



Young Kashmiri engineer develops mobile app to prevent fatal electrocutions

Umair Gull Ganie

Anantnag, Jan 01: Moved by repeated incidents of electrocution claiming lives, particularly Power Development Department employees in the Valley, a young engineer from south Kashmir's Anantnag district has developed a life-saving safety device aimed at preventing fatal electrocutions.

Zahid Bashir, a resident of Kralpora hamlet in Anantnag and a B.Tech graduate in Computer Science from the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), has designed a safety device intended to enhance electrical safety and reduce the risk of deadly electric shocks.

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer



(KNO), Zahid said the system comprises two main components — a hardware device and a mobile application that controls it. "The application has multiple modules and a public reporting or grievance section," he said.

He said that when common people witness a fault in an electric line and report it through the application, the

device immediately gets alerted. "After that, officials can depute a lineman to the concerned area. The system tracks the lineman while he is on duty, and once the fault is rectified, only the same person (lineman) can log into the application and, by informing it that the line is now functional, the device will show a green signal," Zahid said.

According to him, the public can only submit reports, while access to other sections of the application is restricted to authorised PDD officials. "The application has two-factor authentication and cannot be accessed by unauthorised persons," he said.

Zahid said the application also includes a grievance redressal option, | [More on P6](#)

J&K higher reaches receive snowfall, weather to remain dry till Jan 20: MeT

No major Western Disturbances expected

Residents, tourists advised to avoid avalanche-prone areas

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Jan 01: Light to moderate snowfall was recorded over higher reaches of Jammu and Kashmir, while several low-lying areas received light rain during the past 24 hours, officials said on Thursday.

According to the Jammu and Kashmir Meteorological Department, Sadhna Top and Razdan Top recorded the highest snowfall accumulation in the last 48 hours, with two feet each.

Gurez Valley in north Kashmir's Bandipora district and Zojila Pass received one foot of snow, while Sonamarg recorded eight to ten inches.

Popular tourist destinations such as Gulmarg and Chandanwari in Pahalgam received three to four inches and two to three inches of snow, respectively.

Kashmir Weather official Faizan Arif told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that most of the state remained generally cloudy, with light rain or snow reported in scattered locations, mainly over



hilly areas such as Tulail Valley, Razdan Top, Machil, Sadhna Top, and the Sonamarg-Drass axis.

"Over the next 12 hours, light rain and snow showers are expected in a few areas as the trailing part of the current Western Disturbance gradually moves away by evening," Arif added.

Officials said that there are currently no indications of any significant Western Disturbances affecting Jammu and Kashmir until at least

January 20, although a few feeble systems may bring isolated showers over scattered areas.

Weather forecasts suggested that temperatures are likely to remain cold across the Union Territory, with higher reaches continuing to witness snowfall, while lower regions experience intermittent rain.

Authorities have advised residents and travellers, particularly in snow-bound hilly areas, to exercise caution. | [More on P6](#)



Kashmiri farmers washing and cleaning carrots along canal banks during carrot harvest season. Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

Weapon systems developed by DRDO proved decisive in 'Op Sindoor': Rajnath

Calls for continued innovation, pvt sector engagement, rapid tech advancements

KNO Correspondent

New Delhi, Jan 01: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said that the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) played a decisive role in Operation Sindoor.

While addressing a gathering on the occasion of 68th Foundation Day of DRDO in New Delhi, Singh, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "The weapon systems developed by DRDO were crucial during Operation Sindoor, demonstrating the organisation's professionalism and commitment towards safeguarding national interests."

He commended DRDO for strengthening India's indigenous defence capabilities by providing the Armed Forces with state-of-the-art equipment, which performed seamlessly during the operation and bolstered the morale of personnel on the field.



Singh also expressed confidence that DRDO will soon achieve the creation of the Sudarshan Chakra, an air defence system announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Independence Day address in 2025.

"Under this initiative, DRDO is tasked with equipping vital installations with comprehensive aerial protection over the next decade. Operation Sindoor underscored the critical importance of air defence in modern warfare, and I am confident that DRDO will accomplish this goal soon," he said.

The Defence Minister praised DRDO for not only creating advanced technology

but also building public trust.

He highlighted the organisation's collaboration with private industry, academia, and start-ups, which has contributed to a synergistic defence ecosystem. "DRDO has consistently improved its systems, processes, and working methods—from procurement and project management to engaging with start-ups and MSMEs—making work easier, faster, and more reliable," he added.

Singh urged DRDO to continue aligning with the rapidly evolving technological landscape and develop products relevant to current and future defence requirements.

He encouraged | [More on P6](#)

JERC shelves JKPDD's 20% peak hour surcharge proposal

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Jan 01: Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC) for Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh has decided to shelve the proposal of JKPDD seeking nod to charge an extra 20 per cent charge on electricity consumption during morning and evening hours in the UT.

JERC said that the petitioners (JPDC and KPDC) had proposed to modify the existing Time of Day (TOD) tariff with certain modifications.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), JERC in an official communique has said it has reviewed the tariff proposal submitted by JPDC and KPDC.

"The Commission noticed that a letter was issued by the Director Finance JKPDD, about the Government's decision to continue the present tariff that is for FY 2024-25 approved tariff is also applicable for FY 2025-26, however for the HT Power Intensive Units category should not be given subsidy on power tariff as their substantial power requirement often necessitates procurement of power on higher rates," it reads.

"The Commission has decided to continue | [More on P6](#)

PDD links official salaries to High AT&C losses

Issues new Load Curtailment Plan

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Jan 01: The Power Development Department (PDD) has directed the JPDC and KPDC to initiate strict actions including deducting up to 50 percent of salary against the officials of divisions and feeders where Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses exceed 40 percent.

Besides, the department has issued the revised Load Curtailment Plan (LPC) with extra hours of power shedding to the areas having AT&C losses of more than 40 percent and between 15 percent and 40 percent respectively.

According to the news agency—Kashmir | [More on P6](#)

CM Omar will meet Home Minister soon, says MP Ramzan

'No rift in NC, Ruhullah not against party or leadership'

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jan 01: Asserting that Chief Minister Omar Abdullah will be meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah soon, senior National Conference leader and Rajya Sabha MP Chaudhary Ramzan on Thursday said that there is no rift between the National Conference (NC) leadership and party Member Parliament Aga Ruhullah.

Talking to reporters here after attending a felicitation ceremony held to honour him for assuming the charge of NC Additional General Secretary, Ramzan, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said,



"Differences within the party are only in approach and not in intent. There is no rift in the party. There is only a difference in approach. Aga Ruhullah is young and wants things to happen quickly, but such matters take time to fall into place."

Ramzan said he met Aga Ruhullah during the recent Parliament session and found him fully aligned with the party and its leadership. "I did not find him against the party or its | [More on P6](#)

Div Com Kashmir's 2026 vision: Tourism revival, youth empowerment, environmental sustainability

Says recent snowfall positive sign for record tourist influx

Announces major plan for drug de-addiction

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jan 01: Entering 2026 with renewed optimism after a challenging 2025, Divisional Commissioner (Div Com)

Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Thursday outlined the administration's developmental priorities, calling for consolidating growth, reviving tourism, empowering youth, and promoting sustainability across the Valley.

Garg said the recent snowfall in Gulmarg, Sonmarg, and Pahalgam has been a positive sign, with expectations of a record tourist influx this year. He said the administration is fully prepared to support stakeholders in this regard.

Speaking to a select group of media persons at his office, the Div Com, as per the news agency—Kashmir News



Observer (KNO), highlighted ongoing infrastructure projects. "Key projects under the

Public Works Department are progressing rapidly. The Noor Jahan Bridge and Sanat

Nagar Flyover have enhanced Srinagar's connectivity. Work on the Ring Road and the Srinagar-Baramulla-Uri highway is advancing swiftly. The completion of the Awantipora stretch this year will significantly ease travel in South Kashmir," he said.

He discussed reforms in the water and power sectors under the Jal Jeevan Mission and RDSS. "Many areas in Srinagar are receiving 24x7 power this winter, with metering now complete. The PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana has benefited hundreds of households by reducing electricity bills through solar energy," Garg added.

Regarding youth and drug de-addiction initiatives, the Div Com announced a comprehensive two-year plan under the Chief Secretary's guidance. "A dedicated online portal will integrate youth programmes related to sports, culture, and entrepreneurship across all 20 districts, enabling young people aged 16-30 to access opportunities with a single click," he said.

Garg said an extensive de-addiction campaign is also underway. "Counsellors are being trained at the Primary Healthcare level by GMC Srinagar, SKIMS, and IMHANS. All 72 colleges and schools are

appointing nodal teachers for awareness training, and coaching centres are being involved to identify and rehabilitate vulnerable students," he said.

On food safety, he reaffirmed zero tolerance. "Food safety officers will conduct regular inspections at the block level. We have intensified enforcement, seized unlabelled or unsafe items, and imposed heavy penalties," he said. Measures such as mandatory glass shields at meat shops are being enforced to prevent contamination, with strict action taken against violators.

Addressing environmental concerns, | [More on P6](#)

Sakeena Itoo calls for complete sanitation revamp in J&K hospitals



KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JANUARY 01: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo Thursday emphasised on the urgent need for a complete revamp of sanitation and cleanliness measures in all Government Medical Colleges (GMCs), District Hospitals, Sub-District Hospitals (SDHS) and other healthcare facilities across the J&K, underscoring that hygiene and sanitation is central to quality patient care and public trust.

Chairing a high-level review meeting on cleanliness and sanitation measures in health facilities of Jammu division, in line with the yesterday's meeting of Kashmir division, the Minister, as per an official statement called for zero tolerance policy towards unhygienic hospitals, directing the Principals and Medical Superintendents to ensure strict adherence to cleanliness protocols, regular monitoring of sanitation standards and accountability at every level. She stressed that hospitals and other facilities must reflect an environment of safety, dignity and compassion for patients and their attendants. "Clean and well-maintained health institutions are not optional but they are fundamental to effective healthcare delivery. We must ensure that every facility, from major GMCs to peripheral health centres, highest standards of sanitation and cleanliness is maintained," Minister Sakeena said.

The Minister issued strong and emotionally charged directions for absolute cleanliness, discipline, and accountability in all hospitals across Jammu & Kashmir, declaring that unclean hospitals are not merely an administrative failure but a moral, cultural

and ethical betrayal. Quoting the Islamic teaching "At-Tahooru Shatruul Imaan" (cleanliness is half of faith), she emphasized that if cleanliness is essential in homes and places of worship, it becomes sacred in hospitals, where pain, prayer, and hope converge.

The Minister directed the department to frame Audit Committee at Central level and conduct routine inspection on fortnightly basis of health facilities across Jammu and Kashmir, with particular focus on sanitation and cleanliness measures.

The Minister expressed deep concern over ground observations during hospital visits, stating that the most disturbing issue was not lack of doctors or effort, but lack of ownership. She categorically stated that cleanliness is everyone's responsibility, from the Director and Principals to the last sanitation worker.

"Everyone has role in management and cleanliness of hospitals, not just medical superintendents or Principals", Minister Sakeena said. "Hospitals need to be as clean as our homes and there should be no compromise on that".

She also asked the Medical Superintendents to award cash rewards, certifications for sanitation workers, doctors or other staff involved in maintaining the cleanliness and sanitation of the hospitals.

The Minister further directed the Medical Superintendents not to allow any kind of food or eatables inside the hospitals from outside. She also called for complete ban on polythene bags inside the hospital premises.

The Minister directed the Principals and Medical Superintendents to form Committees at their levels who would carry inspection regarding cleanliness in their respective hospitals

on daily basis. She further directed them to carry out awareness among the attendants regarding Dos and Don'ts in the hospital premises. She also asked them to take firm action against visitors violating cleanliness norms.

