



10 soldiers killed, 10 injured as Army vehicle falls into gorge in Doda

PM, HM, Rajnath, LG, CM express grief, assure support to injured

Ahmad Taimur

Srinagar, Jan 22: Ten soldiers died and as many were injured after an Army vehicle fell into a deep gorge near the Khannitop on the Bhaderwah-Chamba road in Doda district on Thursday morning, officials said.

An official told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the Army's Casspir vehicle fell into the deep gorge near the Khannitop area after the driver lost control over the vehicle.

He said that the vehicle went down around 400 meters from the road, resulting in the on spot death of four soldiers and injuries to others. "Six soldiers later succumbed to their injuries while being rescued. The injured were shifted to SDH Bhaderwah, where from they have been airlifted to Army's command hospital in Udhampur for specialised treatment," he said.

The official said that the driver of the vehicle lost control due to the slippery condition of the road. "The accident happened when an Army part y was coming back from an operational duty," he added.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the loss of lives in the accident, saying their service to the nation will be remembered forever.

"Deeply anguished by the mishap in Doda, in which we have lost our brave army personnel. Their service to the nation will be remembered forever. May the injured recover at the earliest. All possible support is being provided to those



affected," he said in a X post.

Home Minister Amit Shah also condoled the death of soldiers in the tragic accident. "I am deeply pained by the road accident in Doda, Jammu and Kashmir. I express my heartfelt condolences to the families of the brave soldiers we have lost in this tragic incident. The injured jawans are being provided with the highest level of medical care. I pray to God that all the soldiers recover as soon as possible," he posted on X.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh also expressed sadness over the tragic road accident. "My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. The injured soldiers are receiving medical care and all necessary directions have been given to

ensure the best possible treatment. The nation stands with our Armed Forces and their families in this difficult hour," he said.

Meanwhile, Lt Governor Manoj Sinha expressed grief over the loss of lives, saying that the entire nation stands united with the bereaved families in solidarity and support.

"Deeply saddened at the loss of lives of 10 of our brave Indian Army soldiers in an unfortunate road accident in Doda. We will always remember the outstanding service and supreme sacrifice of our brave soldiers. My deepest condolences to the grieving families," he said in a post on X.

He further said that in this moment of | [More on P6](#)

Gusty winds sweep through J&K parts

Damage property, disrupt power supply; orange alert issued

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Jan 22:: Strong and gusty winds swept through several parts of the Kashmir Valley on Thursday evening even as the Weather Department issued an orange alert for the next two hours, warning of thundershowers and lightning.

An official told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the gusty winds caused widespread damage to property and also disrupted electricity supply across the Kashmir Valley and several parts of the Jammu region.

He said that the high-intensity winds uprooted trees, damaged rooftops of several



residential houses in parts of the Kashmir Valley, including Srinagar, Anantnag, Shopian, Kulgam, Budgam and Pulwama. "The strong winds also triggered forest fires in

several areas across Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Kulgam, Mohammad Ashraf Katoo, who is also holding additional charge of

Anantnag, told KNO that forest fires were raging at two locations in Anantnag district - Manzmoth and Verinag - and at three locations in Kulgam, which included Lammer, Akhal and Pranhah.

He said teams of the forest department have been deployed to the affected areas and efforts are underway to contain the blaze.

The Indian Meteorological Department issued an orange alert for several districts of Jammu and Kashmir including Anantnag, Bandipora, Baramulla, Budgam, Doda, Ganderbal, Kishtwar, Kulgam, Kupwara, Poonch, Pulwama, Rajouri, Ramban, Reasi, Shopian, | [More on P6](#)

Over 80% of power supply disrupted in Kashmir

Riyaz Bhat

Gusty winds across Kashmir valley on Thursday late evening disrupted power supply in more than 80 percent areas of the region. An official informed the news

agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the power supply was affected in more than 80 percent of the valley due to gusty winds. The official also said that due to the gusty winds, the department was supplying nearly 300 Megawatts of power against the 1900 MWs. The official said that the | [More on P6](#)

Budgetary proposals should be feasible: CM Omar

Holds pre-budget consultations with depts



KT News Desk

Jammu, Jan 22: On the third straight day on Thursday, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah chaired series of pre-budget consultation meetings of Jal

Shakti, Agriculture, Rural Development, Forest, Food & Civil Supplies, Youth Services and Sports, other key sectors to finalise the priorities and developmental plans in view of the | [More on P6](#)

CM to hold pre-budget meetings with MLAs

KNO Special Correspondent

After holding pre-budget meetings with different administrative departments, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is set to meet Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) to seek their inputs for the upcoming budget. According to the schedule, the Chief Minister will hold separate meetings with MLAs representing North Kashmir, | [More on P6](#)

Cabinet clears excise policy

Discusses LG's address to Assembly

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Jan 22: The Cabinet on Thursday cleared and the Excise Policy for 2026-27, sources disclosed.

