No. 01951315001

PUBLIC NOTICE

Through the medium of this Public Notice, all the vehicle owners who have not valid Route Permit of their vehicles till date (as per the enclosed list), are hereby informed to obtain Route Permit of their vehicles within a period of 15 days from the date of issuance of this Public Notice, failing which all such vehicles shall be seized and action as warranted under the Motor Vehicles Act and Rules framed thereunder, shall be initiated against them.

Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam

No: Arto/Bud/2025-26/1046-53
Dated: 24/12/2025

DIPK-9374/25
DATED: 26-12-2025

JDI Kashmir condoles demise of AIO Shabir Ahmad Bhat's father-in-law

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 26: Joint Director Information, Kashmir Division, Syed Shah Nawaz Bukhari, along with officers and staff of the department, on Friday expressed profound grief and sorrow over the demise of the father-in-law of Assistant Information Officer, Shabir Ahmad Bhat, who passed away Friday.

In this connection, as per an official statement, a condolence meeting was held at the office of the Joint Director Information, Kashmir, which was attended by Deputy Director Information, Kashmir, Mohammad Rafiq and officials of the department.

The participants expressed solidarity with the bereaved family and conveyed their heartfelt condolences to Shabir Ahmad Bhat on the sad demise of his father-in-law.

They prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and for courage and strength to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

DC Budgam reviews HADP projects, distributes farm machinery

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, DECEMBER 26: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-din Bhat Friday visited Khansahib to review the functioning of the Agriculture Department and assess farmer-oriented service delivery, besides inspecting key initiatives aimed at strengthening the agriculture and horticulture sectors in the area.

During the visit, the DC reviewed Implementation of various agriculture-related schemes and inspected the implementation of Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) projects in the area.

The DC, as per an official statement, directed the concerned officers that farmer-centric services should be delivered in a timely, transparent and efficient manner to ensure maximum benefit to the farming community.

During the visit, the DC handed over the keys of a farm tilling tractor to a progressive farmer of village Shoroo, Khansahib, under the HADP. The initiative is aimed at promoting farm mechanisation, reducing drudgery and enhancing agricultural productivity through modern farming practices.

On the occasion, the DC said that such interventions are expected to significantly improve operational efficiency and contribute towards enhancing farmers' income.

The DC also inspected the functioning of the Kisan Khidmat Ghar (KKG), Khansahib, where it was stressed that all farmer-related services should be provided in a hassle-free, transparent and time-bound manner. He laid emphasis on prompt grievance redressal and effective

service delivery to ensure greater outreach and satisfaction among farmers.

The DC also interacted with Krishi Udyamis, appreciating their innovative approaches and entrepreneurial initiatives in agriculture.

He encouraged them to adopt modern farming techniques, value addition, and explore market linkages to enhance productivity and income. He assured that the District Administration will provide full support, technical guidance, and subsidies to promote agri-entrepreneurship.

Later, the DC visited a High Density Apple Orchard at Khansahib, developed on a 20 kanal landholding of farmer, Abdul Gani Kothli, who has been provided 40 percent subsidy assistance for the development of the orchard.

The DC appreciated the initiative and said that its a progressive step towards adopting scientific and high-yield horticulture practices. He said that the adoption of integrated farming practices and proper orchard management techniques would further help in increasing yield, improving quality produce and enhancing overall farm income.

The DC said that District administration is extending full support for strengthening agriculture and allied sectors through focused interventions and effective implementation of government schemes.

Besides, CPO budgam, SDM Khansahib, chief Agriculture officer budgam, Executive Engineer of all wings, tehsildar khansahib, and other district and sectoral officers accompanied the DC during his visit.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT SOCIAL WELFARE OFFICER, KULGAM

Subject: Advertisement of Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pre-matric/ Post-matric Scholarship (PM-YASASVI) for students belonging to OBC, EBC & DNT categories on National Scholarship Portal (2025-26).

PUBLIC -NOTICE

It is for the information of general public especially eligible students that notification regarding submission of online applications under Centrally sponsored Scheme for Pre- matric / Post- matric Scholarship (PM-YASASVI) for the students belonging to OBC, EBC & DNT categories on National Scholarship Portal has been issued by Directorate of Social Welfare Kashmir vide No:-DSWK/Sch /2025/4643-53 dated:-03.12.2025 for the year 2025-26 the contents of which are as under :-

Name of the Scheme	PM-YASASVI (PM YOUNG ACHIEVERS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD SCHEME FOR VIBRANT INDIA)
Category	The student must belong to Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Economically Backward Classes (EBCs), or De-notified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (DNTs) as notified by the Central/State Govt.
Annual Family Income	The total annual family income from all sources should not exceed Rs. 2.50 Lakh per annum.
PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP(PMS) FOR OBC, EBC, AND DNT	The student must be currently studying in Class IX or Class X on a full-time basis in a government recognized school.
POST-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP (PMS) FOR OBC, EBC, AND DNT	He or she must have passed Matriculation (Class 10th) or Higher Secondary (Class 12th) or any higher examination and be pursuing a recognized post-matric course (e.g., Class XI & XII, Diploma, Graduate, Post-Graduate, Professional Courses).

Time limit for submission of applications:

Scheme	Activity	Date
PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP (PMS) for OBC, EBC and DNT	Portal Opening Date	November 01, 2025
	Portal Closing Date	December 31, 2025
POST-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP for OBC, EBC and DNT.	Portal Opening Date	November 25, 2025
	Portal Closing Date	December 31, 2025

How to apply

The scholarships are open to Indian Nationals who are residents of J&K and belong to the specified categories, pursuing approved courses in recognized institutions in India.

All eligible students are advised to apply on the National Scholarship Portal (NSP) within the specified timelines.

1. All applications must be submitted online on the National Scholarship Portal (NSP) viz <https://scholarships.gov.in/>.

2. All necessary certificates (Income, Caste, category etc.) must be uploaded as per the devised format/specifications mentioned on the application portal.

3. A student who is already covered under any other scholarship scheme from State/Centre Government is not entitled under this scheme.

* For further details regarding scholarship and criteria students are requested to visit the National Scholarship Portal (NSP): <https://scholarships.gov.in/> or [https://socialjustice.gov.in/social-audit/public/schemesdoc/PM Yasasvi scheme.pdf](https://socialjustice.gov.in/social-audit/public/schemesdoc/PM%20Yasasvi%20scheme.pdf).

No:DSWO/Kgm/Estt/2025/1079-84 Dated: - 26/12/2025

DIPK-9375/25
DATED: 26-12-2025

Sd/
District Social Welfare officer, Kulgam.

Sakeena Itoo reviews educational issues with Pvt schools, parents

KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, Dec 26: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Friday held an extensive interaction with representatives of Private School Association and Parents Association at Civil Secretariat here to deliberate on pressing issues concerning the functioning of educational institutions and the welfare of students.

Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education and Chairman JKBOSE Shantamanu; Secretary School Education, Ram Niwas Sharma; Project Director, Samagra Shiksha, Bhawani Rakwal; Director School Education Kashmir, Naseer Ahmad Wani; Director School Education Jammu, Naseem Javid Chowdhary; Secretary JKBOSE, Ghulam Hassan Sheikh; office bearers of Fee Fixation Regulation Commission, other senior officers of School Education and Higher Education departments were also present on the occasion.

During the meeting, the Education Minister held extensive discussion on matters related to school fees, academic calendars, school student safety, availability of school books, quality of education,



and effective coordination between school managements and parents.

Addressing the participants, the Minister laid emphasis on ensuring transparency, accountability, and adherence to government guidelines by private schools, while safeguarding the interests of students and parents alike.

Minister Sakeena Itoo reaffirmed the government's commitment to providing quality, inclusive, and affordable education. She stressed that the welfare of students remains the top priority and made it clear that any form of exploitation or deviation from prescribed norms would not be tolerated.

The Minister called upon the Secretary School Education to frame a committee to deal with the pressing issue of availability of books in schools. She also

called for constant surveillance in markets to check unauthorised selling of books which do not form under the prescribed curriculum of JKBOSE.

During the interaction, the representatives of Parents Association flagged various issues like arbitrary fee hikes, annual charges, books from private publishers despite government books available, transport charges and other related issues. They also demanded representation of parents association while making any decisions regarding fee hikes or related matters. They urged the government to strengthen monitoring mechanisms to prevent arbitrary practices and ensure a student-friendly learning environment.

The Minister assured them that their concerns would be examined in detail and

appropriate measures would be taken in consultation with all stakeholders.

She directed the concerned officers of the Education department to closely monitor the implementation of existing regulations and to maintain regular engagement with parents association to address grievances promptly.

The representatives of Private Schools Association also raised various issues before the Minister and sought their timely redressal. They demanded swift NOC process and registration procedure.

The Minister assured them that these issues will be addressed promptly. She directed officers to facilitate Low budget schools and a collaborative approach should be established to resolve their issues in a time-bound manner.

MP Ruhullah issues ultimatum on J&K reservation

■ Says he will join students protest on Sunday if talks fail

SAJID RAINA

Srinagar, Dec 26: Member Parliament and senior National Conference leader, Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, on Friday said that if the government fails to engage with protesting students and unemployed youth on the reservation issue till Saturday, he would join their sit-in on Sunday.

Aga Ruhullah wrote: "I have neither forgotten nor left the students alone. I urge the government once again to talk to the students and apprise them of the measures and decisions taken to resolve this issue. If that does not happen till Saturday, I will not leave our youth and students help-less. I will walk with them and sit with them this coming Sunday at the same place as we did the last year on 23rd December to make them heard."

The statement has brought back memories of the December 23 protest last year, when the NC parliamentarian, along with unemployed youth and leaders from different political parties, staged a sit-in outside the official residence of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. The demonstration had received support from the Peoples Democratic Party, with its MLA Waheed Para joining the protest, while Kashmir's chief cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq had also extended support to the demand for rationalising reservations.

After assuming office, the government had constituted a cabinet sub-committee to examine the reservation policy and suggest corrective measures. Following several months of deliberations,



the recommendations were finalised and forwarded to the LG's office.

Meanwhile, National Conference leader and Zadibal MLA Tanvir Sadiq while reacting to Ruhullah's post said, "The proposal stands already cleared by the cabinet. I appeal to the Lieutenant Governor's administration to expedite its approval so that stalled recruitment processes could move forward."

Ruhullah has emerged as one of the most vocal critics of the existing reservation framework in Jammu and Kashmir.

He has repeatedly called for a rationalisation of quotas in line with population proportions and Supreme Court guidelines, which generally cap reservations at 50 per cent.

Following the formation of the National Conference government under Chief Minister Omar

Abdullah in late 2024, a review of the policy was promised.

In December 2025, the Cabinet approved a revised reservation framework, including a reduction in quotas under categories such as Economically Weaker Sections and Re-served Backward Areas, with the stated aim of increasing seats available under Open Merit.

The proposal has since been forwarded to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha for final approval.