The Minister called for periodic audits, improved waste management systems, strengthening of housekeeping services, and enhanced coordination with concerned agencies to address gaps in cleanliness and infrastructure. She also instructed hospital administrations to sensitize staff and service providers on maintaining hygiene and patient-friendly surroundings.

Minister Sakeena also called for rationalisation of Sanitation workers in hospitals and framing of proper working roster for them. She also asked the hospital administrators to provide uniform to Safaikaramcharis after every six months or less and also take some initiatives for their overall well being.

Minister Sakeena emphasized that those who clean hospitals are performing an act of ibadat (worship) and deserve dignity, safety, timely wages, training and recognition.

"A hospital that disrespects its sanitation workers can never be truly clean," she stated.

The Minister reiterated that improving sanitation standards will remain a top priority and warned that laxity in maintaining cleanliness in health institutions will not be tolerated. She urged officials to work with dedication to ensure that public health facilities meet the expectations of the people.

The Minister directed the hospital administrators to change defective wheel chairs and trolleys on continuous basis and replace them with new ones. She also stressed on them for

change of unhygienic beds as well as bedding to maintain overall patient care in the hospitals.

Highlighting the issue of unhygienic wards, dirty washrooms and scattered waste, the Minister said that no amount of medical expertise can compensate for loss of patient dignity. "A clean hospital is sadqa-e-jariya (a continuous charity)", she stated.

Highlighting the Omar Abdullah led Government's sustained efforts to upgrade healthcare infrastructure across J&K, Sakeena Itoo said that advanced medical services like LINAC, PET scan, Brachytherapy, Renal transplant programme, molecular diagnosis of oncology patients and other advanced services at Super Speciality Hospital and GMC Jammu have significantly improved the health care services at the hospital. She highlighted that the advanced cancer treatment facilities at State Cancer Institute and the introduction of other state-of-the-art diagnostic and therapeutic services have reduced the need for patients to seek treatment outside the region.

The meeting, among others, was attended by MD JKMSCL, Tariq Hussain Ganai; Principal GMC Jammu, Dr. Ashotush Gupta; Director Health Services Jammu, Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar; Director Family Welfare and Immunization, Dr. Poonam Sethi; Director Finance Health and Medical Education, Director Planning Health and Medical Education, Principal Government Dental College Jammu, Principals of GMCs of Kathua, Doda, Rajouri and Udhampur, Medical Superintendents of all district Hospitals of Jammu division, CMOs and other concerned officers either in person or through video conferencing.

DC Srinagar, Director SKIMS review infrastructure upgradation, traffic decongestion at SKIMS

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 01: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo along with the Director of Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura, Prof Mohammad Ashraf Ahangar Thursday conducted an on-spot review of infrastructure upgradation and developmental requirements of the Institute to further strengthen the healthcare facilities at the major tertiary care hospital of the valley.

Additional Director SKIMS, Zahoor Ahmad Mir; Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; Superintending Engineer

R&B, Medical Superintendent SKIMS, Dr Farooq Jan; Executive Engineer of R&B, Dy SP Traffic, Tehsildar Eidgah, other senior Officers of District Administration and SKIMS were present on the occasion.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner and Director SKIMS, as per an official statement, held a detailed deliberations with regard to expansion of healthcare infrastructure of the SKIMS Soura, traffic decongestion measures outside the Institute, demarcation of SKIMS land, enhancing access to SKIMS by way of road widening, land for proposed new OPD block of the institute.

The officers reviewed on the spot various measures aimed at making the

Institute campus more patient-friendly. Special focus was laid on expanding the entry and exit points of the main gate to ensure hassle-free movement of patients, attendants and emergency vehicles.

On the occasion, the DC stressed upon the concerned Officers to work out practical and feasible solutions to the issues discussed and directed them to conduct follow-up spot visits within the coming weeks. He assured the SKIMS administration of all possible support from the District Administration to further strengthen healthcare infrastructure and improve patient care and service delivery, with the objective of making SKIMS a patient-friendly campus.

GOVT. OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANANTNAG

email.id:dc-anantnagjk@gov.in

Phone No:-01932222337

Re-Advertisement

In reference to Re-Advertisement Notice No. ADDC/Ang/2025-26/1188-89 dated 21.11.2025 followed by corrigendum No ADDC/Ang/2025-26/1289-93 dated 08.12.2025 regarding empanelment of Motivators under Mission YUVA., it is hereby informed that due to poor response of applications the posts are hereby Re-advertised. Applications may be submitted via the below link and the conceptual framework for Motivators (Detailed Selection process, role description can be accessed through the same link): <https://forms.gle/zFw4bF81v68hfZT86>

Retired Government officials, NGO workers, Lakhpati Didis, Pashu Sakhis, Bank Sakhis, other community resource persons, and local community members are encouraged to apply.

Remuneration Structure for Motivators	
Fixed Pay	Rs. 2000/- per month (including allowances to cover local travel and communication.
Variable Pay (Performance Incentive)	Based on the number of sanctioned loan applications (up to a maximum of Rs. 3000/- per month.

Further, the last date for submission of applications has been extended as 15th January 2026. All other terms and conditions of the original advertisement notice shall remain unchanged.

Sd/-
Additional District Development Commissioner
(Nodal Officer, Mission YUVA), Anantnag

No: ADDCA/2025-26/1412-16 Dated: 31.12.2025 DIPK-9571/25 DATED: 01-01-2026

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

SCHOOL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

(HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SECTION)

CIVIL SECRETARIAT, MK

Subject: Final seniority list of PG Masters/ PG Teachers in the discipline of Arabic as on 01.10.2025.

Government Order No:731- JK (Edu) of 2025

Dated: 26.12.2025

WHEREAS, the tentative seniority list of PG Masters/ PG Teachers in the discipline of Arabic was issued vide the issuance of the said tentative seniority list, the Department received various representations through the concerned Directorates for correction/ inclusion/up-dation of service particulars of members in the seniority list;

AND WHEREAS, the objections received in the Department have been examined/ scrutinized and necessary corrections/ additions/ deletions etc., wherever required, have been made in the seniority list;

AND WHEREAS, the Designated Committees have recommended 22 incumbents (Annexure-D Annexure-E) in light of Government Order No. 188-JK (Edu) of 2024 dated 15.03.2024, who have obtained their PG degrees through distance/private mode during service. The recommendations made in their favour, after examination in the Department, have been accepted by the Competent Authority;

AND WHEREAS, some of the incumbents who have obtained their PG degrees through distance/private mode during service and whose cases have not yet been recommended by the Designated Committees constituted vide Government Order No. 188-3K (Edu) of 2024, dated 15.03.2024, have also been included in the seniority list, subject to the condition that their cases are recommended by the said Designated Committees. In case recommendations are not received in their favour from the Designated Committees, their names shall be deemed to have been deleted from the seniority list ab-initio.

Now, therefore, in terms of Rule 24 of MK Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956, the final seniority list in respect of PG Masters/ PG Teachers in the discipline of Arabic, forming "Annexure-A" to this Government Order, is hereby issued. The dates of birth of the incumbents recorded in the seniority list shall not be taken as authentic and shall be Subject to further verification from service records/ original Matriculation Certificates of all the concerned.

Moreover/ 12 incumbents have been included in the final seniority list at appropriate places as detailed in "Annexure-B" and 68 incumbents have been deleted from the final seniority list as detailed in "Annexure-C" for the reasons as shown against each; and

Furthermore, 01 incumbent who has been recommended by the Designated Committee constituted vide Government Order No. 188 JK (Edu) of 2024 dated 15.03.2024, conveyed by Director School Education Jammu vide No. MB/Trig/2024/15989 (CRU-4716540) dated 02.07.2024, as detailed in "Annexure-D" to this Government Order, shall be included in the seniority at appropriate place, as and when full authenticated service particulars of the incumbent are received from the concerned Directorate.

The seniority list so issued will be subject to outcome of writ petition(s) pending, if any, before any Competent court of law.

Any member of the service who is either not included or is aggrieved with the position assigned to him/her in this final seniority list can file a review petition within 07 days from the date of issuance of this updated final seniority list along with supporting documents, through concerned Directorates which shall be decided on case-to-case basis as per merits. No petition shall be entertained after the expiry of stipulated time period.

The final seniority list is also available on the official website of School Education Department i.e. (<https://schooleducation.jk.gov.in>).

Sd/-
Ram Niwas Sharma, IAS
Secretary to the Government School Education Department

No. Edu-HRM/72/2022-01 (138273) Dated:26.12.2025. DIPK-9552/25 DATED: 01-01-2026

SSCL CEO reviews work on Heritage Wooden Footbridge at Amira Kadal

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 1: Chief Executive Officer, Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), Faz Lul Haseeb, Thursday undertook a comprehensive site inspection of the heritage wooden pedestrian footbridge under construction at Amira Kadal to review the progress and quality of works.

He was accompanied by the Chief Engineer SSCL, Executive Engineers, and other senior officers.

During the visit, the CEO, as per an official statement, closely examined the pace of execution and the technical and structural aspects of the project being carried out on the existing piers of the old bridge. The inspection covered retrofitting and structural strengthening of the piers, construction of the wooden superstructure, and progress of all allied components. On completion, the footbridge is expected to significantly enhance pedestrian mobility and walk ability across the Jhelum river while preserving the historic character of the Amira Kadal precinct. The project aims to provide safe and convenient pedestrian access to the Jhelum Riverfront and ensure seamless connectivity with key heritage and commercial areas,



including Goni Khan, Maharaja Bazar, and Hari Singh High Street.

Emphasising the importance of quality, safety, and timely delivery, CEO directed the Chief Engineer, SSCL, to further accelerate the pace of work and ensure completion of the project within the stipulated timeframe. He also instructed the executing agencies to strictly adhere to approved designs, technical specifications, and prescribed timelines, while integrating heritage-sensitive architectural elements in harmony with the historical and cultural landscape of the

area. Officials briefed that the project is envisaged as a strategic urban intervention aimed at promoting pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, revitalising the city's historic core, and enhancing the overall urban environment for residents, traders, and visitors. Expressing satisfaction with the progress achieved so far, the CEO urged all concerned agencies to maintain momentum and ensure the timely delivery of a safe, durable, and aesthetically refined public infrastructure asset for the city of Srinagar.

Tral's Tech Blossom: An App for Kashmir's Heart

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Jan 01: In a moment of immense pride for Tral and the entire Kashmir Valley, a 19-year-old student from Nowpora village has developed a pioneering mobile application aimed at modernising and strengthening Kashmir's horticulture sector.

Hazik Hussain, at such a young age, has achieved what many seasoned professionals aspire to—leveraging technology to address long-standing challenges faced by farmers and fruit growers.

Hazik's newly developed mobile application is designed to serve as a comprehensive digital companion for orchardists and cultivators, providing scientific guidance and real-time support directly through their smartphones.

The app functions as a smart



advisory platform, helping farmers make informed decisions at every stage of crop and orchard management.

One of the standout features of the application is its accurate and timely weather forecasting system. By offering up-to-date climatic information, the app enables farmers to plan crucial activities such as spraying, irrigation, pruning, and harvesting

in accordance with changing weather patterns—an essential factor in a region where climate variability often affects crop yields.

The application also provides detailed guidance on the correct use of pesticides, fungicides, and medicines. By recommending precise dosages, it helps farmers avoid excessive or incorrect use of chemicals,

thereby protecting crops, soil health, and the environment. This feature is expected to significantly reduce crop damage caused by misuse of agrochemicals and improve the overall quality of produce.

Another major component of the app is its disease identification system. Farmers can identify common plant diseases and pests and receive scientifically recommended treatment options, including suitable sprays and preventive measures. This feature acts as a quick-response solution for growers who often struggle to access expert advice in remote areas.

Beyond disease management, the app assists users in analysing soil quality and understanding nutrient requirements. It offers guidance on the proper application of fertilizers and promotes best horticultural practices based on scientific research. By integrating

these tools, the application effectively works as a "virtual scientist," offering reliable and practical solutions tailored to the needs of Kashmir's farming community.