Sources told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the Cabinet meeting was chaired by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at civil secretariat Jammu this morning to discuss key administrative proposals.

According to sources, the Cabinet cleared the annual Excise Policy 2026-27, which is expected to generate additional revenue of Rs 127 crore. As per the proposal approved by the Cabinet, no | [More on P6](#)

LoP Sharma calls on Home Minister Shah



Discusses J&K Assembly Session, security, development

KNO Desk

New Delhi, Jan 22: Leader of Opposition, Sunil Sharma on Thursday met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi and held a detailed discussion on the upcoming Assembly

session, the prevailing political scenario, the security situation, and developmental priorities of Jammu & Kashmir.

During the meeting, LoP Sharma according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) apprised HM Shah of the ground-level political dynamics in J&K and conveyed the expectations and aspirations of the people from the forthcoming | [More on P6](#)

Snowfall, rain expected in J&K, disruptions likely

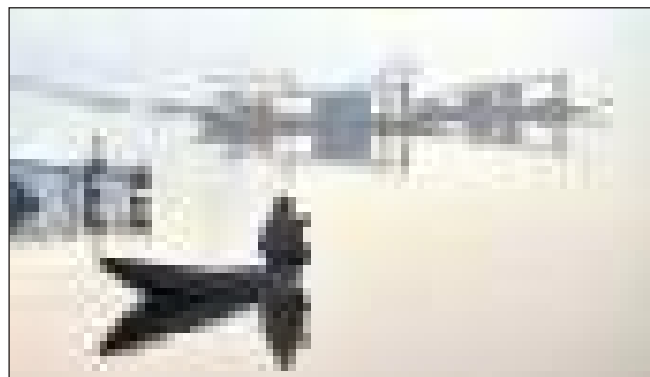
Valley reels under sub-zero temps | Western Disturbance approaches

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Jan 22: Minimum temperatures across Jammu and Kashmir dipped further on Thursday, with most places in the Kashmir Valley recording sub-zero night temperatures, while Ladakh continued to reel under intense cold conditions, officials said.

According to data obtained by the news agency - Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Srinagar recorded a minimum temperature of minus 3.4 degrees Celsius, down from minus 2.4 degrees Celsius the previous day.

Several parts of south Kashmir witnessed sharper drops, with Pulwama emerging as one of the coldest places at minus 5.8 degrees Celsius, compared to minus 4.9 degrees Celsius on Wednesday.



Anantnag settled at minus 5.3 degrees Celsius, while Shopian recorded minus 5.4 degrees Celsius.

Pahalgam, a key tourist destination, recorded a minimum of minus 4.4 degrees Celsius, slightly lower than Wednesday's minus 3.8 degrees. Sonamarg remained cold

at minus 6.1 degrees Celsius, compared to minus 5.5 degrees a day earlier.

Awantipora and Pampore also saw notable drops, recording minus 5.2 degrees and minus 5.0 degrees, respectively.

In north Kashmir, Kupwara recorded minus 3.7 degrees Celsius, while | [More on P6](#)

SMVDIME MBBS students to be adjusted in 7 new GMCs of J&K

50 supernumerary seats created; BOPEE to conduct counselling tomorrow

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Jan 22: Students affected by the withdrawal of the letter of permission for the MBBS course at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Institute of Medical Excellence (SMVDIME) will now be accommodated in seven newly established Government Medical Colleges of Jammu & Kashmir.

According to a notification issued by the Board of Professional Entrance Examination (BOPEE), a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) 50 supernumerary seats have been created for SMVDIME students

across these colleges. Of these, eight seats have been allotted to GMC Anantnag, while seven seats each have been allotted to GMC Baramulla, GMC Doda, GMC Handwara, GMC Kathua, GMC Rajouri, and GMC Udhampur.