Ruhullah has backed Open Merit candidates who contend that the current system, with reservations exceeding 60 per cent, significantly reduces their chances in government jobs and professional courses, including medical and police recruitments, where the Open Merit share in recent notifications has fallen to nearly 40 per cent.

Meanwhile, Education Minister Sakina Itoo accused Aga Ruhullah of creating confusion among educated unemployed youth through his statements.

She said the cabinet has already taken a decision on the reservation issue and the file was awaiting approval from the Lieutenant Governor. "We are functioning under the Union Territory framework and cannot make cabinet decisions public before the LG's assent," Itoo said. She added that the youth were already under stress and such remarks only worsened the situation.

The minister suggested that Mehdi should take up the matter directly with the LG's office to seek clarity on the pending approval—(KNO)

Uttarakhand police arrest leader over assault on Kashmiri traders



REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Dec 26: The Kotwali Kaphur police in Uttarakhand on Friday said they have taken strict action following a viral video showing the assault of Kashmiri traders.

An FIR has been registered in this regard, and the accused have been taken into police custody, officials add-ed.

The incident, which occurred on December 22, involved a group of men assaulting a Kashmiri shawl seller in Kaphur. The video, first circulated on December 24 via social media, prompted immediate police intervention.

SSP Uddham Singh Nagar said in a video statement that the police are investigating the case under sections 191(2), 115(2), 351(3), 352, 304, 622, 292, and 126(2) BNS. "The matter has been taken seriously. Those involved have been identified and taken into custody. Any further circulation of the video will attract legal action," he added.

The police have also urged the public not to spread rumours or share the video on social media, stressing that maintaining law and order and ensuring the safety of traders remains a priority.

It is important to mention that the Kashmiri traders outside the Valley often face challenges while operating businesses outside J&K.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir Students Association (JKSA), in a statement issued to KNO, said the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has assured it of strict action and a "zero tolerance" approach towards any assault or intimidation of Kashmiri shawl sellers.

The Association has taken up the matter with senior authorities at the Centre, in the Uttarakhand government, and in Jammu and Kashmir.

Confirming the development, National Convenor of the Association, Nasir Khuehami, said an FIR has been registered in the case and the main accused, identified as Ba-jrang Dal leader Ankur Singh, has been arrested, while other accused involved in

the incident have also been taken into custody. The Association welcomed the swift action taken by the Uttarakhand Police in the matter.

Khuehami said that after the issue was brought to the attention of senior authorities, the Director General of Police (DGP) of Uttarakhand informed him that an FIR had been registered in connection with the incident.

He further said that the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kumaon Range, Riddhim Agarwal, informed the Association that the Uttarakhand Police had taken cognisance of the assault and the death threats issued to the victim.

"An FIR bearing No. 517/25 has been registered under Sections 191(2), 115(2), 351(3), 352, 304, 62, 292, and 126(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Police teams were constituted, raids were conducted, arrests were made, and legal proceedings have also been initiated against the accused under the relevant provisions of the Police Act. All the accused have been arrested," Khuehami added.

Officials, Khuehami said, have assured that no pressure or settlement attempt will derail the prosecution and that the investigation will proceed strictly on merit to establish the full sequence of events, identify any additional accused, and fix liability under the law.

According to JKSA, the victim was assaulted, threatened with death, and asked to leave the state, creating an atmosphere of fear among Kashmiri traders who earn their livelihood by selling shawls seasonally across Uttarakhand and other states.

"The safety, dignity, and livelihood of Kashmiri traders and students across the country will be safeguarded, and the rule of law must prevail," Khuehami said, quoting a senior MHA official.

The Association demanded strict punishment for all those involved and called upon state governments across the country to ensure the safety, dignity, and security of Kashmiri traders and students so that they can live and work without fear—(KNO)

India-NZ FTA sparks apple price crash fears in Kashmir

JAHANGEEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Dec 26: Apple growers across Kashmir have expressed deep concern over the reduction of customs duty on apples imported from New Zealand under the India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA), saying the move could adversely impact prices of local produce and threaten their livelihoods.

The anxiety among growers has intensified as cold storage facilities in the Valley are about to open. Farmers fear that the entry of cheaper imported apples into the domestic market at this crucial juncture could depress prices of Kashmiri apples, which are currently stored and awaiting release.

"Every year, new challenges emerge for Kashmir's apple industry," said Bashir Ahmad Basheer, President of the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers Cum Dealers Union. "Sometimes apples are imported from Iran, sometimes from the United States and other countries, and now New Zealand has been added to the list. These developments consistently put pressure on our local apple industry."

Basheer said that the cumulative impact of such imports has been damaging for local growers, especially small and marginal farmers who are already struggling with rising input costs, erratic weather, pest attacks and transportation issues.

"The reduction in customs duty will make imported apples cheaper, and traders naturally prefer them. This directly affects the



pricing of our apples in the market," he added.

Growers said most of the Valley's apple produce is currently in cold storage. "When cold storage opens, we expect fair prices to recover our costs. But if imported apples flood the markets, our produce will be pushed aside or sold at distress rates," said an apple grower from Shopian, often referred to as the apple bowl of Kashmir.

Another grower from Sopore said the local industry employs lakhs of people directly and indirectly. "From orchardists and labourers to traders and transporters, the apple economy sustains a large population in Kashmir. Any policy decision that hurts apple prices affects the entire Valley," he said.

Basheer urged the government to adopt a more balanced approach while entering into international trade agreements.

"We are not against trade or imports, but the government must consider its own domestic industry before taking such decisions. Safeguards are necessary to protect local farmers from unfair competition," he said.

Growers have also demanded minimum import price mechanisms, better market interventions, and stronger promotion of Kashmiri apples at the national and international level to ensure that local produce remains competitive.

The apple industry is the backbone of Jammu and Kashmir's rural economy, contributing significantly to employment and exports. Farmers warned that continued policy neglect could push many orchardists into financial distress, calling on the Centre to review the impact of the duty reduction and hold consultations with stakeholders from the Valley—(KNO)

Police log nearly 3,200 Cyber complaints in North Kashmir

WARIS FAYAZ

Baramulla, Dec 26: In north Kashmir, police have registered nearly 3200 cyber complaint cases in year 2025. The DIG North Kashmir Media Cell according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) while re-vealing the yearly figures regarding the cyber frauds said that it has registered 3186 complaints this year.

The complaints were registered both online and offline across the North Kashmir including Baramulla, Kupwara, Bandipora, Sopore and Handwara districts. The data reflects a sharp rise in digital fraud reporting.

Officials added that swift coordination with concerned units helped them to recover more than Rs 2 crore that was returned to victims of online financial frauds. Police said they have conducted hundreds of

cyber awareness programmes across the North Kashmir Range this year, targeting schools, college and village clusters to educate people about safe digital practices.

"Outreach drives focus on explaining common fraud patterns, helpline numbers and quick reporting mechanisms so that victims can act within the crucial 'golden hour' of an online transaction," officials added.

Officials urged people to remain vigilant against phishing calls, investment scams and fake customer-care numbers, which remain the most frequently reported offenses.

They stressed that every complaint, whether lodged online or at local police stations, is being monitored by specialised cyber teams, and urged citizens to treat cyber safety as an essential part of everyday life in the digital age—(KNO)

Special trains between Delhi and Katra for New Year

SAJID RAINA

Jammu, Dec 26: Northern Railway's Jammu Division has announced the operation of special reserved trains between New Delhi and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra to manage the expected surge in passenger traffic during the New Year period, officials said on Friday.

An official said that the special train services will run from December 27, 2025, to January 1, 2026, keeping in view the heavy rush of pilgrims and tourists travelling to Jammu and Kashmir during the holiday season.

The special reserved train 04081 will operate from New Delhi to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra for five trips between December 27 and December 31. The train will depart from New Delhi at 11:45 pm and reach Katra at 12:00 noon the next day, officials said.

En route, the train will halt at Panipat, Kurukshetra, Ambala Cantt, Ludhiana, Jalandhar Cantt, Pathankot Cantt, Jammu and Shaheed Captain Tushar Mahajan (Udhampur) stations.

Similarly, the return special reserved train 04082 will run from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra to New Delhi for five trips between December 28 and January 1.

The train will depart from Katra at 9:20 pm and arrive in New Delhi at 10:00 am the following day.

On its return journey, the train will stop at Shaheed Captain Tushar Mahajan (Udhampur), Jammu, Pathankot Cantt, Jalandhar Cantt, Ludhiana, Ambala Cantt, Kurukshetra and Panipat, the officials said.

Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Jammu Division, Uchit Singhal, said the special train had been introduced to cater to the rising number of tourists visiting Jammu and Kashmir and to meet the travel requirements of local residents during the festive period.

He said the service would help passengers connect with their families and friends to celebrate the New Year while also assisting the railways in managing crowd movement during peak travel days.

The reserved special train will operate with 16 coaches, officials said, adding that tickets can be booked through the official Indian Railways website, mobile application, or authorised ticketing agents.

Passengers have been advised to check train timings and operational details before commencing their journey, as schedules may be subject to operational requirements.

Northern Railway said it continues to operate special trains periodically across the Jammu Division to improve passenger convenience and ensure smoother travel during periods of high demand—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Environmental Preservation Is Our Collective Responsibility

The fragility of our environment is a present reality, unfolding in the retreat of glaciers, the choking of our rivers, and the silent disappearance of wetlands. These are interconnected symptoms of an ecosystem under profound stress. The responsibility to halt this decline rests not with a single entity, but with the entire society. It is a collective duty where government action, community vigilance, and individual responsibility must converge into a unified force for preservation. The challenges are systemic and deeply interlinked. Receding glaciers threaten the

very source of our water. Degraded wetlands, nature's perfect flood-control systems, leave us vulnerable to deluges. Rampant deforestation disrupts microclimates and erodes soil, while unchecked vehicular pollution poisons the air we breathe. To address one issue in isolation is to miss the forest for the trees; a holistic, science-based strategy is the only viable path forward. This strategy must be built on three pillars. First, we need an enforceable policy rooted in prevention. Stringent environmental impact assessments must be non-negotiable for all development,

ensuring ecological costs are factored in at the outset. Laws protecting forests, wetlands, and water bodies must be upheld with zero tolerance for encroachment or pollution. Second, we must empower communities as frontline guardians. Local populations, with their indigenous knowledge and direct stake in the land, should be partners in conservation, managing resources and monitoring health. Third, sustainable alternatives must be actively promoted and invested in. This means revolutionising public transport, incentivising green energy, and championing

circular economies that reduce waste. Ultimately, environmental preservation is the ultimate test of our shared humanity and foresight. It transcends political and social divisions, demanding that we act as stewards for future generations. Robust governance, active citizen participation, and a cultural shift towards sustainable living are the need of the hour. Our forests, rivers, and mountains are the foundation of our survival and prosperity. Their health is our collective responsibility, and their protection is our most urgent shared mission. The time for concerted action is now.