Sharing his motivation, Hazik Hussain said that the idea for the app emerged after he observed the difficulties faced by farmers due to limited awareness and lack of access to expert guidance. "Many farmers suffer losses simply because they don't have the right information at the right time. I wanted to create something that could help them manage their orchards efficiently and confidently," he said.

He added that the development process involved months of continuous learning, research, and hard work. "After sustained effort, I was able to design an application that combines scientific accuracy with a simple, farmer-friendly interface. My aim is to ensure that even farmers

with minimal technical knowledge can benefit from it," Hazik said.

Experts and locals believe that the app has the potential to significantly improve productivity, reduce costs, and enhance sustainability in Kashmir's horticulture sector, which forms the backbone of the region's economy. With apples and other fruits being a major source of livelihood for thousands of families, such innovations could bring long-term positive change.

Hazik Hussain's achievement stands as a shining example of youth-led innovation and social responsibility. His work not only highlights the growing role of technology in agriculture but also reflects how young minds from rural Kashmir can contribute meaningful solutions to regional challenges. The initiative promises a more informed, efficient, and tech-driven future for Kashmir's horticulture industry—(KNO)

Class-10 results in second week of January: Sakina Itoo

Says 11th, 12th grade results to follow subsequently



RIYAZ BHAT

Srinagar, Jan 01: Education Minister Sakina Itoo Thursday said that the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) will announce the result of annual regular-2025 class 10th examination in the second week of January.

Sakina Itoo said, "Most likely, the results of annual regular exams of 10th standard will be declared in the second week of January." Itoo further said, "The results of 11th and 12th standard will be declared soon after the class 10th. As of now we have decided to declare the results of 10th class first followed by other classes." Pertinently, over 94,000 students had appeared in the annual regular exams of 10th standard that commenced

on November-03 in the Kashmir division.

Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (BOSE) had set-up 994 examination centers across the Kashmir region.

BOSE had said that 68,804 students enrolled for the annual regular exams of 10th are from ten districts of Kashmir division and 25,224 students are from eight districts of winter zone areas of Jammu division.

Besides, the board had also informed that at least 660 from Kargil and 95 from Leh district were also enrolled for the examinations.

Earlier, BOSE Secretary had said that nearly 95,000 students were enrolled to appear for 10th class exams and the board has made 994 exam centers for them—(KNO)

Tral's Masifa wins gold medal at NJC Assam

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Jan 01: Masifa Mush-taq, a promising young sportsperson from Batnoor Tral, has brought laurels to Jammu and Kashmir by winning a gold medal at the National Junior Championship (NJC) 2025 held in Guwahati, Assam.

Her achievement has been widely hailed in the area as a testament to the growing sports culture and the rising participation of girls in competitive athletics.

Masifa said she has been actively involved in sports for the past several years and has steadily progressed through various competitive levels. "I started by playing at the block and district level, then represented at the state level, and now I have had the honour of competing and winning at the national level. This journey has been challenging but deeply rewarding," she said.

Masifa highlighted the positive impact of sports infrastructure development in Tral, particularly the establishment of the Indoor Sports Stadium, which she believes has transformed the local sporting landscape. "After the indoor stadium was started in Tral, many girls began participating in different sports activities. This is a very encouraging and healthy sign for our society," she added.

Emphasising the role of support systems in achieving



success, the gold medallist said that no athlete can reach their goals without encouragement from family and guidance from coaches. "Family support and coach support are essential to achieve any goal. I am extremely thankful to my parents and my coach for standing by me at every step of my journey," Masifa said.

She also expressed concern over the growing social challenges affecting youth, particularly substance abuse. "Earlier, drug involvement was mostly seen among boys, but now even girls are getting affected. It is very important to engage girls in sports and other constructive activities to keep them away from such dangers," she said.

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Prof. Wahid Makhdoomi set to be appointed chairman BOSE

KNO

Srinagar, Jan 01: Prof. Wahid Makhdoomi, Registrar of the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), is set to be appointed Chairman of the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education (BOSE), sources disclosed.

Sources in the J&K administration said that the cabinet, headed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, in its meeting on December 22, 2025, finalized the name of Prof. Wahid Makhdoomi from among three candidates recommended by the search panel constituted by the J&K government.

The cabinet decision was then sent to Lok Bhavan, formerly Raj



Bhavan, for approval, which has since given its go-ahead.

According to sources, the government is expected to issue a formal notification tomorrow regarding the

appointment of Makhdoomi as head of BOSE. Who is Prof. Wahid Makhdoomi?

A distinguished academician, Makhdoomi has held key academic and administrative

positions over the past 35 years. He joined the Higher Education Department in 1991 as an Assistant Professor, then referred to as Lecturer.

He headed the Electronics and Information Technology Department at several prestigious institutions, including Women's College M.A. Road, S.P. College, Bemina College, and GDC Baramulla. He also served as Principal of GDC Hadipora (Baramulla) and Gandhi Memorial College, Srinagar.

Makhdoomi further worked at the Central University and also served as Joint Secretary and Director Academics at JKBOSE before joining IUST as Registrar in 2024—(KNO)

Sajad Lone calls 2025 a 'year of lies' in J&K under NC

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, Jan 01: Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Conference (PC) president and Handwara MLA Sajad Gani Lone on Thursday accused the National Conference-led government of betraying public trust, alleging that its tenure so far has been marked by unfulfilled promises and weak governance.

Addressing a press conference, Lone said the year 2025 had "exposed the government's claims," asserting that key electoral assurances had not been implemented.

He alleged that the promise of providing 200 units of free



electricity had not materialised and claimed that residents in non-metered areas were instead

facing increased power tariffs.

Lone alleged that the assurance of providing 12 free gas cylinders annually had been dropped, while the promise of generating one lakh jobs had resulted in what he termed an "outsourcing model" for government posts.

He also claimed this had adversely affected employment prospects for local youth.

The PC president also criticised frequent transfers in the administration, alleging that governance had been reduced to a system focused on postings rather than service delivery.

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Farooq Abdullah stresses good neighbour relations to overcome challenges



REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, Jan 01: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Thursday said that maintaining good relations with neighbours and living in brotherhood is key to overcoming the challenges ahead. He also cautioned that those targeting Kashmiri shawl dealers across India are trying to bring back Hitler's ideology. Speaking with reporters in Srinagar, Farooq Abdullah said there will be many shortcomings and many successes, but they will keep moving forward. He said that "our relationship with our neighbours should be good".

He also expressed satisfaction over India's gesture of sending the External Affairs Minister to Bangladesh to attend the funeral of former

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. "It is good. Bangladesh is our old friend and we have to strengthen our friendship," he said.

Condemning the recent attacks on Kashmiri shawl traders in different parts of the country, he said such incidents reflect a dangerous mindset inspired by Hitler's ideology.

"There are some people whose aim is something else. They are following Hitler's path and want Hitler's regime to start here. But Hitler disappeared-he shot himself. God willing, Nazism ended there, and the time will come when it will end here too," he said.

On the recent reports about the Constitution being translated into Kashmiri for the first time, he said it has already been translated many years ago—(KNO)

KASHMIR THUNDER
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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
قطب الاقطاب شيخ المشايخ
حضرت شيخ احمد صاحب عاصمي الفاروقى

تاره بلى رحمة الله عليه 169 وان سالانه عرس
1- سنيچر وار (3-01-2026)-

بمقام آستان عاليه تاره بلى،
نوا كدل، سرينگر كشمير

قرآن پاڪ كى تلاوت ٿيڪ صبح 9 بجے شروع بوگي
اور اسكے بعد خطمات المعظمات كا انعقاد بوگا۔

2- اتوار (4-01-2026) مولود مسود

انشا الله صبح 9 بجے سے مولود مسود كى مجلس
شروع بوگي۔ امة المسلمين سے بالعموم عاشقين
اولياء سے بالخصوص التجا ہے كه ان متبرك مجالس
میں اپنى حاضري دے كر الله تعالى كى خوشنودى
رحمتیں اور برکتیں حاصل كريں۔



'Sadak Suraksha, Jeevan Raksha' rally marks road safety month

REHAN QAYOUM MIR

Srinagar, Jan 01: Flagging off 'Sadak Suraksha, Jeevan Raksha', rally here, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic City Srinagar, Aijaz Ahmad Bhat, on Thursday said the event is aimed at promoting responsible driving and adherence to traffic norms across the city.

The rally, which marked the beginning of Road Safety Month, commenced from the City Traffic Office in Srinagar.

Speaking to the media during the flag-off ceremony, SSP Aijaz Ahmad Bhat said the initiative is part of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways' month-long awareness programme designed to educate road users about safety and responsibility.

"A person behind the wheel holds responsibility for his own safety and that of others. When one loses control, it can harm not only the driver but also pedestrians and fellow

commuters. This campaign aims to make people aware, urging them to follow rules and ensure smooth, safe and calm traffic movement," SSP Bhat said.

The rally, which passed through downtown Srinagar and Fore-shore Road, sought to sensitize the public on safe driving habits, lane discipline and parking etiquette.

SSP Bhat said the goal was to build a culture of "responsible citizenship" where drivers take pride in courteous road behaviour.

"When people return home after their journey, they should feel they met well-behaved drivers. We want to nurture disciplined traffic culture," he added.

Continued on
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EDITORIAL

Friday Brief: The New Year & Time For Self-Introspection

As the calendar turns to 2026, the world engages in celebration and resolution. However, this moment holds a deeper, more profound significance rooted in the timeless Islamic practice of Muhasabah—rigorous self-accounting. The turn of the year is not merely a change of date but a powerful, natural reminder of the passage of our most precious capital: time itself. The Quran repeatedly calls us to reflect on time, declaring, “By time, indeed,

mankind is in loss, except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience” (Surah Al-Asr). This new beginning is, therefore, a divine prompt to pause and look inward. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) emphasised this daily spiritual audit, advising, “Take account of yourself before you are taken to account [on the Day of Judgment]” (Al-Tirmidhi). The new year

amplifies this call. It is a moment to weigh our deeds against our faith, to ask the essential questions: Have our prayers been a source of humility or mere habit? Has our wealth been purified through Zakat and charity, or hoarded in heedlessness? Have our tongues been instruments of truth and kindness, or of backbiting and harm? This introspection is not for despair but for course correction—a spiritual recalibration towards our ultimate

purpose: the pleasure of Allah (SWT). This process, guided by the Quran and Sunnah, must be honest and holistic. We must assess our obligations to Allah, to our own souls, to our families, and to the wider Ummah and humanity. Are we contributing to justice, compassion, and knowledge, or are we passive observers in a suffering world? Let 2026, then, be a year where we move beyond superficial resolutions to foundational repentance (Tawbah) and

steadfast improvement (Istiqamah). Let us use this milestone to renew our covenants, mend broken ties, seek knowledge, and increase in righteous action. The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Let us shed with it our spiritual neglect and resolve to meet our Lord with hearts that are heavier with good deeds and lighter with sin. For in this sincere self-accounting lies the path to true success, in this world and the hereafter.

2025 Economic Reforms:
Building A Future-Ready India

Press Information Bureau

Setting the Stage: India's 2025 Economic Vision

Economic reforms in 2025 reflect a maturing phase of India's governance, where the emphasis shifted decisively from “expanding regulatory frameworks” to “delivering measurable outcomes”. The focus moved towards simplifying systems, reducing compliance burdens, and improving predictability for citizens and businesses. Across taxation, GST, labour regulation, and business compliance, reforms were designed to make every day economic interactions smoother, faster, and more transparent, strengthening trust in institutions and policy certainty.

The year's initiatives emphasized ease of living, ease of doing business, and inclusive growth, aligning regulatory structures with India's evolving economic aspirations. From simplified tax regimes and Next-Generation GST to modern labour codes and expanded MSME definitions, the Government ensured that reforms not only reduced friction in everyday economic activities but also empowered youth, women, small businesses, and rural communities. Collectively, these measures illustrate a governance approach rooted in outcome-driven policymaking, fostering trust, predictability, and long-term economic resilience.