The BOPEE has announced that the physical round of counselling for these students will be conducted on January 24 at 11:00 AM, the notification reads.

Meanwhile in a post on X, the chief minister's office said that the issue of admission to MBBS students of SMVDIME has been resolved.

"The Government has resolved the | [More on P6](#)

M&HED gears up with 300 machines, 26 control rooms for snow clearance across Kashmir

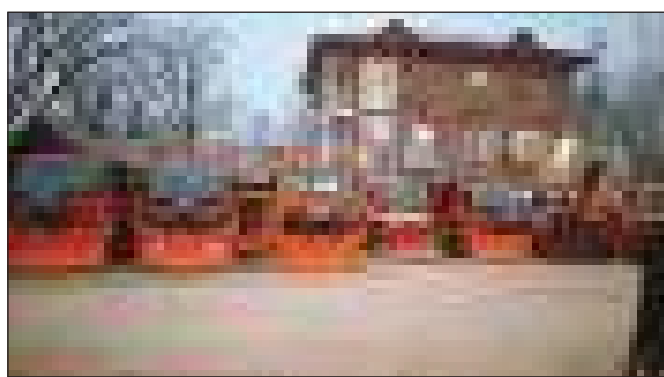
10,000-15,000 km road network to be cleared

All operators, mechanics, field staff on standby across districts

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jan 22: The Mechanical Engineering department Kashmir (M&HED), on Thursday said it has mobilised the entire workforce and machinery to ensure smooth snow clearance operations across Kashmir as the region braces for winter weather.

According to officials, over



300 snow clearance machines have been stationed at 26 control rooms across all major districts of Kashmir. The department has set a target of clearing

10,000 to 15,000 kilometres of road network during the upcoming snow spells.

"The Valley has been divided into four major divisions for

better coordination - Srinagar-Budgam, Anantnag, Baramulla-Gulmarg and Ganderbal-Kupwara-Bandipora," an official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

He said all operators, mechanics and field staff are fully mobilised, with machinery positioned since November 15. "Our mechanical department is also managing essential hospital services like oxygen supply, heating and lift operations at GMCs and district hospitals. We are ready on all fronts," he added.

Officials appealed to residents to cooperate with snow clearance teams. "People are requested to | [More on P6](#)

Ensure peaceful, incident-free Republic Day: DGP

Reviews security scenario, anti-terror operations

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jan 22: Director General of Police (DGP), Jammu & Kashmir, Nalin Prabhat on Thursday chaired a comprehensive security review meeting at DPO Anantnag to assess the prevailing security situation and review ongoing anti-terror operations in the districts of Anantnag, Kulgam and Police District Awantipora, ahead of Republic Day 2026.

The meeting was attended by Special DGP (Coordination) S.J.M. Gillani, IGP Kashmir Zone V.K. Birdi, DIG South Kashmir



Range Javaid Iqbal Matoo, SSP Anantnag Amritpal Singh, SSP Kulgam Anayat Choudhary, SSP Awantipora Sajad Hussain Shah, along with other Gazetted Officers and SHOs from Districts Anantnag, Kulgam and PD Awantipora.

During the meeting, the DGP conducted a detailed review of law-and-order management, counter-terrorism preparedness, crime control measures, and security arrangements for the upcoming Republic Day celebrations. | [More on P6](#)

150 Years of Vande Mataram
DC Srinagar leads
district level event,
lauds organisers &
participants

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR JANUARY 22: To mark the Phase II of commemoration of 150 years of the national song "Vande Mataram", a district level event was held Thursday at the Government College of Education (GCoE), Srinagar.

The programme, as per an official statement, organized by District Administration Srinagar in collaboration with Government College of Education, Srinagar was presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo

Among those present on the occasion were Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Aadil Fareed; SDM East, Zubair Ahmad; Principal, GCOE, Prof. Seema Naaz, along with faculty members and students from various degree Colleges of the district.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the timeless relevance of "Vande Mataram", noting that the song not only inspired India's freedom struggle but also continues to serve as a powerful symbol of unity, harmony and national pride. He further observed that the national song evokes deep reverence for the nation's natural landscape, its mountains, rivers and land regarded as life-giving and sacred elements that shape India.