Your Money, Your Right Reclaiming Forgotten Financial Assets And Strengthening Citizen Ownership

Press Information Bureau

Across generations, Indian families have saved carefully through opening bank accounts, purchasing insurance policies, investing in mutual funds, earning dividends from shares and setting aside money for retirement. These financial decisions are taken with a hope and responsibility, often to secure children's education, support healthcare needs, and ensure dignity in old age.

Yet, over time, a significant portion of these hard-earned savings has remained unclaimed. The money has not vanished, nor has it been misused. It lies safely with regulated financial institutions, separated from its rightful owners due to lack of awareness, outdated records, changes in residence, or missing documentation. In many cases, families are simply unaware that such assets exist.

Your Money, Your Right is a nationwide effort to reconnect citizens with these forgotten financial assets and ensure that money that belongs to individuals and families ultimately finds its way back to them.

What Are Unclaimed Financial Assets
Unclaimed financial assets arise when money held with financial institutions is not claimed by the account holder or their legal heirs for a prolonged period. Such assets include:

Bank deposits such as savings accounts, current accounts, fixed deposits and recurring deposits that have not been operated for ten years or more

Insurance policy proceeds that remain unpaid beyond the due date

Mutual fund redemption proceeds or dividends that could not be credited due to reasons such as change in bank account, bank account closure, incomplete bank account in records etc.

Dividends and shares that remain unclaimed and are transferred to statutory authorities

Pension and retirement benefits that are not claimed within the normal course

In most cases, assets may become unclaimed because of routine life events such as migration for work, changes in contact details, closure of old bank accounts, or lack of information among family members and legal heirs.

The "Your Money, Your Right" Initiative
To address this challenge in a structured and citizen-centric manner, the Government launched the "Aapki Poonji, Aapka Adhikaar – Your Money, Your Right" initiative in October 2025 as a nationwide awareness and facilitation campaign.

The initiative is coordinated by the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, in collaboration with key financial sector fund regulators, including:

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)
- Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
- Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA)
- Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)

The central objective is to help citizens identify, access and reclaim financial assets that legally belong to them, using simple processes and transparent systems.

The Scale of Unclaimed Money
The volume of unclaimed financial assets in India is significant and spans multiple segments of the formal financial system. Indicative estimates suggest that Indian banks together hold around 78,000 crore in unclaimed deposits. Unclaimed insurance policy proceeds are estimated at nearly 14,000 crore, while unclaimed amounts in mutual funds are about 3,000 crore. In addition, unclaimed dividends account for around 9,000 crore.

Together, these amounts underline the scale of unclaimed savings belonging to citizens that continue to remain unused, despite being securely held within the financial system.

Why Unclaimed Assets Matter
Unclaimed money is more than a financial statistic. For households, it may result in restricted or deferred access to funds needed for education, healthcare, livelihood support

or emergencies. For senior citizens, it could involve pensions or insurance benefits that provide essential financial security.

At a systemic level, unclaimed assets weaken the connection between citizens and the formal financial system. When people are unable to access money that belongs to them, it affects trust, participation and confidence. Addressing this issue with "Your Money, Your Right" initiative strengthens not only household finances, but also the credibility and inclusiveness of financial institutions.

Digital Platforms for Tracing Unclaimed Assets

Unclaimed Bank Deposits – UDGM Portal
The UDGM portal, developed by the Reserve Bank of India, provides a central search facility for unclaimed bank deposits across participating banks in a centralized manner. While claims are settled by the respective banks, the portal helps citizens identify where unclaimed balances exist.

If a bank deposit remains unclaimed for ten years or more, it is transferred to the Depositor Education and Awareness Fund (DEA Fund). However, the money still belongs to the customer, and there is no time limit for the customer or their legal heirs to claim it.

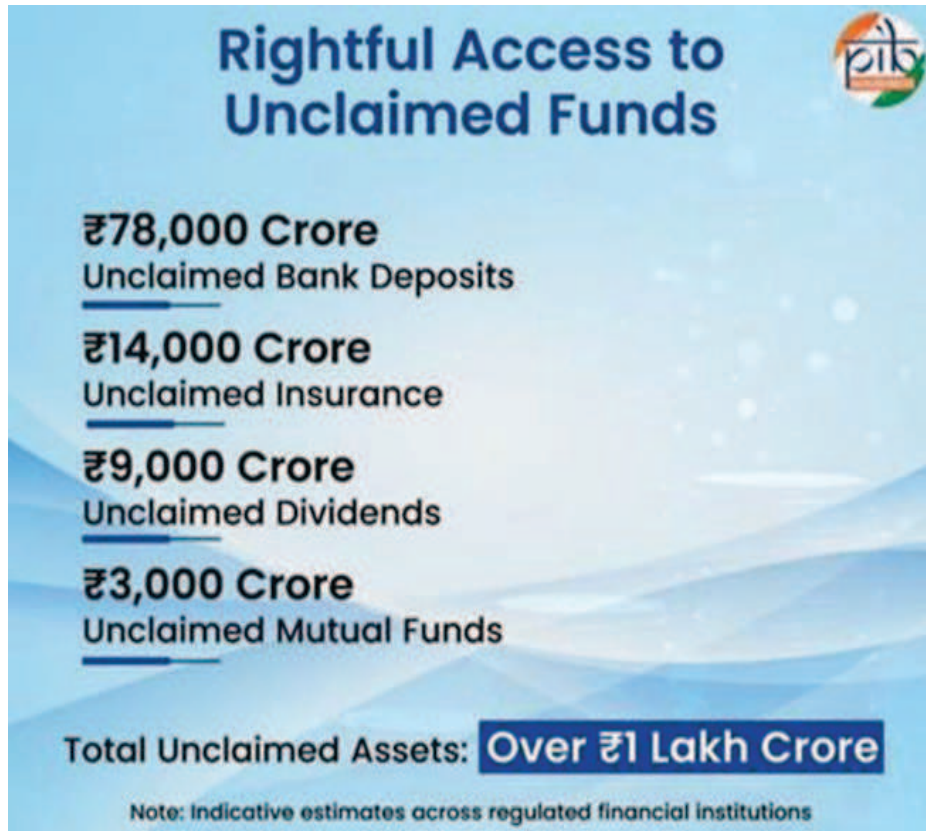
The portal can be accessed at: <https://udgm.rbi.org.in/unclaimed-deposits/#/login>

Insurance Proceeds – Bima Bharosa Portal
The Bima Bharosa portal enables individuals to trace unclaimed insurance policy proceeds. It allows policyholders, nominees and legal heirs to check whether any insurance amounts are due to them by providing links to the enquiry pages of insurers.

An insurance amount is treated as unclaimed when it remains unpaid beyond twelve months from the due date. Insurance proceeds that remain unclaimed for more than ten years are transferred to the Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund (SCWF) maintained by the Government. Such transfer does not affect ownership rights, and beneficiaries continue to retain the right to claim the amount, up to 25 years from the date of transfer.

Policyholders, nominees or legal heirs may approach the concerned insurer to initiate claims even after transfer to the SCWF, in accordance with prescribed procedures. There is no fee for claiming unclaimed insurance proceeds.

The framework also encourages preventive measures, including updating contact details, registering and updating nominations, informing family members about insurance policies, and maintaining physical or digital records of policy documents, including through platforms such as DigiLocker. The policies can



also be linked to Aadhaar and PAN for easy identification.

The portal can be accessed at: <https://bimabharosa.irdai.gov.in/>

Mutual Fund Investments – MITRA Portal
The Mutual Fund Investment Tracing and Retrieval Assistant (MITRA), hosted on MF Central, enables investors to trace unclaimed and inactive mutual fund investments. The platform allows investors to identify the mutual fund in which such investments may be held, using the prescribed search parameters.

Folio number is a unique identification number provided by mutual fund institutions to their investors in order to track their assets in a certain scheme.

Mutual fund amounts remain unclaimed when redemption, maturity proceeds, or dividends are not credited to the investor's bank account due to reasons such as changes or closure of bank accounts, incomplete records, outdated contact details, or pending KYC compliance.

In such cases, the money is not lost; on the due date, it is transferred to designated unclaimed schemes, where it remains until it is claimed. Additionally, a mutual fund

folio is treated as inactive if the investor does not make any transaction for ten years, even though unit balance is available in the folio.

MITRA facilitates the identification of unclaimed or inactive investments, after which investors may contact the concerned Asset Management Company (AMC) or Registrar and Transfer Agent (RTA) to initiate the claim process.

The framework also emphasizes preventive measures, encouraging investors to keep KYC details, bank account information and contact records updated, and to regularly review account statements to avoid future instances of unclaimed investments.

The portal can be accessed at: <https://app.mfcentral.com/investor/signin>

Dividends and Shares – IEPFA Portal

Unclaimed dividends and shares are transferred by companies to the Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA) after remaining unpaid or unclaimed for a continuous period of seven years. The IEPFA portal provides a search facility that allows individuals to trace unclaimed dividends, shares or deposits by entering details such as PAN, Name or Company Name & Demat ID/Folio Number. There is no charge for filing a claim with the IEPFA, and there is no specific time limit for claiming amounts transferred to the Fund. The rightful claimant can apply for a refund at any point after the transfer has been made.

The portal can be accessed at:

<https://www.iepf.gov.in/content/iepf/global/master/Home/Home.html>

Taking the Initiative to the Ground
The "Your Money, Your Right" initiative places strong emphasis on direct citizen outreach, combining digital platforms with structured on-ground engagement to ensure wide and inclusive coverage across the country.

Launched in October 2025, the initiative was implemented as a three-month nationwide drive from October to December 2025, covering every State and Union Territory. The campaign is anchored in the 3A Framework – Awareness, Accessibility and Action, with the objective of enabling citizens to identify, access and reclaim their rightful savings through simple and transparent processes.

From October until 19th December 2025, facilitation camps were organized in 668 districts. These camps witnessed active participation from public representatives, district administrations, and officials from banks, insurance companies and other financial institutions, ensuring coordinated and effective service delivery at the local level.

The camps were conducted through State-Level Bankers' Committees and State-Level Insurance Committees, in coordination with lead district banks and local administrations.

Citizens were assisted through helpdesks and digital kiosks to check for unclaimed financial assets and initiate claims conveniently. Citizens were also encouraged to enrol

Key Takeaways

- "Aapki Poonji, Aapka Adhikaar" – Your Money, Your Right is a nationwide awareness and facilitation initiative to help citizens identify and reclaim unclaimed financial assets.
- The initiative addresses unclaimed savings across banks, insurance, mutual funds, dividends, shares and retirement benefits held within the regulated financial system.
- Coordinated by the Department of Financial Services with financial sector regulators, the campaign combines digital portals with district-level facilitation.
- Through coordinated efforts of Government departments, regulators and financial institutions, nearly ₹2,000 crore has been returned to rightful owners.

under financial inclusion schemes and complete KYC and re-KYC formalities, thereby strengthening their link with the formal financial system.