Key Reforms Shaping Growth and Opportunity

Income Tax Reforms

In a major relief for Indian families and individual taxpayers, the Union Budget 2025-26 introduced substantial reforms in direct taxation, ensuring that annual incomes up to ₹12 lakh are exempt from income tax under the new regime, with the effective exemption rising to ₹12.75 lakh for salaried taxpayers on account of the standard deduction. This change reaffirmed the Government's commitment and left millions of middle-class households with higher disposable income, boosting consumption, savings, and investment.

In July 2024, the Government announced a comprehensive overhaul of the Income-tax Act, 1961 leading to New Income Tax Act, 2025 - a landmark development to simplify language, remove obsolete provisions and consolidate & restructure provisions. An internal Departmental Committee, constituted by Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) for comprehensive review of the existing Act, undertook the reform with three guiding principles:

Textual and structural simplification, improved clarity and coherence.

No major tax policy changes, ensuring continuity and certainty.

No modifications of tax rates, preserving predictability for taxpayers.



The Income Tax Act, 2025 modernizes India's direct tax framework by simplifying and streamlining tax legislation, making it more accessible, transparent, and less prone to litigation. A key reform is the introduction of a unified “Tax Year - the twelve-month period of the financial year commencing on the 1st April”, replaces the earlier concepts of Assessment Year and Previous Year. It not only improves clarity and makes it easier for taxpayers to understand the financial period their income and tax filings, but also reduces ambiguity in compliance and interpretation.

The Act strengthens digital-first enforcement, faceless tax administration, consolidates compliance provisions such as Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) under a single section, empowers the Government to introduce technology-enabled schemes, and enhances dispute-resolution mechanisms.

Labour Reforms

In a landmark reform, the Government of India consolidated 29 existing labour laws into four Labour Codes- the Code on Wages, 2019, the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, the Code on Social Security, 2020 and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020.

The new framework enhances ease of doing business while expanding wage security, social protection, and workplace safety for workers, including women, migrant, gig, and platform workers.

Wages: It aims to strengthen workers' rights while promoting simplicity and uniformity in wage-related compliance for employers. Uniform definition of wages and statutory minimum wages across sectors, improving income security and reducing disputes.

Industrial Relations: Simplification laws related to trade unions, conditions of employment in industrial establishment or undertaking, investigation and settlement of industrial disputes.

Social Security: Extension of social

security to all workers- including unorganized, gig, and platform workers-covering life, health, maternity, and provident fund benefits, while introducing digital systems and facilitator-based compliance for greater efficiency.

Occupational Safety & Health: Safeguarding worker rights and safe working conditions, and creating a business-friendly regulatory environment.

The reforms expand the safety net for India's workforce, with nearly 10 million Gig and Platform workers receiving annual social security support. Women workers benefit from assured leave provisions, maternity benefits and improved workplace safety. Overall, the Labour Codes mark a decisive shift from rule-heavy regulation to outcome-based governance, creating one unified framework for over 50 crore workers across sectors. Additionally, the codes lay a strong foundation for a future-ready workforce and resilient industries aligned with India's long-term growth aspirations.

Rural Employment Reforms

Rural employment reforms anchored in the enactment of the Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025, replaces the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) with a modern statutory framework that enhances livelihood security and integrates employment with community development.

Extended Employment Guarantee: 125 days of wage employment per rural household in a financial year.

Integrated Provision for Agriculture and Rural Employment: facilitate adequate availability of agricultural labour during peak sowing and harvesting seasons while ensuring a calibrated balance that supports both agricultural productivity and worker security.

Timely Wage Payments: timely payment of wages on a weekly basis or, in any case, within fifteen days of completion of work, reinforcing wage security and protecting workers from delays.

Asset Creation Focus: Work contributes creation of durable public assets across four priority thematic domains - water security & related works, rural infrastructure, climate-resilient projects, and livelihood enhancement.

Decentralized Planning: All works flow from Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans (VGPPs), prepared through participatory processes at the Gram Panchayat level and approved by the Gram Sabha. These plans are digitally integrated with national platforms including PM Gati Shakti, enabling convergence across Ministries while retaining decentralised decision-making.

Financial Architecture: The Act is implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, notified and operationalised by State Governments in accordance with its provisions.

Strengthened Administrative Capacity: The administrative expenditure ceiling has been increased from 6% to 9%, strengthening staffing, training, technical capacity, and field-level support to improve institutional delivery and outcomes.

Ease of Doing Business Reforms

To ensure that Quality Control Orders (QCOs) do not disrupt domestic production, the Government has implemented them in a phased and MSME-friendly manner through the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

Quality Control Orders (QCOs) - Key Relaxations: Additional compliance time was given to Micro (6 month) and Small (3 months) enterprises, exemptions were provided for export-oriented and R&D imports (upto 200 units), and legacy stock could be cleared within six months, easing the transition for businesses.

Under BIS Support Measures for MSMEs, enterprises received concessions on annual marking fees, the in-house laboratory requirement was made optional with access to accredited or shared labs, inspection and testing processes were made more flexible, and product certification guidelines were made publicly accessible to simplify compliance.

Under Improving Credit Flow to MSMEs, loans have been linked to external benchmarks with shorter reset periods (3 months), the Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs (MCGS-MSME) now provides cover up to ₹100 crore for equipment and machinery, Priority Sector Lending targets are enforced, collateral-free loans up to ₹10 lakh are available for micro and small enterprises, and working capital requirements for MSEs are set at a minimum of 20% of projected annual turnover for credit limits up to ₹5 crore.

Other MSME Reforms

The Budget 2025-26 expanded the MSME definition, raising investment and turnover limits to enhance confidence and generate employment for our youth, while credit guarantee cover for Micro and Small Enterprises doubled from ₹5 crore to ₹10 crore, improving access to formal finance for expansion and modernization, with higher limits and term loans for startups and exporters boosting growth and competitiveness.

Revised Thresholds:

Micro: Investment up to ₹2.5 crore, turnover up to ₹10 crore
Small: Investment up to ₹25 crore, turnover up to ₹100 crore
Medium: Investment up to ₹125 crore, turnover up to ₹500 crore

GST 2.0 Reforms

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) reforms, represent another landmark step in reshaping India's indirect tax framework to align with the aspirations of a young, entrepreneurial, and consumption-driven economy. The latest Next-Generation GST reforms, mark a decisive step towards simpler taxation, lower burden on citizens, and improved ease of doing business. They significantly strengthen GST's role as a citizen-centric, business-friendly, and growth-oriented tax system.

Simpler Tax Structure: The move to a two-slab GST regime (5% and 18%) reduces complexity, classification disputes, and compliance costs, improving ease of doing business, especially for MSMEs and small traders.

Lower Cost of Living: Wide-ranging rate reductions on essential goods, household items, healthcare products, education materials, housing inputs, and services directly reduce inflationary pressures and enhance household affordability.

MSME and Startup Enablement: Faster refunds, simplified registration and returns, and lower input costs aim to boost the present businesses and startups and incentivise the youth to enter into businesses and initiate startups.

Wider Tax Base and Revenue Stability: Simpler rates and improved compliance have expanded the GST taxpayer base to over 1.5 crore, while gross collections reached ₹22.08 lakh crore in FY 2024-25, reinforcing fiscal sustainability.

Overall, the Next-Generation GST reforms reinforce GST as a simpler, fairer, and growth-oriented tax system, delivering ease of living for consumers and ease of doing business for enterprises, while supporting consumption-led growth and long-term fiscal sustainability.

Key Takeaways

- 2025 Economic reforms focused on outcome-driven governance, simplifying systems, and boosting growth, inclusivity, and ease of doing business.
- Labour reforms unified 29 laws under four Labour Codes, extending social security and workplace safety.
- Next-Gen GST simplified taxation, expanded the taxpayer base to 1.5 crore.
- The Export Promotion Mission (₹25,060 crore) strengthens MSME and first-time exporter support with finance, compliance, and market access.
- Rural employment reforms provide 125 days of guaranteed paid work.

Export Promotion mission

In a major boost to India's trade competitiveness, the Union Cabinet approved the Export Promotion Mission (EPM) as a flagship structural reform with an outlay of ₹25,060 crore for FY 2025-26 to FY 2030-31. Announced in the Union Budget 2025-26, EPM marks a strategic shift from fragmented export support schemes to a single, outcome-based and digitally driven framework, aimed at empowering MSMEs, first-time exporters, and labour-intensive sectors. The Mission integrates financial support (Niryat Pratsahan) including affordable trade finance and credit enhancement with non-financial enablers (Niryat Disha) such as quality compliance, branding, logistics, and market access.

The Mission

Facilitates access to affordable trade finance for MSMEs,
Enhances export readiness through compliance and certification support,
Improves market access and visibility for Indian products,
Boosts exports from non-traditional districts and sectors, and
Generates employment across manufacturing, logistics, and allied services
It aims to position India's export ecosystem for sustained, inclusive, and globally competitive growth in line with Viksit Bharat @2047.

Other Trade Reforms

During the year, trade and ease of doing business reforms focused on simplifying procedures, digitising interfaces, and reducing transaction costs, especially for MSMEs. Key measures included digital integration of trade systems (National Single Window, Trade Connect, ICEGATE, e-Commerce Export Hubs), Next Gen GST 2.0 with risk-based refunds, District Business Reform Action Plan (D-BRAP 2025) launched by DPIIT to decentralise approvals and inspections EoDB reforms, and MSME/start-up support across 154 targeted reforms. Enhanced market access through GeM and MSME-SAMBANDH has strengthened MSME participation in Government procurement. Additionally, export incentives under the Foreign Trade Policy and disbursement of ₹58,000 crore under Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products scheme (till March 2025) have provided a further boost.

Driving Outcomes: Towards a Future-Ready Economy

Taken together, the year's economic reforms reflect a clear shift towards outcome-based governance, reducing friction for citizens and businesses, enhancing transparency and efficiency, and laying the foundation for sustained, inclusive growth. By simplifying taxation, modernizing labour laws, strengthening MSMEs, boosting rural employment, and advancing digital payments, these measures collectively foster trust, resilience, and global competitiveness in India's economy.

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

DC Budgam chairs meeting to expedite authentication, protection of Hokersar Wetland

KT News Desk

BUDGAM, JANUARY 1: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr Bilal Mohi-ud-din Bhat, Thursday chaired a coordination meeting regarding the facilitation and authentication of Hokersar Wetland, a designated Ramsar Site, through Revenue Authorities.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was convened to ensure accurate demarcation, authentication of land records, and strengthened inter-departmental coordination for the long-term conservation and protection of the wetland.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on revenue record authentication, boundary verification, geo-referencing, demarcation of wetland areas, and removal of



ambiguities in land ownership records to ensure that Hokersar Wetland is legally and physically protected from encroachments and unregulated activities.

The DC addressing the officers, emphasized the ecological significance of Hokersar Wetland, stating that it is not only a critical habitat for

migratory birds but also plays a vital role in maintaining environmental balance in the region.

"Hokersar Wetland is a natural heritage site of international importance. Accurate authentication of revenue records and scientific demarcation are essential to safeguard this Ramsar

Site from encroachments and degradation," the DC said.

He further stressed the need for seamless coordination between Revenue, Forest, Wildlife, Police, and Survey & Land Records departments to ensure time-bound completion of the assigned tasks.

The DC added that all concerned departments must work in close coordination and ensure that the process of facilitation and authentication is completed in a transparent, legally sound, and time-bound manner.

The DC also directed the concerned officers to share verified data, maps, and records and ensure proper documentation to strengthen the legal framework for wetland conservation.

The DC directed officer to expedite the authentication process and reinforce institutional

mechanisms for the effective protection, management, and sustainable conservation of Hokersar Wetland, in line with national and international environmental commitments.