The DC emphasized that such programmes aim to instil a sense of patriotism while encouraging them to understand rich cultural and historical legacy. The DC added that the 150-year commemoration provides an opportunity to reflect on the values of unity, sacrifice and freedom inspiring younger generations to uphold the ideals of patriotism.

The Deputy Commissioner lauded the organizers and participants for conducting the event in an effective and meaningful manner. He also felicitated the participants of the event.

During the programme, students from various City Colleges presented patriotic and national songs, adding cultural vibrancy to the event.

Earlier, Principal GCOE Prof. Seema Naaz welcomed the participants and highlighted the role of educational institutions in commemorating the 150 years of the national song "Vande Mataram".

Data-driven interventions key to
reducing road accidents in J&K: CS

Reviews implementation of SC mandated road safety directives in J&K



KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JANUARY 22: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Thursday while assessing the implementation of road safety measures as recommended by the Supreme Court underscored the need for extensive use of GIS-based data to identify vulnerable and accident-prone road stretches across districts.

He emphasized that such data-driven identification would enable focused technological and physical interventions to significantly reduce road accidents in the UT.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Administrative Secretaries of concerned departments, senior officers of the Traffic Police, and Heads of Departments, while Deputy Commissioners participated through video conferencing from their respective districts.

The Chief Secretary sought a detailed account of the Supreme Court directions on road safety and the status of compliance by the concerned departments. He stressed that a clear-cut and time-bound roadmap for implementation of each directive must be prepared without delay.

He called for leveraging

available transport and traffic data to guide interventions such as targeted safety measures, strategic deployment of traffic police, and engineering corrections on road patches identified for frequent accidents.

Emphasizing deterrence as a key component of road safety, the Chief Secretary directed the authorities to strictly enforce punitive measures against habitual and serious traffic violators. These include cancellation of driving licences, registration certificates, and other statutory actions against offenders involved in rash driving and non-compliance with traffic rules.

The Chief Secretary also took stock of the road accident scenario in Jammu and Kashmir based on data available on the i-RAD portal. He reviewed accident trends with respect to time of day, monthly patterns, district-wise distribution, classification of roads, and the nature of traffic violations leading to such mishaps.

During the meeting, road construction agencies including PWD, NHAI, NHIDCL, BRO and SAMPARK were asked to brief the meeting on steps taken for removal of identified black spots in accordance

with the Black Spot Protocol. The Chief Secretary also reviewed measures related to traffic calming, installation of safety signage, and fitting of speed-limiting devices in school buses to ensure student safety.

Secretary, Transport Department, Avny Lavasa made a detailed presentation on the functioning of the i-RAD and e-DAR portals in the Union Territory. She informed that since the operationalisation of the i-RAD portal in June 2022, a total of 20,135 road accidents involving 32,819 persons have been reported in J&K. These accidents resulted in 3,688 fatalities and 29,131 grievous or minor injuries too.

It was further informed that the majority of accidents occur on major highways, particularly in the districts of Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur and Rajouri. Data analysis revealed that most accidents took place between 3:00 pm and 9:00 pm, with rash driving and over-speeding accounting for nearly 50 percent of road mishaps reported during 2025.

The Transport Department also shared enforcement statistics, stating that 40,197 challans were issued in 2024 and 52,543 challans in 2025, amounting to fines of

Rs 10.15 Cr and Rs 15.88 Cr respectively. Major violations included non-wearing of helmets, driving without seat belts, use of mobile phone while driving, over-speeding, and jumping of red lights. In 2025 alone, 1,528 vehicles were seized, 1,641 driving licences suspended, 10,439 vehicles blacklisted, 1,192 registration certificates cancelled, and 300 route permits revoked.

In this meeting the IGP Traffic, M. Suleman apprised about the functioning of surveillance cameras installed under the Integrated Traffic Management System (ITMS) and traffic signal cameras under the Intelligent Light Traffic System (ILTS) at major junctions in Jammu and Srinagar.

He informed that the Traffic Police enforced 12,36,380 e-challans in 2023, 15,03,901 in 2024 and 14,92,591 in 2025, imposing fines of Rs 85.16 Cr, Rs 120.09 Cr and Rs 145.12 Cr respectively. He further added that 15,947 vehicles were seized during 2025 for various violations of the Motor Vehicles Act.