District-Level Outcome
District-level implementation translated national objectives into measurable outcomes at the local level. Dormant and unclaimed financial accounts were identified, claims were initiated, and funds were restored to beneficiaries in multiple instances, including through on-the-spot settlements during outreach activities. The participation of banks, insurance companies and other financial institutions on a common platform enabled coordinated service delivery, simplified citizen interaction and reduced procedural delays.

Progress Achieved
The coordinated efforts of Government departments, regulators and financial institutions yielded tangible results during the course of the campaign. Nearly 2,000 crore was returned to rightful owners, reconnecting families with financial assets that had remained unclaimed for extended periods.

In addition to financial recovery, the initiative contributed to improved awareness around nominations, documentation and record-keeping, supporting more effective financial planning at the household level.

Conclusion
Aapki Poonji, Aapka Adhikaar – Your Money, Your Right is a focused and citizen-centric initiative that reconnects individuals and families with financial assets that rightfully belong to them. By combining awareness, simplified access and coordinated facilitation, the initiative addresses a long-standing gap in the financial system and ensures that unclaimed savings are identified and returned to their rightful owners.

At a broader level, the initiative strengthens trust in financial institutions, reinforces financial inclusion and promotes responsible financial practices. By ensuring that personal savings remain accessible, protected and transferable, Your Money, Your Right contributes to a more transparent, responsive and citizen-first financial ecosystem.

PIB Research

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Javed Rana reviews development works in Poonch

Calls for expeditious completion

KT News Desk

JAMMU, DECEMBER 26: Aimed at accelerating the pace of development in Poonch district, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Friday chaired a virtual meeting to review the progress of ongoing developmental works in the district.

The review meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by the District Development Commissioner (DDC), Poonch, Ashok Kumar Sharma, along with Heads of Departments and key district officers representing various line departments.

The meeting was convened to assess both the physical and financial achievements across all sectors, schemes and development plans currently under implementation in the district during the 2025-26 financial year.

The Minister evaluated the district's developmental roadmap, with special emphasis on critical infrastructure projects and public welfare initiatives.

While chairing the meeting, Rana stressed the importance of achieving the set targets within the stipulated timelines, underscoring that quality and transparency must not be



compromised at any stage. He directed the officers to expedite project implementation and ensure that processes such as tendering, approvals and on-ground execution are carried out in a swift and time-bound manner.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to holistic development of Poonch, the Minister instructed the officials to maintain meticulous sector-wise documentation of progress and submit weekly updates to enable continuous and effective monitoring.

He further called for enhanced inter-departmental coordination and real-time monitoring mechanisms to bridge implementation gaps and ensure that UT and Centrally Sponsored Schemes reach the grassroots level.

During the meeting, the Minister also reviewed the pre-vailing power supply scenario and the status of ongoing power infrastructure works in the district.

Highlighting the strategic importance of the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), particularly for a hilly district like Poonch, he described the scheme as a transformative initiative for strengthening the power distribution network in Jammu and Kashmir. He directed the concerned officers to formulate a proactive roadmap to ensure the successful and timely implementation of RDSS in the district.

The Minister further emphasized that no payments should be released without thorough physical verification of all ongoing and completed works. He

instructed the officers to conduct regular on-ground inspections to verify quality, progress and adherence to approved specifications, reiterating that financial disbursements must be strictly linked to verification reports.

Additionally, the Minister reviewed the progress of J&K Green Drives being implemented by the Poonch Forest Division. He reiterated that any bottlenecks hampering the execution of projects and schemes must be resolved immediately to avoid inconvenience to the public.

Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner presented a detailed scheme-wise overview of the physical and financial progress of developmental works being executed in the district. He informed the meeting

that under the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), 151 works are underway in Haveli, 17 in Mendhar and 67 in Surankote constituencies.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), the Deputy Commissioner stated that 19 works have been allotted in Mendhar, while 23 works have been allotted in Poonch. He further apprised that under the Public Works Department (PWD), 225 works have been approved in Poonch, 18 in Surankote and 742 in Mendhar.

Providing an update on rural development initiatives, he informed that under the Rural Development Department (RDD), a total of 3,280 works have been tendered, of which 2,842 works have been allotted. He also shared details of works being executed under the Irrigation & Flood Control Department, Ground Water Division, Border Area Development Programme and other schemes, assuring that concerted efforts are being made to expedite their completion.

The Deputy Commissioner also briefed the meeting on implementation of Tribal Welfare Schemes in District Poonch. He informed that under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, 317 works have been allotted and are currently at different stages of completion.

He further highlighted the welfare initiatives being implemented under schemes such as SCA to TSS, PMAAGY and DAJGUA.

Secretary transport inspects weighbridge operations in Sonamarg



KT News Desk

GANDERBAL, DECEMBER 26: Secretary, Transport Department, Avny Lavasa, Friday visited Sonamarg to take stock of the functioning and facilities at the Weighbridge here.

The Secretary, as per an official statement, was accompanied by the Regional Transport Officer (RTO) Kashmir, Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) Ganderbal and other concerned officers and officials.

During the visit, the Secretary assessed the operational status of the weighbridge, availability of manpower and adequacy of infrastructure. She stressed the importance of strict enforcement of axle load norms to curb overloading, ensure

smooth traffic regulation, enhance road safety and protect road infrastructure.

The Secretary directed the officers to ensure transparency in weighbridge operations, improve inter-departmental coordination and maintain round-the-clock functionality of the facility, especially during peak tourist influx and high-traffic periods.

She also interacted with the staff on duty and took stock of the challenges faced in routine operations, emphasizing timely redressal of issues to improve efficiency and public service delivery. The visit was aimed at strengthening the transport enforcement mechanisms and ensuring effective regulation of vehicular movement in Sonamarg area.

District Administration Shopian observes Veer Bal Diwas

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, DECEMBER 26: Veer Bal Diwas programme was held Friday at the Mini Secretariat, Shopian, in alignment with the national-level event organised in New Delhi by the District Administration involving Departments including Social Welfare, Education, Health and others.

The programme, as per an official statement, was presided over by the Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC), Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone and was attended by officers and officials from various departments including Education, Health, Rural

Development, Panchayati Raj, Social Welfare, Agriculture, Youth Services & Sports, Skill Development, and other allied departments.

Women Self-Help Groups, health functionaries, Anganwadi Workers, ASHA workers, children, public and other stakeholders also participated.

The national programme was screened live enabling all officers and officials present to participate collectively in the event.

While addressing the gathering, the ADDC stated that Veer Bal Diwas highlights the importance of nurturing values such as courage, discipline and moral strength.

CEO J&K conducts quarterly inspection of EVM-VVPAT warehouse in Samba

KT News Desk

SAMBA, DECEMBER 26: Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Jammu & Kashmir, Sanjeev Verma, Friday conducted the mandatory quarterly inspection of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) warehouse of Samba district at the District Administrative Complex, here.

The inspection, as per an official statement, was conducted jointly by Deputy Commissioner Samba, Ayushi Sudan, along with Nodal Officer for EVM, J&K, Sandesh Kumar Gupta and Deputy District Election Officer, Sunil Angral. Representatives of recognized political parties were also present during the inspection, in accordance with prescribed electoral procedures.

During the inspection, the officers carried out a comprehensive review of the security arrangements including verification of EVM and VVPAT storage boxes, physical condition



of the machines and sealing of warehouse doors. All protocols related to access control and record maintenance were thoroughly examined.

The quarterly inspection of EVM/VVPAT warehouses is a routine and mandatory exercise being conducted under the guidelines of the Election Commission of India. The process was carried out in presence of political party representatives during the opening and closing of the warehouse to ensure complete transparency, accountability and strict adherence to electoral norms.

Minister Satish Sharma joins Christmas celebrations in Jammu

KT News Desk

JAMMU, DECEMBER 26: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), Information Technology, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, joined the Christian community in celebrating the festival of Christmas at various locations across Jammu, including Birpur, Garrison Church, Gandhinagar and Kunjwani.

The Minister, as per an official statement, conveyed warm greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion. He said that Christmas is not merely a religious festival but a celebration of universal values such as love, peace, sacrifice and service to humanity.

Highlighting Jammu and Kashmir's age-old tradition of unity in diversity, the Minister said that the region has always been a shining example of peaceful coexistence among different faiths and cultures. He called upon



all sections of society to work together to further strengthen the bonds of brotherhood, tolerance and mutual respect in order to build a harmonious and progressive Jammu and Kashmir.

"True development is possible only when communities live in peace and solidarity. Festivals like Christmas remind us that humanity, compassion and empathy must guide our collective journey," Satish Sharma remarked.

Recalling the visionary and transformative role of Jesus Christ, the Minister said that His teachings of love, forgiveness and selfless service have left an indelible mark on human civilisation and continue to inspire people across the world. He urged the citizens, particularly the youth, to follow these ideals and contribute positively to society.

The Minister also interacted with the members of the Christian community and local residents, appreciating their contribution in nurturing a spirit of harmony and social responsibility. He assured them of the government's continued commitment towards safeguarding the rights, dignity and cultural heritage of every community.

The celebrations at the churches were marked by special prayers, hymns and messages of goodwill, creating an atmosphere of joy, unity and spiritual reflection.

JKTPO organises export awareness, E-commerce drive in Baramulla

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, DECEMBER 26: Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) successfully organized an Export Awareness-cum-E-Commerce Onboarding drive in Baramulla.

The workshop was conducted in collaboration with the District Administration Baramulla, the ODOF Team, DPIIT, APEDA, and the Government e-Marketplace (GeM).

The primary objective of the workshop, as per an official statement, was to empower local MSMEs, artisans, SHGs, FPOs, and entrepreneurs by equipping them with comprehensive knowledge on export-related schemes, procedures, and the benefits of digital commerce platforms. The event aimed to connect local producers and artisans with national and international markets through digital platforms and to get well acquainted with the different schemes of the Centre and State Governments.

The programme was attended by the Assistant Director, Handicrafts Baramulla, along with officers from various line departments.



At the outset, a representative of JKTPO highlighted the pivotal role of JKTPO in organizing district-level outreach programmes to promote ODOP and facilitate seller's onboarding on e-commerce platforms.

Senior Consultant from GeM, briefed the participants on the functioning of the GeM portal, documentation requirements for registration, and the benefits available to sellers upon onboarding.

Likewise, Business Development Consultant, APEDA, provided valuable insights into APEDA's role in promoting agricultural exports and explained the registration process and documentation requirements.

ITS, Assistant Director General

of Foreign Trade (DGFT), joined the session virtually and elaborated on foreign trade policies, and the procedure for obtaining the Import Export Code (IEC). The participants were explained the role of Credit Guarantee Bank for exporters after conceiving the order from the overseas buyers by providing the insurance guarantee to the consignment.

More than 110 artisans, exporters, and FPO representatives from Baramulla district participated in the workshop. The event witnessed enthusiastic engagement, with participants actively interacting during the sessions and expressing keen interest in onboarding their products on the GeM platform.