The meeting was attended by ADC Budgam, ACR Budgam, SDM West, Srinagar; SDM Beerwah, SDM Khanshaib, SDM Chadoora, SDPO Magam, Regional Wildlife Warden, Kashmir, Divisional Forest Officer, Photo Interpretation (PI) Division, Divisional Forest Officer, Settlement & Demarcation, Srinagar, Kashmir; Range Officer, Hokersar, Budgam; Naib Tehsildar, Regional Director, Survey and Land Records, Srinagar; Settlement Assistant, Regional Director Survey & Land Records, Srinagar, besides other concerned officers.

DC Bandipora tours Ajas Tehsil, reviews office functioning



KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, JANUARY 01: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, conducted an extensive tour of Ajas Tehsil to review the functioning of government offices, inspect public facilities and listen to public grievances.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, inspected the Tehsil Office Ajas and reviewed routine administrative work, including the progress of on-going digitisation. She directed the staff to ensure timely delivery of services and maintain efficiency, transparency and responsiveness in public dealing.

The DC also visited Panchayat Ghar Ajas C, where she inspected the library and emphasized optimal utilisation of such

facilities for the benefit of local residents, especially students and youth. Interacting with the general public at various locations, the Deputy Commissioner patiently listened to their issues and assured them that genuine grievances would be addressed on priority by the district administration.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner visited the Higher Secondary School and Government Degree College Ajas, where she interacted with the staff and reviewed the overall functioning of the institutions. She stressed the importance of maintaining academic discipline, improving learning outcomes and fostering a student-friendly environment.

The visit reiterated the district administration's commitment to grassroots governance,

DC Anantnag reviews arrangements for Republic Day-2026 celebrations

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, JANUARY 01: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, SF Hamid, reviewed the arrangements for the upcoming Republic Day-2026 celebrations during a comprehensive meeting with concerned officers on Thursday at Dak Bangalow, Khanabal.

The meeting was attended by ADCs, GM DIC, ACR, ACD, SDMs, CPO, CMO, CEO, CAO, CAHO, DSEO, representative of SSP, district and sectoral officers, representatives of Educational Institutions and other concerned officials.

At the outset, the DC, as per an official statement, noted that Republic Day marks an important milestone in the history of our country. He called for celebrating the occasion with traditional zeal and enthusiasm, and directed all officers and departments to make necessary arrangements befitting the national event. He further remarked that all concerned officers and agencies must execute their assigned tasks seamlessly to ensure the celebrations are a grand success.



During the meeting, arrangements related to the timing and schedule of the event, security, sanitation and cleanliness, seating, medical facilities, power and water supply, illumination and decoration, deployment of fire tenders, transportation, invitations besides stage management, PA system installation, and prize distribution were reviewed in detail.

The meeting was informed that the main function will be held at Shaheed Humayun Muzammil Memorial, Government Degree College (Boys), Khanabal, where the National Flag will be unfurled by the Chief Guest, followed by a parade by contingents of the J&K Police and other

security forces. Colourful cultural items highlighting patriotism, nationalism, and folk traditions will also be presented on the occasion.

It was further informed that similar functions will be organized at the Sub-Division and Tehsil levels, where the respective SDMs and Tehsildars shall ensure that all necessary arrangements are made well in advance for smooth conduct of the Republic Day celebrations.

Urging officers to perform their duties diligently, the DC emphasized that coordinated efforts of all departments are essential to organize the Republic Day celebrations with festive and patriotic fervour.

JKBOSE discards old syllabus, advises shift to new syllabus in -2026

KT News Desk

JAMMU, JANUARY 01: Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education has discarded the old syllabus which was in vogue for the Failure students. The failure/ re-appear candidates of classes 10, 11 and 12 under the old syllabus were accordingly given multiple chances to pass the examination.

In line with the Board regulations, as per an official statement, the syllabus has already outlived its validity and thus no further chances will be given to failure/ re- appear students to take up examinations under the old scheme of studies.

According to a notification

issued by the Board, the concerned candidates have been advised to prepare as per the new syllabus for the annual private/ bi-annual examinations slated later this year after the conclusion of the summer zone examinations and the declaration of the annual results.

The notification has been issued well in advance to advise the students of the old course to timely switch over to the new syllabus for appearing in annual private/ bi-annual examinations in 2026 and thereafter.

It has been observed that the number of students who still have not cleared the examinations under the old scheme of studies is insignificant.

CRPF inaugurates Chenab Open Air Gym in Ramban



KT News Desk

RAMBAN, JANUARY 01: The 84 Battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) inaugurated the Chenab Open Air Gym at its Tactical Headquarters- Boom Ramban on the New Year's Day.

The gym, as per an official statement, was formally inaugurated by N. Gayabati Devi, First Lady of 84 Bn in a function attended by N. Ranbir Singh, Commandant, 84 Bn; Vikram Singh, Second-in-Command; A. K. Dixit, Second-in-Command, along with officers, families, personnel of 84 Bn CRPF and media representatives.

The open-air gym has been developed to promote physical and mental well-being among

CRPF personnel. It comprises 12 different pieces of equipment designed to facilitate overall physical fitness, focusing on strength, cardio and flexibility.

Addressing the gathering, the Commandant emphasised that physical fitness is paramount in a combat force like the CRPF. He noted that games, sports and gym activities are effective means to inculcate fitness among personnel. With this objective, the facility has been developed to further strengthen the fitness culture within the battalion.

The 84 Bn CRPF, Boom Ramban already has two badminton courts, one volleyball court, one lawn tennis court and one modern gym to ensure the overall fitness of its personnel.

Akhnoor farmers trained in modern fruit cultivation, Govt schemes

MPs Jugal Kishore, Sat Sharma interact with participants

KT News Desk

JAMMU, JANUARY 01: The Department of Horticulture Jammu organised a comprehensive Horticulture Awareness and Development Camp at Chak Brahmana, Akhnoor under ATMA/MIDH for promoting modern cultivation techniques and imparting awareness to local farmers about the government schemes.

The camp was graced by the Member Parliament (Lok Sabha), Jugul Kishore Sharma; Member Parliament (Rajya Sabha) Sat Sharma; Member Legislative Assembly Akhnoor, Mohan Lal Bhagat; Director Horticulture Jammu, Gul Sayed; Chief Horticulture Officer, R.K Kotwal; Horticulture Development Officer (HDO) Sandeep Sharma.

The programme commenced with a warm welcome to all participants followed by an overview of horticulture initiatives and objectives for boosting fruit production across the Akhnoor Zone.

The event, as per an official statement, saw enthusiastic participation from local farmers, agricultural stakeholders and community members.

Key highlights of the camp included presentations on scientific horticultural practices, high-value crop cultivation, soil health management and climate-smart farming techniques to enhance productivity.

A detailed briefing was delivered on central and UT government horticultural schemes including the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), JKICP and other support mechanisms for inputs, credit facilitation and marketing linkages.



Direct engagement between farmers and experts, including the Director Horticulture and the Chief Horticulture Officer addressed the queries on crop choices, improved sapling varieties, pest management, post-harvest practices and orchard care.

Emphasis was laid on adopting modern horticultural methods and diversification of crops like cultivation of guava, dragon fruit, citrus, mango and Aonla -all well-suited to the agro-climatic conditions of Jammu region.

MP Sat Sharma highlighted the pivotal role of horticulture in rural economy and urged farmers to avail themselves of the technical support and financial incentives provided by the government.

MP Jugul Kishore Sharma pitched for tapping the immense horticulture potential of the region and assured continued support for horticulture-based economic growth.

Jugal Kishore Sharma laid special emphasis on the cultivation of dragon fruit, describing it as a high-value horticultural crop with immense

income-generating potential for farmers. He stated that dragon fruit requires comparatively less water and is well-suited to the agro-climatic conditions of the Jammu region.

The MP encouraged farmers to move beyond traditional farming practices and adopt innovative and commercially viable crops like dragon fruit. He further urged them to avail the technical guidance and subsidies provided under the government horticulture schemes to enhance their income and create new livelihood opportunities.

The MLA Akhnoor lauded the initiative for empowering farmers with knowledge and resources to improve crop yields and income levels.

The camp concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by the Director Horticulture, who reaffirmed the Department's commitment to supporting farmers with training, market access and scheme implementation in collaboration with field-level officers including the Chief Horticulture Officer and HDO Akhnoor.

National Road Safety Month 2026

DC Kishtwar leads road safety pledge

KT News Desk

KISHTWAR, JANUARY 01: National Road Safety Month-2026 campaign was formally kick-started Thursday in Kishtwar district by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pankaj Kumar Sharma.

The DC, as per an official statement, administered the Road Safety Pledge to the participants including heads of line departments, officials of the DC office and members of Transport Union, reaffirming the district administration's commitment to minimize road accidents through collective responsibility and by promoting adherence to traffic rules.

The DC informed that the National Road Safety Month



2026 will be observed from 1st January to 31st January 2026, during which a series of focused activities and campaigns would be conducted across the district. The campaign aims to educate road users about safe driving practices, pedestrian safety and the importance of

following traffic regulations.

The DC directed the Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO), Tasleem Wani to organize scheduled activities during the month, including road safety awareness camps, public outreach programmes, enforcement drives besides medical

check-up camps for drivers and transporters to promote health and fitness for safer driving.

Emphasizing the importance of public participation, the DC stated that road safety is a shared responsibility and called upon all stakeholders—drivers, pedestrians, students and transport operators—to actively support the initiative and contribute towards making Kishtwar's roads safer for everyone.

The event was attended by ADDC Vinod Kumar Behnal; ADC Pawan Kotwal; ACR Idrees Lone; ACD Manoj Kumar; CPO Akhil Thakur; DSWO Tariq Parvaiz Qazi; ARTO Tasleem Wani; AD FCS&CA Shafqat Ali Keen; AD Handicrafts Pardeep Shan besides other officers, staff and representatives from the Transport Union.

DC Ramban inspects development works, reviews KV arrangements

KT News Desk

RAMBAN, JANUARY 01: Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan Thursday inspected ongoing developmental works and reviewed the arrangements for the commencement of the long-awaited academic activities of Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV) at the proposed accommodation at Kowbag.

The Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner Varunjeet Singh Charak; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Shokat Hayat Mattoo; Tehsildar Deep Kumar and other concerned officers.

The NHAI and other executing agencies were directed to speed up the pace of work to achieve timely completion of the ongoing construction and maintenance of roads and other projects. The DC instructed the officers to clear the identified land for its utilization as a parking facility.

The Deputy Commissioner also inspected the ongoing maintenance and preparatory works at the identified accommodation for KV. He reviewed the availability and condition of classrooms, sanitation facilities, drinking water supply and overall infrastructure required for the smooth start of academic work.

Cultural programme, Mushaira mark new year celebrations in Bhaderwah

KT News Desk

BHADERWAH, JANUARY 01: To mark the New Year 2026, a vibrant cultural programme and Mushaira was organised at Tilligarh Tourist Complex Bhaderwah, celebrating the region's rich cultural and literary heritage while spreading the message of peace, harmony and brotherhood.

The colourful event, as per an official statement, witnessed captivating cultural performances and soulful poetic recitations by renowned poets which were warmly received and highly appreciated by the audience.

The cultural programme was

organised by the Information Department while Mushaira was organised by the Police Department, reflecting coordinated efforts to promote art, culture and literature.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Sunil Kumar Bhutyal extended warm greetings to the people on the advent of New Year 2026. He lauded the efforts of the Information and Police Department for organising the programme.

The function was attended by CEO BDA, SP Jail, Accounts Officer BDA, officials from civil and police administration besides Information department Doda and prominent citizens and cultural enthusiasts.

LoP Sharma expresses deep concern over Dachhan fire, says 5–6 houses gutted

‘People, police, RR soldiers jointly trying to control blaze; relief, compensation will be discussed’

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jan 01: Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma on Thursday expressed deep concern over a massive blaze that broke out in Thechna village of the Dachhan area in Kishtwar district, in which several houses were completely gutted.