The meeting also reviewed the implementation of the Road Accident Victim Fund, establishment of trauma care facilities along highways, and the functioning of the Institute of Driving Training and Research (IDTR) at Kot Bhalwal and the Inspection and Certification Centre (ICC) at Samba. The performance of the District Infrastructure Quality Control (DIQC) mechanism in conducting road safety audits across districts was also assessed.

The Chief Secretary reiterated the government's commitment to reducing road accidents through coordinated enforcement, engineering solutions, public awareness, and strict adherence to judicial and statutory road safety norms for saving the precious lives of the people here in J&K.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that Mr. Reyaz Ahmad Khan, S/o Gh Mohd Khan, R/o Dawlatabad Nusoo, Badragund, P/O Qazigund, District Anantnag, has lost/misplaced the original NOC issued by Mahindra and Mahindra Financial Services Limited.

Details of the lost NOC are as under:
NOC No.: 1417217
Contract No.: 1640323
Vehicle: Mahindra Sento
Registration No.: JK03C-4573

The said NOC has been lost and is not traceable. A request has been made to the concerned authority for issuance of a duplicate NOC.

If anyone has any objection regarding the issuance of a duplicate NOC, the same may be raised within 5 days from the date of publication of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject: Change in location/title of the Excursion agency/Travel Agency under the name and style M/S SUNWAY KASHMIR TOUR AND TRAVELS SITUATED AT ALUSTANG HAZRATBAL SRINAGAR

Whereas, I/We Nissar ahmad wani S/O Manzoor ahmad wani Proprietor of the Excursion Agency/Travel Agency have applied in Tourism Department for change in location of my Excursion Agency/Travel Agency under the name and style SUNWAY KASHMIR TOUR AND TRAVELS from Alustang Hazratbal to Burzahama Shalimar Srinagar as per Section 39 of the J&K Registration of Tourist trade act 1978/2011 Whereas, the said excursion agency/ travel agency is registered with the Department of Tourism, Kashmir under the name and style" SUNWAY KASHMIR TOUR AND TRAVELS in the name of Mr./Mrs./Ms NISSAR AHMAD WANI S/O Manzoor ahmad wani R/O MULPHAQ BURZAHAMA SRINAGAR bearing registration No. JKEA00002289 and the same is renewed upto 31-12-2025 Whereas, I/We have submitted photographs of office both inside and outside and Photocopy of Registration Certificate; Before considering my request for change in location of my Excursion Agency/Travel Agency SUNWAY KASHMIR TOUR AND TRAVELS FROM ALUSTANG HAZRATBAL TO BURZAHAMA SHALIMAR SRINAGAR is considered, the matter is hereby notified for information of General Public/Financial Institutions/ Banks/ Development Authorities/ PHE Department/ Electric Department that in case of any objection, the same should reach the office of Deputy Director Tourism, Registration within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objections beyond a period of 07 days will be entertained and my request for the same will be considered under rules, after submission of requisite documents.

Dated 22/01/2026

DLSA Reasi holds Legal
Awareness Programmes on
public welfare issues



KT NEWS DESK

REASI, JANUARY 22: Under the visionary leadership of Chairman Khalil Choudhary, Chairman (also Pr. District and Sessions Judge Reasi) and Secretary Pooja Gupta, District Legal Services Authority Reasi on Thursday organised multiple awareness programs in different parts of the district.

An awareness session, as per an official statement, on "Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment at Workplace (POSH) Act" was held at village Akhli for the members of a local Self Help Group. Assistant LADC, Bhumika Rajput was the resource person. She elaborated the provisions and legal framework of the POSH Act. The participants were apprised of what constitutes sexual harassment, the rights and duties of employees and employers, the role of the internal Complaint Committee and the procedure for filing complaints under the Act. Incharge Self Help Group, Meenakshi Verma and members of the group attended the program.

An awareness program on "Patriotism" was held at Government High School-Garn Katra by PLVs of TLSC.

The PLVs highlighted the importance of duties of citizens,

constitutional principles and the role of individuals in strengthening the nation. Emphasis was laid on promoting harmony, social responsibility and awareness about the legal rights and duties as responsible citizens of the country.