Director Estates inspects office, residential facilities in Srinagar

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 26: Director Estates, Kashmir, Ashwani Khajuria conducted an extensive inspection and review of office and residential accommodations and allied facilities at multiple locations in Srinagar, including Civil Secretariat, Assembly Complex, Old Secretariat Complex and Tulsibagh and Jawahar Nagar residential quarters. During the inspection, the Director was accompanied by senior officers of department including FA/CAO, Deputy Director Estates, Deputy Director(P) and Assistant Director Estates, along with other officers.

At the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar, the Director, as per an official statement, took comprehensive tour of various blocks, reviewing ongoing renovation, upgradation, cleaning, fumigation and sanitation works. He impressed upon the concerned officers and executing agencies to ensure their time-bound completion so that officers and officials do not face any inconvenience regarding office accommodation and related facilities.

He inspected different offices,



enquired about the pace and quality of works and stressed that all amenities for Civil Secretariat employees must be kept in a functional, clean and employee-friendly condition.

The Director also enquired about the proposed additional block being constructed within the Secretariat premises and instructed the executing agency to submit the Detailed Project Report (DPR) of the proposed building at the earliest so that work on the new block can be started as soon as possible to augment office accommodation.

During the visit, the Director

also held a comprehensive meeting with accompanying officers and took stock of all office and residential accommodations being provided by the Department. He also reviewed issues and requirements projected by different sections.

The Director also visited the Assembly Complex and Old Secretariat Complex, where he took stock of all office accommodations and issued instructions for their proper upkeep, timely repairs and optimal utilization in the interest of government functioning.

In the meanwhile, the Director

also undertook a detailed inspection of residential accommodations at Tulsibagh, Jawahar Nagar, where he reviewed the ongoing repair and renovation works and physically checked various quarters to assess the condition of facilities and the progress on maintenance activities.

He directed the field functionaries to closely monitor all renovation and sanitation works across these locations and promptly address bottlenecks. He also asked them to ensure clean, safe and conducive environment for officers, officials and their families.

Delhi govt plans to revive real-time pollution study with focus on PM10 sources

PTI

New Delhi, Dec 26: The Delhi government is planning to revive its stalled real-time source apportionment study, nearly two years after it was discontinued, with a renewed focus on identifying contributors to PM10 pollution rather than PM2.5, officials said.

An earlier study, conducted by IIT Kanpur for over two years, was halted in November 2023 after the government expressed dissatisfaction with the data and methodology.

The study analysed real-time sources contributing to Delhi's PM2.5 load.

Officials now say that since the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, already provides estimates of PM2.5 source contributions through its Decision Support System (DSS), the government wants to focus on PM10 pollution.

According to officials familiar with the matter, an analysis of CPCB data shows that PM10 has frequently emerged as the dominant pollutant on several winter days.

While road and construction dust are known contributors to PM10, authorities believe



a detailed, real-time assessment is needed to pinpoint specific sources and design targeted interventions. A meeting to discuss the revival of the study is scheduled at the Delhi Secretariat on January 1 at 3 pm.

Officials said the move would help the government

formulate long-term strategies to address both PM2.5 and PM10 pollution.

Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa said reviving the study would help assess the factors behind rising PM10 levels and evaluate such mitigation measures as water misting systems, anti-smog

guns, and mechanised road sweeping.

"This approach will allow us to understand the impact of various interventions and use technology to respond more effectively to pollution challenges in Delhi," Sirsa said.

The real-time source apportionment facility, known as

the super-site, was set up near Rouse Avenue and operated by IIT Kanpur until November 2023, when a memorandum of understanding with the Delhi government expired.

The government decided not to extend the arrangement, citing concerns over the institute's methodology.

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) later took over the infrastructure but has so far been unable to restart the study and has been searching for a new expert agency.

The super-site had begun generating real-time data for the government in November 2022, with public access made available from January 2023 after its inauguration by the then chief minister.

The project had earlier been mired in controversy, with the previous AAP government alleging in October 2023 that the study was stopped due to objections raised by the then DPCC chairman over the data's reliability and pending payments to IIT Kanpur.

Although the study briefly resumed in early November 2023 following Supreme Court directions, it ceased operations again once IIT Kanpur's contract ended later that month.

Trend of sexually exploiting women by making false promise must be curbed: Allahabad HC

PTI

Prayagraj, Dec 26: The Allahabad High Court has observed in an order that the trend of sexually exploiting women by making false promises of marriage and later refusing to marry them is increasing in society and it must be curbed at the outset.

While making this observation, the Allahabad High Court rejected the anticipatory bail petition of a person accused under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), including section 69 (sexual intercourse by deceit, etc.).

Rejecting the anticipatory bail application of one Prashant Pal, Justice Nalin Kumar Srivastava observed, "In the present case, the facts reveal that the accused applicant had a fraudulent intention towards the victim from the very beginning. He had no intention of marrying the victim from the outset."

The court expressed grave concern over the nature of the crime, terming it "serious against society".

Rejecting the defence of a consensual relationship, the court observed, "He repeatedly had physical relations with the victim on the false promise of marriage. Exploiting the victim

under the pretext of marriage and ultimately refusing to marry her are tendencies that are increasing in society and must be curbed at the outset."

"This is a serious offence against society, and therefore, the applicant is not entitled to any leniency," the court said.

The court further noted that although the victim was an adult and aware of the consequences of her actions with the accused, she placed complete trust and faith in him.

According to the facts of the case, the accused applicant was alleged to have had physical relations with the victim on the false promise of marriage and subjected her to physical and mental torture. Despite a five-year relationship, the accused later refused to marry her and got engaged to another woman.

Subsequently, the applicant filed a petition in the high court seeking protection from arrest.

The state counsel opposed the petition, arguing that the accused applicant had maintained sexual relations with the victim for five years under the false pretext of marriage.

It was also submitted that the medical examination corroborated the victim's statement of sexual assault and that the accused was also threatening the victim with obscene videos.

Study suggests ADHD medicines work by improving alertness, interest, rather than ability to focus

PTI

New Delhi, Dec 26: Prescription medicines used to treat ADHD may be working by making one more alert and interested in tasks, rather than directly improving their ability to focus as was previously thought, a new study has found.

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is a neurodevelopmental condition, marked by short attention spans and restless, impulsive behaviour.

Stimulant drugs -- available in India under market names such as Addwise -- prescribed by a psychiatrist as treatment are thought to work by increasing levels of chemicals in the brain including norepinephrine and dopamine, thereby improving focus and control on impulses.

Researchers, including those from Washington University, US, analysed functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) scans from nearly 5,800 children aged 8 to 11, showing brain activity when they were

not engaged in a task.

Results published in the journal Cell show for the first time that stimulant medicines act primarily on the brain regions important for reward and wakefulness, rather than those responsible for attention, the team said.

The medications were also found to produce brain activity that mimicked effects of a good sleep, negating those due to sleep deprivation -- children with ADHD are known to suffer from sleep disruption, such as difficulty falling asleep and restless sleep.

"Essentially, we found that stimulants pre-reward our brains and allow us to keep working at things that wouldn't normally hold our interest -- like our least favourite class in school, for example," co-lead researcher Nico U. Dosenbach, professor of neurology at Washington University's school of medicine, said.

Co-lead researcher Benjamin Kay, a paediatric neurologist and assistant professor at

Washington University's school of medicine, said, "I prescribe a lot of stimulants as a child neurologist, and I've always been taught that they facilitate attention systems to give people more voluntary control over what they pay attention to."

"But we've shown that's not the case. Rather, the improvement we observe in attention is a secondary effect of a child being more alert and finding a task more rewarding, which naturally helps them pay more attention to it," Kay said.

Kay added that the study's findings point to the importance of addressing inadequate sleep in addition to considering stimulant medication for children being evaluated for ADHD.

The study compared patterns of brain connectivity between children who took prescription stimulants and those who did not on the day of their scan. The participants are part of a larger Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) study, which is tracking more than 11,000 children across the US.

"Taking stimulants reversed the effects of sleep deprivation on connectivity and school grades. Connectivity was also changed in salience and parietal memory networks, which are important for dopamine-mediated, reward-motivated learning, but not the brain's attention systems," the authors wrote.

Compared with children having ADHD who did not take a stimulant, children with ADHD who took a stimulant medication were found to have better grades in school (reported by parents) and performed better on cognitive tests taken as part of the study.

Children with more severe ADHD showed the greatest gains in cognitive outcomes associated with taking prescription stimulants, the researchers said.

However, stimulant medications were not associated with cognitive gains in all children taking them -- taking the drugs did not correspond with an improved performance for neurotypical kids who got sufficient sleep, the team said.

Congress pays tribute to former PM Manmohan Singh on death anniversary

PTI

New Delhi, Dec 26: Congress leaders on Friday paid tributes to former prime minister Manmohan Singh on his first death anniversary, saying his humility, honesty, and legacy would continue to inspire future generations.

Describing Singh as a transformative leader, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said he reshaped the country's economic path and expanded opportunities for millions through economic reforms and lifted millions out of poverty.

"Known for his humility, integrity, and wisdom, he led with dignity and compassion, ensuring that progress remained inclusive and welfare reached those most in need. The rights-based paradigm is a testament to that approach. We had built a stronger India under his vision," he said.

"We pay our heartfelt tribute to a statesman whose legacy of honest public service and lasting reforms shall continue to inspire generations," the Congress chief said in a post on X.



Former party president Rahul Gandhi hailed him as a champion of the underprivileged.

"Through his visionary leadership, he empowered India economically. His historic efforts and bold decisions for the underprivileged and poor gave India a new identity on the world stage," Gandhi said.

"His humility, hard work, and honesty will always be an inspiration to all of us," he said.

The Congress said on X, "We remember a statesman of integrity, humility, and vision." "His leadership strengthened India's economy and democracy. Tributes to the Prime Minister who served the nation selflessly

and with determination."

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said the former Union finance minister was dedicated to bringing the nation out of poverty.

"Manmohan Singh ji was a strong believer in equality, a strong, courageous, and dignified figure, truly dedicated to the nation's progress. His simplicity, honesty, and dedication to his country will always inspire us all," she said.

Congress leaders, including Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, paid floral tributes before the photograph of the former prime minister at Akbar Road and Indira Bhawan headquarters of the party.

Separately, Congress leaders and Gursharan Kaur, Manmohan Singh's wife, attended a prayer meeting at Gurdwara Bangla Sahib in the national capital in the evening.

Singh, who served as prime minister from 2004 to 2014, died last year at the age of 92.

He served as finance minister in the Narasimha Rao government and was credited with ushering in a comprehensive policy of economic reforms.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Pahalgam attack

also said that under PM Modi's vision of zero-tolerance against terrorism, the anti-terror annual conference has become a platform to deal with emerging threats. "In the last 3 years, we have moved forward in the direction of making this conference an annual tradition. This conference is not merely a forum for discussion, but actionable points emerge here, and the NIA along with all related agencies of the states continuously work throughout the year towards their implementation. As a result, we are succeeding in building a strong anti-terrorism grid across the country," he said.