Speaking about the situation, LoP Sharma, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that the fire started in one house in the congested village and quickly spread to nearby homes, resulting in the destruction of at least five to six residential houses. “I have received a message that a major fire has broken out in Thechna village of Dachhan. The area is congested and the blaze has spread to the entire locality,” Sharma said.

He said that the local population, along with police personnel and the Rashtriya Rifles troops stationed in the area, have been making continuous efforts to control the flames.

“Many people are trying to put out the fire manually. The Army’s National Rifle Company is also assisting by arranging



water at the site. They are working tirelessly to stop the spread,” he said.

Sharma added that while the fire has been largely brought under control, one house

remains severely affected and still poses a risk of reigniting nearby structures.

“If that particular house is not brought under control soon, the rest of the houses could also be

damaged,” he said.

The Leader of Opposition also said he has spoken to the local administration and the fire brigade department to ensure swift response and assistance to the affected families. “I have already spoken to the fire brigade and they are on their way from Kishtwar. Once they reach, I believe the situation will be completely under control,” he said.

Expressing grief over the losses, Sharma said the incident was “very sad news” and assured that appropriate relief and compensation would be discussed once the fire is fully extinguished.

“It’s very unfortunate. I have full sympathy with the victims. Our immediate focus is on controlling the fire as quickly as possible. Tomorrow, we will discuss the relief and compensation issue with the administration,” he said.

The LoP said that he is in constant touch with both the administration and the local residents of Thechna village. “I am personally monitoring the developments and ensuring that necessary assistance reaches the affected people at the earliest,” Sharma said. (KNO)

Near record number of small boat migrants reach UK in 2025

AFP

London, Jan 01: The second-highest annual number of migrants arrived on UK shores in small boats since records were started in 2018, the government was to confirm Thursday.

The tally comes as Brexit firebrand Nigel Farage’s anti-immigration party Reform UK surges in popularity ahead of bellwether local elections in May.

With Labour Prime Minister Keir Starmer increasingly under pressure over the thorny issue, his interior minister Shabana Mahmood has proposed a drastic reduction in protections for refugees and the ending of automatic benefits for asylum seekers.

Home Office data as of mid-day on Wednesday showed a total of 41,472 migrants landed on England’s southern coast in 2025 after making the perilous Channel crossing from north-ern France.

The record of 45,774 arrivals was recorded in 2022 under the last Conservative government.

The Home Office is due to confirm the final figure for 2025 later Thursday.

Former Tory prime minister Rishi Sunak vowed to “stop the boats” when he was in power. Ousted by Starmer in July 2024, he later said he regretted the slogan because it was too “stark” and “binary” and lacked sufficient context “for exactly how challenging” the goal was.

Adopting his own “smash

the gangs” slogan, Starmer pledged to tackle the problem by dismantling the people smuggling networks running the crossings but has so far had no more success than his predecessor.

Reform has led Starmer’s Labour Party by double-digit margins in opinion polls for most of 2025.

In a New Year message, Farage predicted that if Reform got things “right” at the forthcoming local elections “we will go on and win the general election” due in 2029 at the latest.

Without addressing the migrant issue directly, he added: “We will then absolutely have a chance of fundamentally changing the whole system of government in Britain.”

In his own New Year message, Starmer insisted his government would “defeat the decline and division offered by others.”

Conservative Party leader Kemi Badenoch, meanwhile, urged people not to let “politics of grievance tell you that we’re destined to stay the same.”

—Protests —

The small boat figures come after Home Secretary Mahmood in November said irregular migration was “tearing our country apart.”

In early December, an interior ministry spokesman called the number of small boat crossings “shameful” and said Mahmood’s “sweeping reforms” would remove the incentives driving the arrivals.

A returns deal with France had so far resulted in 153 people being removed from the UK to France and 134 being brought to the UK from France, border security and asylum minister Alex Norris said.

“Our landmark one-in-one-out scheme means we can now send those who arrive on small boats back to France,” he said.

The past year has seen multiple protests in UK towns over the housing of migrants in hotels.

Amid growing anti-immigrant sentiment, in September up to 150,000 massed in central London for one of the largest-ever far-right protests in Britain, organized by activist Tommy Robinson.

Asylum claims in Britain are at a record high, with around 111,000 applications made in the year to June 2025, according to official figures as of mid-November.

Labour is currently taking inspiration from Denmark’s coalition government — led by the center-left Social Democrats — which has implemented some of the strictest migration policies in Europe.

Senior British officials recently visited the Scandinavian country, where successful asylum claims are at a 40-year low.

But the government’s plans will likely face opposition from Labour’s more left-wing lawmakers, fearing that the party is losing voters to progressive alternatives such as the Greens.

About 40 people dead, 115 injured in fire at Swiss Alpine bar during New Year celebration

AP

Crans-Montana (Switzerland), Jan 01: About 40 people were killed and another 115 injured, most of them seriously, after a fire ripped through a bar’s New Year celebration in a Swiss Alpine resort less than two hours after midnight Thursday, police said.

Authorities did not immediately have an exact count of the deceased.

The Crans-Montana resort is best known as an international ski and golf venue, and overnight, its crowded Le Constellation bar morphed from a scene of revelry into the site of potentially one of Switzerland’s worst tragedies.

Valais Canton police commander Frederic Gisler said during a news conference that work is underway to identify the victims and inform their families, adding that the community is “devastated.”

Beatrice Pilloud, Valais Canton attorney general, said it was too early to determine the cause



of the fire. Experts have not yet been able to go inside the wreckage.

“At no moment is there a question of any kind of attack,” Pilloud said.

Axel Clavier, a 16-year-old from Paris who survived the blaze, described “total chaos” inside the bar. One of his friends died and “two or three were

missing,” he told The Associated Press.

He said he hadn’t seen the fire start, but did see waitresses arrive with Champagne bottles with sparklers, he said.

Clavier said he felt like he was suffocating and initially hid behind a table, then ran upstairs and tried to use a table to break a Plexiglas window. It fell out of its

casing, allowing him to escape.

He lost his jacket, shoes, phone and bank card while fleeing, but “I am still alive and it’s just stuff.”

“I’m still in shock,” he added.

Two women told French broadcaster BFMTV they were inside when they saw a male bartender lifting a female bartender on his shoulders as she held a lit candle in a bottle. The

flames spread, collapsing the wooden ceiling, they told the broadcaster.

One of the women described a crowd surge as people frantically tried to escape from a basement nightclub up a narrow flight of stairs and through a narrow door.

Another witness speaking to BFMTV described people smashing windows to escape the blaze, some gravely injured, and panicked parents rushing to the scene in cars to see whether their children were trapped inside.

The young man said he saw about 20 people scrambling to get out of the smoke and flames and likened what he saw to a horror movie as he watched from across the street.

Officials described how the blaze likely triggered the release of combustible gases that ignited violently and caused what English-speaking firefighters call a flashover or backdraft.

“This evening should have been a moment of celebration and coming together, but it turned

into a nightmare,” said Mathias Reynard, head of the regional government of the Valais Canton.

The injured were so numerous that the intensive care unit and operating theater at the regional hospital quickly hit full capacity, Reynard said.

Crans-Montana is less than 5 km from Sierre, Switzerland, where 28 people, including many children, were killed when a bus from Belgium crashed inside a Swiss tunnel in 2012.

In a region busy with tourists skiing on the slopes, the authorities have called on the local population to show caution in the coming days to avoid any accidents that could require medical resources that are already overwhelmed.

With high-altitude ski runs rising around 3,000 metres (nearly 9,850 feet) in the heart of the Valais region’s snowy peaks and pine forests, Crans-Montana is one of the top venues on the World Cup circuit.

The resort will host the best men’s and women’s downhill

racers, including Lindsey Vonn, for their final events before the Milan Cortina Olympics in February. The town’s Crans-sur-Sierre golf club stages the European Masters each August on a picturesque course.

The Swiss blaze on Thursday came 25 years after an inferno in the Dutch fishing town of Volendam on New Year’s Eve, which killed 14 people and injured more than 200 as they celebrated in a cafe.

Swiss President Guy Parmelin said in a social media post that the government’s “thoughts go to the victims, to the injured and their relatives, to whom it addresses its sincere condolences.”

Thursday was Parmelin’s first day in office as the seven members of Switzerland’s government take turns holding the presidency for one year. Out of respect for the families of the victims, he delayed a traditional New Year’s address to the nation meant to be broadcast Thursday afternoon, Swiss broadcasters SRF and RTS reported.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Young Kashmiri

allowing users to upload photographs along with a written complaint for quick action. He said it took him around six months to develop both the hardware and software components of the device, using materials procured at his own expense.

“At present, this is a prototype, and I am controlling my own home through it,” he said, adding that he has already filed a patent for the innovation under Mission YUVA. “More such innovations will follow. Earlier, I have also developed devices aimed at preventing suffocation hazards,” he said.

Zahid said, “The Valley has immense potential for innovation, but what is needed is proper government support and a platform to nurture such ideas,” he added. (KNO)

J&K higher reaches

The JKUTDMA, in a statement, said that an avalanche with a low danger level is likely to occur above 2,300 meters in Bandipora district over the next 24 hours.

It has advised residents and travellers to avoid avalanche-prone areas and strictly follow official safety advisories. In case of emergencies, people are urged to dial 112 immediately for assistance, JKUTDMA officials said.

The officials said that despite moderate snowfall in popular destinations like Gulmarg and Sonamarg, road connectivity remains largely operational, though travellers should check weather conditions and exercise caution while visiting higher altitude regions. (KNO)

Weapon systems

the organisation to focus on innovation and explore areas that could further enhance private sector participation. Emphasising continuous learning and development, he said, “Technology, innovation, and new domains of warfare are advancing rapidly, making

yesterday’s knowledge obsolete. We must continue learning and challenging ourselves to pave the way for the next generation.”

During his visit to the DRDO headquarters, Singh was briefed by DRDO Chairman Dr Samir V. Kamat and Secretary of Defence R&D on the organisation’s 2025 achievements, ongoing R&D activities, industry collaborations, and the roadmap for 2026. Raksha Rajya Mantri Sanjay Seth, DGs, corporate directors, and senior DRDO scientists were also present.

The Defence Minister called for sustained efforts in deep tech and next-generation technologies, stating that such advancements will enhance national capabilities and strengthen India’s defence ecosystem. (KNO)

JERC shelves

the existing tariff without any change for FY 2025–26 except the HT Power Intensive Units category of consumers,” JERC said.

It also said that for HT Power Intensive Units category of consumers, the energy charge has been revised as submitted by the Petitioners, without any change in the demand charges.

Pertinently, KNO on November-20 exclusively published the news that the Power Development Department (PDD) has proposed an extra 20 percent charge on electricity consumption during morning and evening hours in the Valley.

The Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCL) had sought approval from JERC to impose a 20 percent surcharge on all categories of consumers except for the agriculture sector during peak hours, when demand is at its highest due to the bone-chilling cold in the Valley.

According to a petition that was filed before the JERC for J&K and Ladakh, KPDCL had proposed the surcharge for different consumer categories, including domestic households. (KNO)

PDD links official

News Observer (KNO), PDD in an official communicate that the measures are been taken in order to improve billing efficiency, collection efficiency and to reduce AT&C losses

Stating the revision of Load Curtailment Plan (LCP), PDD said the current plan may be revised by imposing no power cut on feeders having AT&C losses below 15 percent.

“Three hours power cut instead of the present scheduled cut of two hours on feeders having AT&C losses between 15 percent and 40 percent and six hours power cut instead of the present power cut of four hours on feeders having AT&C losses above 40 percent for both Kashmir and Jammu divisions,” it reads.

PDD further said that JKPCL shall explore other options, including entering into additional banking arrangements with other states for the period January 2026 to March 2026 in order to curtail the power purchase bill.