Awareness programs on Prohibition of Child Marriage Act was also organised at Govt. Higher Secondary School Reasi, GHSS Bhomag and GHSS Pouni. The participants were made aware about the social and legal consequences of child marriage, provisions of the Prohibition of child Marriage Act, 2006 and the importance of ensuring education, health and overall development of children. They were also informed about free Legal Aid services available through DLSA Reasi and the role of Legal Services Authorities in safeguarding the rights of women and children.

Further, a series of awareness programs in Mahore, focusing on the Government Schemes related to women empowerment, welfare of senior citizens, children and persons with disabilities.

The PLVs sensitized the participants about important welfare schemes related to social security, health, education, women & child welfare and other public benefit initiatives.

Speaker J&K
Assembly
expresses grief over
Doodkhatu fire
incident



KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, JANUARY 22: Speaker J&K Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather has expressed grief over loss of property and damage of houses due to the fire incident that broke out on Wednesday late night in village Doodkhatu of Tehsil Char-i-Sharief, district Budgam.

Showing his concern over the unfortunate incident, the Speaker, as per an official statement, who is in Lucknow to attend the 86th All India Presiding Officers Conference (AIPOC)-2026, immediately directed the Administration to initiate necessary steps for the relief and rehabilitation of the victims.

The speaker exhorted that in view of harsh weather conditions, immediate relief in the form of temporary shelter, free rations, utensils, clothing and financial assistance shall be provided to the victims of fire incident to alleviate their sufferings.

He also directed the district administration to assess the loss of property occurred due to fire incident at the earliest.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
ENGINEER R&B DIVISION GUREZ

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

(R&B) E-NIT No. 79/2025-26/EE/R&B/Grz/9408-15/E-tendering/Dated:-21-01-2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-:

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (in Rs)	Time of Completion	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Major Head of Account	Class of Contractor	Project Authority
1	Construction of Additional Class room (ACR) Middle School Banjaran	20.60	800 (indicate name of work with NIT serial no. on TR)	90 days	41200	SAMAGRA	CEE/BEE	Project Director, Samagra Shiksha J&K
2	Construction of Additional Class room (ACR) Middle School Dangithal Tulail	20.84	800 (indicate name of work with NIT serial no. on TR)	90 days	41680	SAMAGRA	CEE/BEE	Project Director, Samagra Shiksha J&K
3	Construction of Chemistry Room Higher Secondary School Purana Tulail	17.95	800 (indicate name of work with NIT serial no. on TR)	90 days	35900	SAMAGRA	CEE/BEE	Project Director, Samagra Shiksha J&K
4	Construction of Boundary wall Middle School Neeru	7.46	300 (indicate name of work with NIT serial no. on TR)	30 days	14920	SAMAGRA	DEE/CEE	Project Director, Samagra Shiksha J&K
5	Construction of Boundary wall Higher Secondary School Purana Tulail	9.41	600 (indicate name of work with NIT serial no. on TR)	40 days	18820	SAMAGRA	DEE/CEE	Project Director, Samagra Shiksha J&K
6	Construction of Boundary wall (by way of Chain Link Fencing) Middle School Markoot	7.41	300 (indicate name of work with NIT serial no. on TR)	30 days	14820	SAMAGRA	DEE/CEE	Project Director, Samagra Shiksha J&K
7	Repairs and Renovation of Middle School Kashpot	3.47	200 (indicate name of work with NIT serial no. on TR)	15 days	6940	SAMAGRA	DEE/ Start-up & MSE	Project Director, Samagra Shiksha J&K

Position of AAA:- (Accorded)

Position of TS:- (Accorded)

1. The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:

S. No.	Particulars	Dated
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice.	21-01-2026
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 22-01-2026 (01:00 PM) To 05-02-2026 (04:00 PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	From 22-01-2026 (01:00 PM) To 05-02-2026 (04:00 PM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	07-02-2026 (10:00 AM)
6	Date and time of opening of bid (online)	In the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Gurez

DIPK-10290/25
DATED: 22-01-2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Gurez

Faith and Tragedy Collide: Pilgrim Son Sees Mother's Brutal Murder on CCTV

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Jan 22: What could be more heartbreaking and a nightmare for a son than watching his mother being murdered on CCTV while he is thousands of miles away from home? This is what happened with Rashida Begum (65) of Srinagar's Nowshera area, who was allegedly murdered on Thursday by her domestic help while her son was in Saudi Arabia performing Umrah.