He added that the objective of this conference is also to analyse all terrorist incidents that occurred in the country and the world in the past year, along with the intelligence received about them, and to enhance counter-terrorism capabilities accordingly.

He mentioned that the landscape of terrorism in the world is now changing due to the use of technology in terrorist incidents alongside technological advancements, and "we too must prepare to prevent this". "It is the national responsibility of this conference to anticipate invisible future challenges and to prevent them".

He also said that they have established a new standard of coordination, cooperation, and communication among the DGP Conference, Security Strategy Conference, N-CORD meetings, and the Anti-Terror Conference. "We cannot view these four pillars in isolation; running through them as a common thread is the Anti-Terrorism Conference".

He said that for cyber and information warfare, the misuse of economic networks, and the hybrid format of terrorism, a robust mechanism must be developed as a national grid-one that is vigilant and capable of swift, result-oriented action-and this can only be achieved through such conferences.

The Home Minister further said that they must move forward with trial-in-absentia without fear of the controversies associated with it. "This will force fugitives to return to the country. All agencies of the Government of India, together with the state police, should

form a 'Team India' that works effectively for national security".

He reiterated that as India progresses forward, their challenges will continue to grow. "In such a scenario, it is the responsibility of all of us to build a strong anti-terrorism grid for the country and for the coming generations of officers, so that they can firmly confront the challenges ahead," he said. (KNO)

PM Modi ensured

The Lieutenant Governor stated that, the Sikh tradition, imbued with devotion, valor, and glory, truly synthesizes the invaluable spirit of "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat".

"The path of righteousness paved by the Sikh Gurus serves as the foundational strength for modern India's inclusive development. Their legacy continues to empower those on the frontlines of nation-building," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also remembered the martyrdom of Baba Moti Ram Mehra and his family, calling their sacrifice a testament to human spirit and loyalty.

The members of All Jammu Kashmir Sikh Coordination Committee expressed gratitude to the Lieutenant Governor for fulfilling the long-pending demands of the Sikh Community.

Ajit Singh, Chairman, All Jammu Kashmir Sikh Coordination Committee projected a demand to rename "Veer Baal Diwas" to "Sahibzade Shahadat Diwas". The Lieutenant Governor assured the committee that the memorandum of demand would be forwarded to the Government of India.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor also felicitated a newly married Sikh couple who had their marriage registered under the Anand Marriage Act in the Union Territory.

Mahant Manjeet Singh; S. Ajit Singh, Chairman All Jammu Kashmir Sikh Coordination committee; members of Sikh Coordination Committee and eminent persons of the Sikh community were present.

Dr. Narinder Singh Raina, Member of Legislative Assembly from RSPurajammuSouth; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; Bhim Sen Tuti, IGP Jammu; Shiv Kumar Sharma, DIG Jammu-Samba-Kathua Range; Dr

Rakesh Minhas, Deputy Commissioner Jammu; senior officials of Police and Civil administration were also present on the occasion.

The event Vishesh Shaheedi Samagam 'Safar-E-Shahadat', was organised by All Jammu Kashmir Sikh Coordination Committee, at Gurdwara Digiana Ashram. (KNO)

5-year clock

cases where common elections are held to all tiers of the Panchayats simultaneously so that all tiers have co-extensive terms in the district.

On October 16, 2020, the Union Government amended the Jammu & Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act, 1989 to provide for the setting up of District Development Councils. The law was amended through an executive order by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), invoking the powers vested in it under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.

Each DDC comprises 14 elected members. With J&K having 20 districts, the total strength of elected DDC members is 280. In the first-ever DDC elections held in November-December 2020, the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) won 110 seats, while the BJP emerged as the single largest party with 75 seats. (KNO)

Minimum temperatures

and Bhaderwah improved to 2.6°C from minus 0.3°C. Ramban recorded 0.1°C, down from 4.2°C.

In Ladakh, Leh recorded minus 9.8°C, slightly higher than minus 10.2°C on Thursday. Kargil was minus 9.3°C, up from minus 9.8°C, while Nubra Valley recorded minus 6.7°C, warmer than minus 8.3°C the previous night.

Weather experts said sub-zero nights are likely to continue in higher reaches despite the marginal rise in temperatures.

A spell of light snow is expected in the higher reaches of Jammu and Kashmir, accompanied by light rain at scattered in many places across the region on December 31 and January 1, after that weather is likely to improve gradually. (KNO)

Reservation storm

through a post on X (formerly Twitter) that the Cabinet sub-committee had drafted its report and would soon submit it to the Cabinet. Seven days later, the Cabinet decided to refer the report to the Law Department for examination.

MP links electoral support with reservation report

Ahead of the deadline for filing nominations for the Budgam by-polls, MP Aga Ruhullah Mehdi linked his support for the National Conference in the by-polls to the CSC report.

On October 18, 2025, Ruhullah demanded that the report be made public and shared with stakeholders by the next day, stating that his future course of action would be guided by its contents. With Omar Abdullah adamant about not disclosing the CSC recommendations, Ruhullah stayed away from campaigning, leading to the NC's defeat in Budgam.

Cabinet recommends rationalisation of reservation

On December 3, 2025, the Cabinet recommended reducing the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and Reserved Backward Area (RBA) quotas to increase the share of Open Merit (OM) by 10 percent.

All eyes are now on the fate of the cabinet's recommendations, with fresh job advertisements sparking outrage among OM candidates. (KNO)

2025 toughest year

units be regulated strictly and urged authorities to establish 200-300 additional CA and cold storage facilities across the Valley.

KVFG also reminded CA store owners to adhere to the 2024 decision allowing growers to use their own packaging material (bardanna) if they wish.

No compensation despite massive losses

One of the strongest grievances raised by the growers is the "complete absence" of compensation from the government despite losses running into thousands of crores, Basheer alleged, adding that the industry suffered Rs 2,000

crore losses.

Basheer added, "The KVFG had time to time placed a detailed charter of demands before the government, including immediate Rs 2,000 crore relief package for affected growers, introduction of a crop insurance scheme for horticulture, Revival and strengthening of the Market Intervention Scheme (MIS), especially for Grade B and C produce, Declaration of Mughal Road as a National Highway and construction of additional alternative routes, waiver of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loans and interest exemption on farmer loans, Abolition of municipal chungi on fruit transportation, Establishment of fully equipped fruit mandis, Standardisation of packaging (bardanna) and Strict quality control on pesticides and fertilizers and a ban on artificial colouring chemicals."

We had also called for effective quarantine measures for high-density plantation rootstock to prevent the entry of infected plants into the Valley, he added.

Horticulture expansion continues despite challenges

Interestingly, despite the mounting challenges, the shift from traditional agriculture to horticulture continues unabated in Jammu and Kashmir.

According to officials, around 1,000 hectares have already been brought under high-density orchards, and the government plans to bring an additional 5,500 hectares under such plantations in the coming years.

"This shows people's faith in horticulture as a livelihood option. But unless infrastructure, insurance and market support improve, this expansion could expose farmers to even greater risks," growers warned.

Industry at breaking point

Growers said the fruit economy—which employs lakhs of people directly and indirectly and forms the backbone of Jammu and Kashmir's rural livelihood—is at a breaking point.

"If urgent corrective measures are not taken now, the damage will not be limited to one season. It could permanently weaken the horticulture sector," they said, urging the government to act without further delay. (KNO)

Indian Railways plans to double train capacity in major cities in next 5 years

PIB

New Delhi, Dec 26: In view of the rapid sustained growth in demand for travel, the capacity of major cities to originate new trains needs to be doubled from the current level in the next 5 years. The current infrastructure serving needs to be augmented so as to meet the requirements of upcoming years. The works for doubling the originating capacity by the year 2030 would include the following actions:

- i. Augmenting the current terminals with additional platforms, stabling lines, pit lines, and adequate shunting facilities.
- ii. Identifying and creating new terminals in and around the urban area.
- iii. Maintenance facilities, including mega coaching complexes.
- iv. Increasing the sectional capacity with traffic facility works, signaling upgradation, and multitracking required for handling increased trains at

SN	Name of City	SN	Name of City
1	Delhi	25.	Jammu
2	Mumbai (CR, WR)	26.	Jodhpur
3	Kolkata (ER, SER, Kolkata Metro)	27.	Jaipur
4	Chennai	28.	Vadodara
5	Hyderabad	29.	Surat
6	Bangalore	30.	Madgaon
7	Amdavad	31.	Cochin
8	Patna	32.	Puri
9	Lucknow (NR, NER)	33.	Bhubaneswar
10	Pune	34.	Vishakhapatnam
11	Nagpur (CR, SECR)	35.	Vijaywada
12	Varanasi (NR, NER)	36.	Tirupati
13	Kanpur	37.	Haridwar
14	Gorakhpur	38.	Guwahati
15	Mathura	39.	Bhagalpur
16	Ayodhya	40.	Muzaffarpur
17	Agra	41.	Darbhanga
18	Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyay Jn	42.	Gaya
19	Chandigarh	43.	Mysore
20	Ludhiana	44.	Coimbatore
21	Amritsar	45.	Tatanagar
22	Indore	46.	Ranchi
23	Bhopal	47.	Raipur
24	Ujjain	48.	Bareilly

various points.

While planning for increasing capacity of terminals, stations around terminals will also be considered so that capacity is evenly balanced. For example, for Pune, Hadapsar, Khadki, and Alandi have been considered for increasing capacity along with increasing platforms and stabling lines at Pune station.

The above exercise will be done for both suburban as well as non-suburban traffic, keeping in view the distinct requirements of both segments. A comprehensive plan of the 48 major cities is under consideration (List attached). The plan will include the works planned, proposed, or already sanctioned to achieve the goal of doubling the capacity of handling trains in a time-bound manner.

While the plan to double the capacity is by 2030, it is expected that capacity will be increased progressively in the next 5 years so that the benefits of capacity addition can be reaped immediately. This

will help in meeting the traffic requirement progressively over the years. The plan will classify actions under three categories, i.e., immediate, short-term, and long-term. The proposed plans will be specific, with clear timelines and defined outcomes. While this exercise focuses on specific stations, each Zonal Railway has been asked to plan to increase train handling capacity across their divisions, ensuring that not only terminal capacity is enhanced but also sectional capacity and operational constraints at stations and yards are effectively addressed.

Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union Minister of Railways, Information & Broadcasting, and Electronics & Information Technology, said, "We're expanding coaching terminals, enhancing sectional and operational capacities in various cities to meet rising passenger demand and reduce congestion. This move will upgrade our railway network and improve nationwide connectivity."

Unremitting hostilities against minorities in Bangladesh matter of grave concern: India



PTI

New Delhi, Dec 26: India on Friday said the "unremitting hostilities" against minorities in Bangladesh is a matter of grave concern even as it reiterated that the upcoming parliamentary polls in that country must be free, fair and inclusive.