Under the accountability of underperforming divisions and sub-divisions, the DISCOMs, the JPDCL KPDCL were asked to serve show-cause notices to all divisions and sub-divisions and feeders found to be under performing that is where AT&C losses exceed 40 percent, under intimation to the Administrative Department.

“Further, action may be initiated for deduction of 50 percent of salary of the concerned officers or the officials of such divisions, sub-divisions or feeders,” it reads.

“Simultaneously, steps shall be taken to enhance billing efficiency upto 90 percent and to ensure 100 percent bill distribution among both metered and non-metered power consumers,” PDD said.

About the monitoring of prepaid smart meter billing, the JPDCL and KPDCL DISCOMs have been asked to maintain a proper account of energy (in MUs) billed through prepaid smart

meters and ensure installation of prepaid smart meters for all high-power consumers on or before 31.01.2026.

“JPDC and KPDCL shall constitute dedicated teams to verify feeder-wise AT&C losses vis-à-vis input energy and furnish detailed divisions, subdivisions or feeders where AT&C losses exceed 40 percent,” it reads.

In addition, the DISCOMs have been directed to constitute teams to verify load agreements in non-metered areas through phone, video recordings as evidence. “In cases where it is found that more electrical gadgets are in use than permitted under the approved load agreement, the practice of seizing equipment shall be avoided and instead, the load agreement shall be revised on the spot.”

Pertinently, KNO on Monday reported that PDD is likely to announce a new power curtailment schedule for consumers in the Kashmir division, which will include extra hours of load shedding in the high AT&C losses.

Sources had informed KNO that Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCL) was devising a new power curtailment plan that is likely to be rolled out in coming days. (KNO)

CM Omar will

leadership. He has a different approach, but his goals are the same as those of the National Conference,” Ramzan added.

The NC leader said a memorandum outlining the party’s demands has already been submitted to Union Home Minister Amit Shah. “The Home Minister has assured us that all our demands will be fulfilled soon. The Chief Minister will also meet Amit Shah to discuss other related issues,” he said.

Dismissing suggestions that the Centre is resorting to delay tactics, Ramzan said it has been only a short time since his meeting with the Home Minister. “It has been just ten days since I met him (Shah). These things take time,

and there is no question of deliberate delay,” he maintained.

He also informed that a meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Home Affairs is scheduled to be held in Port Blair, where he will be participating as a committee member. “Important issues will be discussed during the meeting,” he said.

On party organisation, Ramzan said NC workers are active across Jammu and Kashmir but stressed the need for greater outreach. “We must reach out to our workers, meet them and understand their problems. I intend to visit even far-flung areas to connect with party workers on the ground,” he said.

Chaudhary Ramzan also expressed gratitude to the party leadership for appointing him as the Additional General Secretary of the National Conference and reiterated his commitment to strengthen the party at all levels. (KNO)

Div Com Kashmir’s

the Divisional Commissioner called for collective responsibility, saying that maintaining air and water quality is everyone’s duty, as underlined by the Chief Minister. “Proper waste disposal, traffic discipline, and industrial compliance are essential. Industries and brick kilns have been directed to install exhaust treatment systems, and pollution checks for vehicles are being carried out regularly,” he said.

He reiterated the importance of balanced urban-rural development under the ‘Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Prayas’ vision. “Progress depends on societal participation. Our goal is holistic growth across sectors like health, infrastructure, power, and tourism,” he said.

The Div Com urged citizens and media to continue providing constructive feedback. “Every initiative needs refinement, and public input is vital. Our offices are open for all,” he concluded. (KNO)

DRDO will play crucial role in creation of Sudarshan Chakra: Defence Minister

PTI

New Delhi, Jan 01: The weapon systems developed by the DRDO played a decisive role during Operation Sindoor, serving as a testament to the professionalism and commitment of the organisation towards safeguarding national interests, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Thursday.

During his visit to the DRDO headquarters here on its 68th anniversary, he also said the organisation will play a "crucial role" in the creation of Sudarshan Chakra, and exuded confidence that it will "work wholeheartedly to achieve this goal soon".

Mission Sudarshan Chakra was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day address from the ramparts of the Red Fort in 2025.

"Under this initiative, the DRDO is responsible for equipping our vital installations with an air defence system to ensure complete aerial protection over the next decade. We witnessed the importance of air defence in modern warfare during Operation Sindoor. I am confident that DRDO will work wholeheartedly to achieve this goal soon," Singh said during a meeting.

The DRDO was set up in 1958 from the amalgamation of the then already functioning Technical Development Establishments (TDEs) of the Indian Army and the



Directorate of Technical Development & Production (DTDP) with the Defence Science Organisation (DSO).

It was then a small organisation with 10 establishments or laboratories. Over the years, it has grown multi-directionally in terms of the variety of subject disciplines, number of laboratories, achievements and stature, according to the defence ministry.

Singh called upon the DRDO to continue marching ahead "in sync with the rapidly-evolving technological ecosystem", and keep coming out with products that are relevant to the changing times.

He urged the organisation to continue focusing on innovation and identify more areas which can enhance the participation of the private sector. "The weapon

systems developed by the DRDO played a decisive role during Operation Sindoor, which serves as a testament to the professionalism and commitment of the organisation towards safeguarding national interests," the defence minister said.

Operation Sindoor was carried out last year in the early hours of May 7 eliminating at least 100 terrorists in response to the horrific Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 innocent civilians.

Commending the DRDO for bolstering India's indigenous capabilities by equipping the armed forces with state-of-the-art technologies and equipment, Singh said its equipment "worked seamlessly" during the operation, boosting the morale of the soldiers.

He praised the DRDO for

becoming trust builders along with technology creators, saying it makes people look towards it with hope, certainty, and belief.

Acknowledging the DRDO's collaboration with the private sector, he said the increased engagement with the industry, academia and start-ups has resulted in creation of a synergetic defence ecosystem.

"The DRDO has consistently improved its systems, processes, and working methods. From procurement to project management, from industry engagement to collaborating with start-ups and MSMEs, there is a visible effort to make the work easier, faster, and more reliable," he said.

Appreciating the efforts being made by the DRDO towards developing "deep tech and next-generation technologies", he said, headway in this endeavour will not only increase the nation's capabilities, but also strengthen the defence ecosystem.

Emphasising that the present era is not just of science, but of continuous development and constant learning, Singh said technology scanning, capability assessment, and future readiness are "no longer just words in this changing world".

"The world is changing every day. Technology, innovation, and new warfare domains are rapidly advancing, making yesterday's knowledge obsolete. We must never assume that the learning process

has ended. We must continue learning and challenge ourselves, paving the way for the new generation," he said.

During the meeting held on his visit to the DRDO headquarters, Singh was briefed by Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman, DRDO, Samir V Kamat about the ongoing R&D activities, achievements of the organisation in 2025, various initiatives in promoting industry, start-ups and academia and the roadmap for 2026.

Singh was apprised of the major targets set for 2026 and various reforms that the DRDO is taking for the betterment of the organisation.

"On DRDO Day, I extend my heartfelt greetings to all @DRDO_India scientists, personnel and their families. Thier unwavering commitment, scientific excellence and sense of national duty are vital to strengthening India's defence preparedness and advancing Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence," he also posted on X. "By developing indigenous, future-ready technologies, DRDO is reinforcing our strategic autonomy and the confidence of our armed forces. I wish the entire DRDO family a year of meaningful breakthroughs and continued service to the nation," the defence minister said.

Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth, various senior DRDO scientists and other senior officials were also present on the occasion.

PM Modi to inaugurate int'l exposition of sacred Piprahwa Relics connected to Buddha



PTI

New Delhi, Jan 01: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate here on Saturday the grand international exposition of sacred Piprahwa Relics, which were discovered in 1898 and hold a central place in the archaeological study of early Buddhism, the statement said.

The relics are among the earliest and most historically significant deposits directly connected to Bhagwan Buddha, an official statement said.

Archaeological evidence associates the Piprahwa site with ancient Kapilavastu, widely identified as the place where Bhagwan Buddha spent his early life before renunciation, it said.

The grand international exposition is titled 'The Light & the Lotus: Relics of the Awakened One' and it brings together, for the first time, the Piprahwa Relics repatriated after more than a century with authentic relics and archaeological materials

from Piprahwa that are preserved in the collections of the National Museum, New Delhi, and the Indian Museum, Kolkata. The Piprahwa Relics hold a central place in the archaeological study of early Buddhism, the statement said.

The exposition highlights India's deep and continuing civilisational link with the teachings of Bhagwan Buddha and reflects the prime minister's commitment to preserve India's rich spiritual and cultural heritage, the statement said.

The recent repatriation of these relics has been achieved through sustained government effort, institutional cooperation and innovative public-private partnership.

The exhibition is organised thematically. At its centre is a reconstructed interpretive model inspired by the Sanchi Stupa, which brings together authentic relics from national collections and the repatriated gems.

Rajnath to unveil portraits of Vajpayee, Malaviya at Delhi Assembly on Jan 3

PTI

New Delhi, Jan 01: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will unveil the portraits of Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya at the Delhi Assembly on Saturday. A coffee table book titled "Bharat Mata", which presents Indian nationalism as expressed through painting, architecture and literature, will also be released at the event.

The publication is dedicated to the creative and artistic expression of India's national consciousness and commemorates 150 years of the composition of the National Song Vande Mataram.

Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta convened a high-level meeting with senior officers of various departments including the Delhi Police to discuss the event that will also be attended by Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta. During the meeting, Gupta issued directions to ensure proper arrangements for the

smooth conduct of the programme, with special emphasis on security, crowd management, traffic regulation, parking facilities, fire safety and medical preparedness. Around 1,000 people are expected to attend the programme, and all



concerned departments have been instructed to maintain close coordination to ensure a safe, orderly and dignified event.

Gupta said the installation of the portraits is a meaningful homage to two towering national figures whose lives were dedicated to the service of the nation and strengthening of democratic values.

GST collections rise 6 pc to over Rs 1.74 lakh cr in Dec 2025

PTI

New Delhi, Jan 01: Gross GST collections rose 6.1 per cent to over Rs 1.74 lakh crore in December 2025, on slow growth in revenues from domestic sales following the sweeping tax cuts, according to government data released on Thursday.

Gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue in December 2024 was over Rs 1.64 lakh crore.

Gross revenue from domestic transactions rose 1.2 per cent to over Rs 1.22 lakh crore, while revenues from imported goods were up 19.7 per cent at Rs 51,977 crore during December, 2025.

Refunds were up 31 per cent to Rs 28,980 crore in December.

Net GST revenues (after adjusting refunds) stood at over Rs 1.45 lakh crore, up 2.2 per cent year-on-year.

Cess collection last month dipped to Rs 4,238 crore, as against Rs 12,003 crore collected in December 2024.

Effective September 22, 2025, GST rates on about 375 items were slashed, making goods cheaper.



Also, a compensation cess levy is levied only on tobacco and related products, as against luxury,

sin and demerit goods earlier. The lowering of GST rates has impacted revenue collections.

‘Frailty depression in older adults may together account for 17% of dementia risk’

PTI

New Delhi, Jan 01: Older adults who are frail and have depression could be at a higher risk of dementia, with the factors combined contributing to 17 per cent of the overall risk, according to a study.

The findings, published in the journal General Psychiatry, suggests that while frailty and depression each increase dementia risk on their own, having both the conditions could make one more than three times as likely to develop dementia, compared with those in good health.

According to researchers from Zhejiang University School of Medicine, China, frailty and depression should be routinely assessed in older people, as improving their physical and mental health could help reduce dementia risk.

The previously published research has primarily focused on the individual



associations between physical frailty or depression and dementia risk, they added. Data from more than two lakh people from the US and UK, including the UK Biobank dataset, were analysed.

During a 13-year follow-up, 9,088 participants were diagnosed with dementia.

Frail participants were more likely to be female,

have higher body weight, live with multiple long-term conditions, and lower educational attainment. They were also 2.5 times more likely to be diagnosed with dementia.

The participants with depression were had nearly a 60 per cent higher risk of being diagnosed with dementia.

However, "jointly, participants with both

physical frailty and depression exhibited the highest dementia risk compared with those without physical frailty and depression," the authors wrote.

"A significant additive interaction between physical frailty and depression was observed, with 17.1 per cent of dementia risk attributed to their interactive effects," they said.

The results highlight the complex links between frailty, depression, and cognitive function, the team added.

The researchers said that lower levels of frailty may allow a partial offset of depression-related cognitive burden, while lower levels of depression may help mitigate burden of frailty.

However, once both the conditions exceed a threshold, the compensatory effects may be compromised, leading to a sharp increase in the risk of dementia, they said.

GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPTT. GROUND WATER DIVISION SRINAGAR BAGHI-ALI-MARDAN, NOWSHARA SRINAGAR.

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Tel./FaxNo:-0194-2411285

Extension Notice 2nd Of Re-tender Corrigendum 3rd. (For SI. No. 01 & 06)

Subject: 1. Construction of 01 No. 125mm dia, Machine Drilled Hand Pump Tube Well & SITC of Electro mechanical works at Ground Colony Khimber District Srinagar. (SI. No. 01)
Tender ID 2025_PHE_284009_7.

2. Construction of 01 No. 125mm dia, Machine Drilled Hand pump Tube Well at Astan Colony Khonmoh near Darul-uloom Sheikh Ali Sarhadi at Khonmoh B district Srinagar. (SI. No. 06)
Tender ID 2025_PHE_284009_8.

Reference: 1. This office Re-Tender Corrigendum 3rd issued vide endorsement No: JS- PHE GWDS/25-26/Camp./15783-92, dated: 11-12-2025. Bearing Tender ID No. 2025_PHE_284009_1 & 6.
2. This office e-NIT No. 30-JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2025-26, issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/25-26/Camp./4725-36, dated: 12-08-2025. Bearing Tender ID No. 2025_PHE_284009_1 & 3.

Due to "NO Response" for the above mentioned works advertised vide e-NIT No. and Tender ID No's under reference. Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 30-12-2025 Up-to 03:00 PM are extended as per the details given below: -

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Period of submission of bids	12-01-2026 Up-to 03:00 PM
2.	Date of opening of tenders	13-01-2026 01.00 PM

NOTE:

All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endst: nos.

No: -JS-PHE/GWDS/25-26/Camp./17046-55
Dated: 30-12-2025

DIPK-9563/25
DATED: 01-01-2026

Sd/= Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.
Ground Water Division Srinagar.

Dozens presumed dead, about 100 injured in fire at Swiss Alps bar during New Year's celebration

AP

Crans-Montana (Switzerland), Jan 01: Dozens of people are presumed dead and about 100 injured, most of them seriously, following a fire at a Swiss Alps bar during a New Year's celebration, police said Thursday.

"Several tens of people" were killed at the bar, Le Constellation, Valais Canton police commander Frédéric Gisler said.

Work is underway to identify the victims and inform their families but "that will take time and for the time being it is premature to give you a more precise figure," Gisler said.

Beatrice Pilloud, attorney general of the Valais Canton, said it was too early to determine the cause of the fire. Experts have not yet been able to go inside the wreckage.

"At no moment is there a question of any kind of attack," Pilloud said. Officials called the blaze an "embrasement généralisé," a firefighting term describing how a blaze can trigger the release of combustible gases that can then ignite violently and cause what English-speaking firefighters would call a flashover or a backdraft.

"This evening should have been a moment of celebration and



coming together, but it turned into a nightmare," said Mathias Rénard, head of the regional government. The injured were so numerous that the intensive care unit and operating theater at the regional hospital quickly hit full capacity, Rénard said.

Helicopters and ambulances rushed to the scene to assist victims, including some from different countries, officials said.

"We are devastated," Frédéric Gisler, commander of the Valais Cantonal police, said during a news conference.

The injured were so numerous that the intensive care unit and operating theater at the regional

hospital quickly hit full capacity, according to regional councilor Mathias Rénard.

The municipality had banned New Year's Eve fireworks due to lack of rainfall in the past month, according to its website.

In a region busy with tourists skiing on the slopes, the authorities have called on the local population to show caution in the coming days to avoid any accidents that could require medical resources that are already overwhelmed.

The community is in the heart of the Swiss Alps, just 40 kilometers (25 miles) north of the Matterhorn, one of the most

famous Alpine peaks, and 130 kilometers (81 miles) south of Zurich.

The highest point of Crans-Montana, with a population of 10,000 residents, sits at an elevation of nearly 3,000 meters (1.86 miles), according to the municipality's website, which says officials are seeking to move away from a tourist culture and attract high-tech research and development.

The municipality was formed only nine years ago, on Jan. 1, 2017, when multiple towns merged. It extends over 590 hectares (2.3 square miles) from the Rhône Valley to the Plaine Morte glacier.

Crans-Montana is one of the top race venues on the World Cup circuit in Alpine skiing and will host the next world championships over two weeks in February 2027.

In four weeks' time, the resort will host the best men's and women's downhill racers for their last events before going to the Milan Cortina Olympics, which open Feb. 6.

Crans-Montana also is a premium venue in international golf. The Crans-sur-Sierre club stages the European Masters each August on a picturesque course with stunning mountain views.

Pope opens 2026 with plea for peace in countries bloodied by war, families wounded by violence

AP

Rome, Jan 01: Pope Leo XIV opened 2026 on Thursday with a plea for peace, singling out in particular countries "bloodied by conflict" and families wounded by violence.

Leo celebrated a New Year's Day Mass in St. Peter's Basilica and then delivered a special noontime prayer from his studio overlooking the piazza, which was full of pilgrims and tourists on the bright, chilly day.

Leo noted that Jan. 1 marks the church's World Day of Peace and used the occasion to issue a prayer.

"Let us all pray together for peace: first, among nations bloodied by conflict and suffering, but also within our homes, in families wounded by violence or pain," he said.

After a busy Christmas season, Leo has a few days of rest before he celebrates the church's Epiphany holiday on



Jan. 6. On that day, too, he officially closes out the 2025 Holy Year, the once-every-quarter-century celebration that brought millions of pilgrims to Rome.

Immediately thereafter, he is to preside over a two-day meeting of the entire College of Cardinals, the princes of the church who elected him pope,

as well as those who are over age 80 and didn't participate in the conclave but still remain part of the college.

Leo is resurrecting a tradition largely eschewed by Pope Francis to convene cardinals every so often to seek their counsel on how to govern the 1.4 billion-strong Catholic Church.

Rahman thanks Yunus govt functionaries, foreign dignitaries for support during Khaleda Zia's funeral

PTI

Dhaka, Jan 01: BNP acting chairperson Tarique Rahman on Thursday thanked Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus, government functionaries, dignitaries from South Asian countries and common people for attending his mother and former Bangladesh prime minister Khaleda Zia's funeral.

Rahman also expressed his "profound gratitude" to the civilian and military institutions, law enforcers, public servants and media professionals for their "professionalism, care and dedication" in ensuring a peaceful and dignified final farewell to Zia.

Hundreds of thousands of people on Wednesday bid an emotional farewell to 80-year-old Zia, the chairperson of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), who was laid to rest with state honour beside her husband Ziaur Rahman's grave near the parliament building amid tight security.

Rahman, who returned to Bangladesh on December 25 after 17 years of self-exile in



London, in a statement posted on his social media account, also promised to honour with humility and commitment his mother's legacy of devoting "her life to serving others, day after day, with relentless dedication."

Stating that his heart is "full of sorrow and gratitude," as he laid his mother, his "first teacher in life," Zia to her final rest beside his father, Rahman said, "The weight of her absence is immeasurable, but your presence, the Bangladeshi people's, has made this profound moment feel less alone."

He extended "heartfelt gratitude" to the

senior dignitaries of countries from the South Asian region, who attended the funeral personally, and to those countries, diplomats and partners who shared their condolences with the family and the party.

"Your gestures of condolence have touched our hearts profoundly," Rahman said.

Thanking the officers and staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he said their "thoughtful efforts" helped ensure that senior dignitaries from abroad were able to personally convey the condolences of their respective countries.

"Their presence reflected the deep respect my mother was held in beyond our borders," he added.

The long list of people and institutions that Rahman thanked comprised the officers and personnel of the Bangladesh Army, Navy, and Air Force; the men and women serving across the country's security and law-enforcement services; individuals from the intelligence community, and the many public servants and staff working within the National Security Adviser's office and several ministries.

Ashwin foresees bleak future for ODI cricket after 2027 World Cup

■ Says format is heading towards 'slow death'

PTI

New Delhi, Jan 01: Sceptical about the future of ODIs after the 2027 World Cup, former India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin says that the format has lost its space to mushrooming T20 leagues and an "overkill" of cricket caused by ICC's push for a marquee event every year.

Ashwin believes ODIs have become all but redundant due to T20 leagues and the pride of place that Test cricket continues to enjoy.

"I am not sure about the future of ODI [cricket] after the 2027 World Cup. I am a little worried about it. Of course, I am following Vijay Hazare Trophy but the manner in which I followed SMAT, I am finding slightly difficult to follow," Ashwin said on his Hindi YouTube channel Ash Ki Baat.

"Also, we need to know what audience wants to watch. I feel Test cricket still has space but ODI cricket, I truly feel (it) doesn't have the space," Ashwin added.

India's second-highest wicket-taker across formats with 765 scalps, Ashwin said that for a game to connect with fans, stars are needed, and cited the more than decent crowd turnout for Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli's recent Vijay Hazare appearances to drive home the point.

The bonafide greats of the game have a combined total of



86 ODI tons.

"Look, Rohit and Virat came back to the Vijay Hazare Trophy, and people started watching it. We have known that sport is always bigger than individuals, but at times these players need to come back to make the game relevant," he observed.

"Vijay Hazare Trophy, of course, is a domestic competition that not a lot of people follow, but they did (this time) because Virat and Rohit were playing. Even then, what happens when they stop playing ODIs?" he wondered.

Changing template of ODI batting

Ashwin spoke about how ODI cricket was once an 'amazing format' that produced a player like Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who knew how to control the innings as required by the game.

"One-day cricket, once upon

a time, was an amazing format because it gave a player like MS Dhoni who (would) take singles for 10-15 overs before he went berserk at the end.

"You don't have players like that (Dhoni) anymore, and there isn't any requirement to play like that, as you are playing with two new balls and five fielders inside the circle," said Ashwin.

Too many World Cups Ashwin urged the ICC to reconsider its scheduling and not be completely driven by commerce.

He said revenue generation is the primary reason for an ICC event taking place almost every year now. While the 2025 calendar featured the men's Champions Trophy and the women's ODI World Cup, in 2026, the T20 World Cup, for both men and women, will take place in different slots.

Friday
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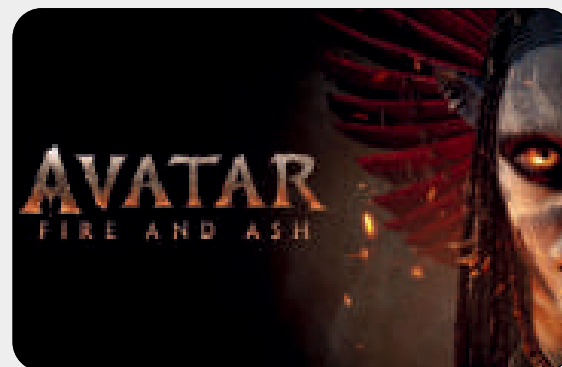
DHURANDHAR (A)
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IKKIS (U/A 13+)
HINDI - 03:20 PM, 06:45 PM



TU MERI MAIN TERA MAIN TERA TU MERI
(U/A 16+) HINDI - 06:20 PM



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