New Delhi also reacted cautiously to the homecoming of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) acting chairman Tarique Rahman saying it should be seen in the context of ensuring inclusive polls. External Affairs Ministry

spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India condemns the recent killing of Hindu youth, Dipu Chandra Das, in Bangladesh's Mymensingh.

Hindu man lynched to death in Bangladesh over alleged blasphemy "The unremitting hostilities against the minorities in Bangladesh including Hindus, Christians and Buddhists is a matter of grave concern. We condemn the recent killing of a Hindu youth in Bangladesh and expect that the perpetrators of the crime will be brought to justice," he said at his

weekly media briefing. Mr. Jaiswal said India is closely following the developments in Bangladesh. India conveys concern to U.S. over cancellation of H1B visa interviews Over 2,900 incidents of violence against minorities have been documented in Bangladesh by independent sources during the tenure of interim government, he noted. "The incidents of violence against minorities in Bangladesh cannot be brushed aside as media exaggeration or dismissed as political violence," Mr. Jaiswal said.

Markets open lower as FPIs continue selling

Sensex down 183 points, Nifty dips below 26,100

PTI

Mumbai, Dec 26: Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty declined in early trade on Friday amid foreign fund outflows as sentiment remained fragile amid low trading volumes and lack of any major domestic cues.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 183.42 points to 85,225.28 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty dipped 46.45 points to 26,095.65.

From the 30-Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance, Sun Pharma, Eternal, Tata Steel, Tata Consultancy Services, and Bharti Airtel were among the biggest laggards.

Bharat Electronics, Titan, Infosys, and UltraTech Cement were among the gainers.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi and Japan's Nikkei 225 index traded in positive territory while Shanghai's SSE Composite index quoted lower.

US markets were closed on

Thursday for Christmas.

The domestic stock markets were closed on Thursday on account of Christmas.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,721.26 crore on Wednesday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth Rs 2,381.34 crore, according to exchange data.

"In the absence of fresh triggers like a US-India trade deal, the market is likely to consolidate around the present levels," V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, climbed 0.11 per cent up to USD 62.31 per barrel.

"Sentiment remains fragile amid low holiday volumes, FII selling of Rs 1,721 crore and lack of strong domestic cues, keeping markets range-bound and volatile," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

Delhi HC asks Centre why GST on air purifiers can't be lowered

PTI

New Delhi, Dec 26: The Delhi High Court on Friday asked the Centre why it cannot reduce the GST charged on air purifiers to make it affordable for the common man in view of the worsening air quality in the national capital and nearby areas.

The court's query came after the counsel for the Centre submitted that the GST Council is a constitutional body and it is no longer a unilateral levy of Delhi. It is a federal levy in all over India so all 30 states and union territories have to agree and involves union finance minister as its member.

Additional Solicitor General N Venkataraman, representing the Centre, said voting has to be done physically and it cannot be done through video conferencing and added that the government will file an extremely detailed counter affidavit in the matter.

A vacation bench of Justices Vikas Mahajan and Vinod Kumar granted 10 days' time to the central government to file its reply to the petition and listed the



matter for further hearing on January 9.

"But the court's concern was that, having regard to the situation in Delhi and surrounding areas, why the goods and services tax (GST) should not be reduced from 18 percent to 5 percent.

"Whatever way you want to do you, may do that and find a way out. The price range is

starting from Rs 10-12,000 and goes up to Rs 60,000, it is beyond the reach of common man. Why not bring it down to a reasonable level which is in the reach of a common man," the bench said.

The court was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking directions to the central government to classify air purifiers as "medical devices" and reduce the goods and

services tax (GST) to the five per cent slab. Air purifiers are currently taxed at 18 per cent.

The petition by advocate Kapil Madan said purifiers cannot be treated as luxury items in view of the "extreme emergency crisis" caused by severe air pollution in Delhi.

During the hearing, the bench told the petitioner that in the last hearing also, the court was with him because the issue raised is such that "everybody is concerned".

Agreeing to this, the ASG said, "certainly milords our hearts are there, no doubt".

He said this matter was deliberated at the highest level involving the finance minister and they had an urgent meeting on Thursday but have some concerns with this writ petition.

The law officer said if the petitioner wants this petition to be treated as a representation by the GST Council through the secretariat, the court may pass an order today itself.

If the petitioner wants to contest the petition, we want to file an extremely detailed counter

affidavit. It's a loaded petition and we really want to know who is behind it, he added.

"Two prayers have nothing to do with GST. Health Ministry is not a party to the petition and a prayer is sought regarding it....

"Somebody wants a monopoly in air purifiers, we don't know. We are really concerned about it. Only on December 12, 2025, the parliamentary standing committee passed the proposal to look into the matter of GST but MoEF is not a party. Standing committee is a constitutional arm under the legislature and there is a process involved and how can the process be scuttled," the ASG submitted.

He urged the court to grant some time to file a counter affidavit as they were not able to react in two days' time.

Petitioner Madan said "Maybe the counsel appearing for the Centre has not seen the notification by which slabs have been imposed... I will say that on bare reading of notification, I will convince the court that they are taxing air purifiers in the wrong slab".

Air pollution India's biggest health crisis since Covid, warn doctors

PTI

New Delhi, Dec 26: Air pollution is arguably the biggest public health crisis India has faced since the pandemic and will continue to worsen each year unless urgent action is taken, a UK-based Indian-origin pulmonologist warned, noting that a looming tsunami of airway disease remains largely underdiagnosed and untreated.

Speaking to PTI, multiple senior doctors practising in the UK asserted that a vast, hidden burden of undiagnosed airway disease is "building beneath the surface" and its incoming wave will exact a heavy, lasting toll on Indian citizens and its healthcare system. They linked the global rise in cardiovascular diseases over the past decade to increasing exposure to toxic emissions from urban transport, including automobiles and aircraft, particularly in cities across India, the UK and beyond, rather than obesity alone.

Union transport minister Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday admitted that nearly 40 per cent of the pollution in Delhi is caused by the transport sector due to dependence on fossil fuels, while emphasising the urgent need for cleaner alternatives, and pushing for the adoption of biofuels.



During the recently concluded winter session of Parliament, the government said that there is no conclusive data establishing a direct correlation between higher Air Quality Index (AQI) levels and lung diseases, despite acknowledging that air pollution is one of the triggering factors for respiratory ailments and associated diseases.

"The Indian government's renewed focus on controlling air pollution is necessary and overdue. However, it is time to confront an uncomfortable truth: for millions living in North India, the damage has already been done. What is currently being managed represents only the tip of

the iceberg. A vast, hidden burden of undiagnosed airway disease is building beneath the surface," Consultant Pulmonologist in Liverpool and a former Covid-19 Advisory Committee Member of India's Health, Manish Gautam, told PTI.

He cautioned that years of exposure mean that a lung health emergency is unfolding, while urging the policymakers to focus on early detection and treatment of airway diseases, and consider establishing a rapid "lung health task group".

In December, Delhi hospitals alone witnessed 20 to 30 per cent spike in respiratory patients, including many first-time cases and

young adults, according to doctors.

Gautam, who holds over 20 years of experience at the UK's National Health Service, further noted that while pollution control and prevention measures remain critical, they are no longer sufficient on their own.

"India has shown before that large-scale public health interventions are possible. Government initiatives have significantly reduced the impact of tuberculosis through early diagnosis, and structured treatment programmes. A similar level of urgency and investment is now required for airway diseases," the Liverpool-based Pulmonologist told PTI.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FISHERIES, DISTRICT BANDIPORA

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Applications are invited from unemployed youth/interested persons of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, who intend to establish Fish Kiosk's, providing Boat and Net to traditional Fishermen, three-wheelers/E-rickshaw with ice box for fish vending and livelihood/Nutritional support @ Rs 3000/- to Fisherman under "Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana" (PMMSY) for the financial year 2025-26. The details of units as per the District wise targets communicated by the Director Fisheries vide letter No:-DOF-PLG/2025-26/ (E-7579127) are as under:-

S.N	Component of the scheme	Total units	No of	Category	Unit cost (Rs in lacs)	Subsidy %age (40%)
01	Providing Boats (replacement) & nets for traditional Fishermen	03		General	5.00	2.00
02	Construction of Fish Kiosks including kiosks of aqua ornamental fish	02		General	10.00	4.00
03	Three wheeler with ice Box including e-rickshaws for fish vending.	05		General	3.00	1.20
04	Livelihood and Nutritional Support to Fishermen	1200		General	4500	3000

Terms and Conditions:-

- The applicant should be a Domicile of Jammu & Kashmir (UT).
- The applicants will have to submit Detailed Project Report (DPR) in respect of S.No. 02 with full justification & technical economical details, including capital cost and the recurring cost, specific time lines for implementation of project etc.
- The applicants will have to provide documentary evidence in respect of S.No. 02 only of availability of requisite land (either own/registered lease document) free from encroachments and encumbrances, sources of finance like Banks consent to provide loan towards the Non-subsidy portion of the project cost or declaration by the beneficiary for own investing , necessary clearances permissions etc.
- The applicant/s in respect of S.No. 03 should have the Valid Driving License and the applicant should be the license holder of the department of Fisheries for at-least 05 years besides, actively dealing in Fish trade/vending.
- In respect of S.No.01, a group of 04 Fishermen or active members of the registered Fishermen Cooperative Society having valid Fishing license for at-least five years can apply.
- The beneficiary should not have availed the same benefit under any scheme by any agency/department.
- The short listing of the applicants/Groups with respect to feasibility/eligibility shall be carried out by the District Level Committee .
- The Final Selection of the intended sites shall be the domain of District Level Committee framed vide Govt; Order No. 944-JK(GAD) of 2020 dated:-15-10-2020 and shall be guided by the necessary orders/guidelines/clarifications issued in this regard from time to time.
- The last date for submission of application is 31.12.2025 upto 12.00 Noon.

Further details/guidelines of the schemes can be had from the office of the Assistant Director Fisheries Bandipora Block C, floor 3rd Mini Sect. Bandipora and Mr. Anam ul Haq Wani, Extension Wing Bandipora bearing contact No:- 7006537992. Also, Feel free to Visit on any working day:-Inspector Fisheries Office Sumbal (Tehsil premises Sumbal) and Watch and Ward hut at Laherwalpora

No:-ADF/Bpr/25/ 3483

Dated:- 24/12/2025

DIPK-9332/25
DATED: 26-12-2025

Sd/
Assistant Director Fisheries
District Bandipora

Vaibhav Suryavanshi receives Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar from President Murmu

BCCI congratulates IANS

New Delhi, Dec 26: President of India Droupadi Murmu on Friday conferred on India's 14-year-old batting prodigy Vaibhav Suryavanshi for his exploits in the field of cricket. The President conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar on children for their exceptional achievements in the fields of Bravery, Social Service, Environment, Sports, Art & Culture and Science & Technology at a ceremony held in the national capital.

The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar is India's highest civilian honour for individuals aged five to 18, instituted to recognise exceptional achievements across diverse fields like art and culture, innovation, science and technology, social service, sports and instances of bravery.

Speaking on the occasion, the President congratulated the recipients of the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar and said, "Vaibhav Suryavanshi has made a name for himself in the highly competitive and talent-filled world of cricket and has set many records."

The teenager is also slated to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi later in the day. Following the ceremony in Delhi, he will rejoin the India Under-19 squad and travel to Zimbabwe for preparations ahead of the



Under-19 World Cup, which begins from January 15.

The BCCI also congratulated the youngster for his achievement. "Congratulations to our explosive young batter, Vaibhav Suryavanshi, on being conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar by the Honourable President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmuji," it posted on X.

Earlier this week, Suryavanshi smashed 190 off 84 balls against Arunachal Pradesh at the Vijay Hazare Trophy, becoming the youngest centurion in List A history. The knock also broke AB de Villiers' record for the fastest 150 in List A cricket and his 15 sixes in the innings are the most by any Indian in the 50-over format.

Earlier this month, Suryavanshi smashed an unbeaten century for Bihar against Maharashtra in an Elite Group B Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy 2025 match at Eden Gardens in Kolkata.

He scored an unbeaten 108 off 61 balls, his maiden ton in the T20 domestic cricket tournament and third overall in the format. His century also made him the youngest batter to score a century in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, at 14 years and 250 days.

The 14-year-old cricketer also smashed the record for the highest score by an Indian in U19 Asia Cup history with his 171 off just 95 against the UAE. The explosive southpaw also

slammed a ton against the Australia U19 team in Brisbane during a Youth Test match in November. His most recent jaw-dropping innings came in the Rising Stars Asia Cup, where he scored 144 off 42 balls for India A against UAE, smashing 11 fours and 15 sixes.

His 32-ball hundred made him the youngest man to score a century for any national representative side at senior level, breaking a 20-year-old record.

Suryavanshi was the most-searched Indian on Google and ranked sixth overall worldwide. Last month, social media platform Instagram chose to spotlight Suryavanshi's journey on its official page - making him only the second Indian cricketer after Virat Kohli to receive the honour.

The teenage batter, hailing from Bihar, enjoyed a breakout IPL debut season with the Rajasthan Royals and made history as the youngest-ever player in the tournament at just 14 years and 23 days, debuting against the Lucknow Super Giants.

He then stunned everyone nine days later by becoming the youngest centurion in the league's history. Vaibhav's explosive 35-ball 100 against the Gujarat Titans was the fastest IPL century by an Indian and the second-fastest overall, behind only Chris Gayle.

China slaps sanctions on 10 individuals, 20 US defence firms over Taiwan arms sales

REUTERS

Beijing, Dec 26: China's foreign ministry announced sanctions on Friday targeting 10 individuals and 20 US defence firms, including Boeing's St. Louis branch, over arms sales to Taiwan.

The measures freeze any assets the companies and individuals hold in China and bar domestic organisations and individuals from doing business with them, the ministry said.

Individuals on the list, including the founder of defence firm Anduril Industries and nine senior executives from the sanctioned firms, are also banned from entering China, it added.

Other companies targeted include Northrop Grumman Systems Corporation and L3Harris Maritime Services.

The move follows



Washington's announcement last week of \$11.1 billion in arms sales to Taiwan, the largest ever US weapons package for the island, drawing Beijing's ire. "The Taiwan issue is the core of China's core interests and the first red line that cannot be crossed in China-US relations," a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said in a statement on Friday.

"Any provocative actions that cross the

line on the Taiwan issue will be met with a strong response from China," the statement said, urging the U.S. to cease "dangerous" efforts to arm the island.

China views democratically-governed Taiwan as part of its own territory, a claim Taipei rejects.

The US is bound by law to provide Taiwan with the means to defend itself, though such arms sales are a persistent source of friction with China.

US launches 'deadly' strike against ISIS in northwest Nigeria: Trump



National Counterterrorism Centre, "ISIS-West Africa (ISIS-WA) was formed in 2015 when Boko Haram pledged allegiance to ISIS. The branch, as per the United States, attacks regional military targets and civilian defence forces and frequently attacks government personnel and infrastructure, and Christians."

Earlier on December 19 (local time), US and Jordanian forces carried out large-scale air strikes against the Islamic State terror group in Syria, hitting more than 70 ISIS targets with over 100 precision-guided munitions, the US Central Command (CENTCOM) said.

In a post on X, CENTCOM said the strikes were carried out overnight and described the operation as a demonstration of "peace through strength." The command also released a video showing footage of the air strikes.

The operation came days after a suspected Islamic State attacker targeted a convoy of US and Syrian forces in the central Syrian town of Palmyra.

ANI

Washington, Dec 26: The United States on Thursday (local time) launched a "deadly" strike against the terror organisation Islamic State in northwest Nigeria, said President Donald Trump.

Donald Trump, in a social media post on Truth Social, said that the strike targeted terrorists over the alleged killings of Christians.

"Tonight, at my direction as Commander in Chief, the United States launched a powerful and deadly strike against ISIS Terrorist scum in Northwest Nigeria, who have been targeting and viciously killing, primarily, innocent Christians, at

levels not seen for many years, and even centuries! I have previously warned these terrorists that if they did not stop the slaughtering of Christians, there would be hell to pay, and tonight, there was," Trump said.

"The Department of War executed numerous perfect strikes, as only the United States is capable of doing. Under my leadership, our country will not allow radical Islamic terrorism to prosper. May God bless our military, and MERRY CHRISTMAS to all, including the dead terrorists, of which there will be many more if their slaughter of Christians continues," the US President added.

According to the US

BNP's Tarique Rahman visits his father's grave after 17-year exile

PTI

Dhaka/New Delhi, Dec 26: BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman on Friday visited the grave of his father and Bangladesh's former president Ziaur Rahman in Dhaka, a day after he returned home from self-exile in the UK.

Rahman reached Zia Uddin in a red-and-green bulletproof bus and paid floral tributes at the grave, offering 'dua' and 'munajat' for the eternal peace of his father's soul, news portal bangla.daily-sun.com reported.

The 60-year-old Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leader returned to the country on Thursday after over 17 years. He has been living in London since 2008.

This is the first time in almost 19 years that Rahman has paid tribute at his father's grave, news portal tbsnews.net reported.

The last time he did so was on September 1, 2006, when he was serving as BNP's Senior Joint Secretary General, marking the party's founding anniversary, it said.

Zelensky says meeting with Trump to happen 'in near future'

AP

Kyiv, Dec 26: A meeting with US President Donald Trump will happen "in the near future," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Friday, signaling progress in talks to end the nearly four-year war between Russia and Ukraine.

"We are not losing a single day. We have agreed on a meeting at the highest level - with President Trump in the near future," Zelensky wrote on X.

"A lot can be decided before the New Year," he added.

Zelensky's announcement came after he said Thursday he had a "good conversation" with US special envoy Steve



Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner.

Trump has unleashed an extensive diplomatic push to end the war, but his efforts have run into sharply conflicting demands by Moscow and Kyiv.

Zelensky said Tuesday he would be willing to withdraw troops from the country's eastern industrial heartland as part of a plan to end

the war, if Moscow also pulls back and the area becomes a demilitarized zone monitored by international forces.

Though Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said Thursday that there had been "slow but steady progress" in the peace talks, Russia has given no indication that it will agree to any kind

of withdrawal from land it has seized.

In fact, Moscow has insisted that Ukraine relinquish the remaining territory it still holds in the Donbas - an ultimatum that Ukraine has rejected. Russia has captured most of Luhansk and about 70 percent of Donetsk - the two areas that make up the Donbas.

On the ground, Russian drone attacks on the city of Mykolaiv and its suburbs overnight into Friday left part of the city without power.

Meanwhile, Ukraine said it struck a major Russian oil refinery Thursday using British-supplied Storm Shadow missiles.

Ukraine's General Staff said its forces hit the Novoshakhtinsk refinery in Russia's Rostov region.

Kohli, Pant fifties carry Delhi to tight 7-run win over Gujarat

PTI

Bengaluru, Dec 26: Star batters Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant made solid fifties, while Gujarat batters pressed the self-destruction button as Delhi eked out a tight seven-run win in their Elite Group D match of the Vijay Hazare Trophy on Friday.

Player of the match Kohli (77, 61 balls) and Pant (70, 79b) carried Delhi to a modest 254 for 9 in 50 overs. Despite looking solid in pockets, Gujarat folded for 247 in 47.4 overs. Kohli and Pant offered the main story thread of the day with knocks of contrasting nature. Kohli had to walk in earlier in this match too after the early departure of opener Priyansh Arya, and looked in excellent touch.

After blocking the first ball, Kohli straight drove pacer Chintan Gaja for a four, manifesting his rich vein of form. While other Delhi batters were often pushed to a tight corner by Gujarat bowlers, Kohli was fluency personified in his pet format of the game. A pulled six off Gaja and a stunning flicked four off Arzan Nagwaswalla followed as Kohli slipped into the top gear. The



37-year-old reached his fifty in 29 balls that had 10 fours and a six in a wonderful exhibition of shot-making. The veteran batter brought up his 85th List A half-century off Ravi Bishnoi, carving the leg-spinner for a boundary over the covers. A second century on the trot looked a certainty but a lovely ball from left-arm spinner Jayswal (4/42) ended his tenure.

Jayswal detected Kohli's little shimmy very early, and fired one past the batter to get him stumped by Urvil. Delhi was 108 for four then, and required some momentum to drag the innings back on track. A couple of overs back, Jayswal had also accounted

for Nitish Rana and Arpit. But Delhi found a saviour in skipper Pant, who eschewed his aggressive tendencies to keep his side's innings together.

There were no archetypal Pant shots until he went past fifty in 64 balls. The first sign of innovation came in the 66th ball when he tried to execute a falling-scoop off Bishnoi, and 12 balls later he again attempted a similar shot off Gaja. However, Pant's growing impatience finally ended in him losing the sticks to Jayswal, also signalling the end of a 73-run alliance with Harsh Tyagi (40). Simarjeet and Ishant Sharma added 19 runs for the final wicket to take Delhi

past the 250-run mark.

Gujarat implode

Chasing 255 was not precisely a tough target even on a slightly tacky BCCI Centre of Excellence pitch, but Gujarat made heavy weather of it. In fact, they made a gradual yet confident start with two fine stands - 67 for the first wicket between Urvil Patel (31), who was dropped on 31, and Aarya Desai (57), and 54 between Aarya and Abhishek Desai for the following wicket.

It helped Gujarat reach 121 for 1 in 25 overs. But from there they lost Aarya, Abhishek, Jaymeet Patel and Hemang Patel while adding a mere 23 runs to slip to 144 for five.

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MOVIES SCHEDULE

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HINDI - 10:40 AM, 01:40 PM, 03:00 PM, 06:30 PM

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