Rashida was alone at her home as her son was in Saudi Arabia for Umrah and her husband was at his shop in Lal Chowk when the domestic help allegedly hit her with a bat and later slit her throat before feeling with her mobile phone. An official



said that the accused domestic help was later arrested after a manhunt was launched to nab him.

Narrating the horrific incident, Rashida's son-in-law, Shafat said that she was in contact with his wife till 11 am during the day. "After lunch, I sent the children and my wife to her house and by the time they arrived, she was lying in a pool of blood with her throat slit," he said.

"I received a call from my wife regarding the incident. When I arrived, I saw the horrific scene and the police reached soon after," he added.

He said that her son was in Saudi Arabia for Umrah. "When he was informed about the incident, he accessed the CCTV footage linked to his phone and helplessly

watched what had happened. My father-in-law was also not present at home at the time as he was at his shop in Lal Chowk. He later returned home after being informed," he said.

Meanwhile, one of her neighbours said that he first heard about the incident around 4 pm and rushed to the house, where cries and chaos filled the area. He said that eyewitnesses had seen the domestic help first hitting Rashida with a bat, leaving her unconscious and then slit her throat.

The police said that the accused was traced with the help of the mobile phone he taken from Rashida after the murder. "The accused has been arrested and further investigation is underway," police said—(KNO)

J&K issues 15 lakh e-challans in 2025

Recovers fine of over Rs 145 crore from violators; impounds 15,947 vehicles

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Jan 22: Jammu and Kashmir's traffic police have intensified their drive against rule-breakers. In 2025, the department issued a staggering 14.92 lakh digital fines, collected over Rs 145 crore in penalties, and even seized 15,947 vehicles for serious violations, officials said on Thursday.

The data was revealed in a high-level review chaired by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, which assessed compliance with Supreme Court-mandated road safety measures and outlined a roadmap for GIS-based, data-driven interventions to reduce accidents and fatalities.

IGP Traffic, M. Suleman in the meeting informed that fines have increased steadily from Rs 85.16 crore in 2023 to Rs 120.09 crore in 2024 and Rs 145.12 crore in 2025, largely due to the expansion of ITMS and ILTS surveillance systems across Srinagar and Jammu.

Transport Secretary Avny Lavasa also highlighted that enforcement drives have yielded 52,543 challans in 2025, amounting to Rs 15.88 crore in fines.

During the same period, authorities suspended 1,641 driving licences, cancelled 1,192 registration certificates, revoked 300 route permits, and blacklisted 10,439 vehicles for repeated



violations including over-speeding, signal jumping, and use of mobile phones while driving.

Since the operationalisation of the I-RAD portal in June 2022, a total of 20,135 road accidents involving 32,819 persons have been reported in J&K, resulting in 3,688 fatalities and 29,131 injuries.

The figures reveal that most accidents occur on major highways in Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, and Rajouri, primarily between 3:00 pm and 9:00 pm, with rash driving and over-speeding contributing to nearly half of all incidents.

In the meeting, CS Dulloo stressed on leveraging GIS mapping and traffic data to identify accident-prone black spots, guide engineering corrections, ensure proper deployment of

traffic police and implement targeted safety measures such as traffic calming, speed-limit enforcement and safety signage installation.

He also stressed the need for deterrence through strict punitive actions against habitual violators.

The meeting also reviewed trauma care preparedness along highways, the Road Accident Victim Fund and the functioning of the Institute of Driving Training and Research (IDTR) at Kot Bhalwal and the Inspection and Certification Centre (ICC) at Samba.

"Data-backed interventions, combined with technology, enforcement and engineering, are critical to saving lives and ensuring safer roads across J&K," Dulloo said—(KNO)

Baramulla ready for R-Day celebrations despite weather alert: DC

WARIS FAYAZ

Baramulla, Jan 22: Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa Thursday said that comprehensive arrangements are in place to ensure the smooth conduct of Republic Day celebrations, despite an adverse weather alert for the region issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

Sherpa said that the main event at Showket Ali Stadium will feature the Army's weapon display for the first time, adding a special patriotic fervour to the celebrations.

He said that all the

necessary arrangements have been made to ensure smooth Republic Day functions, adding that reviews are being conducted continuously at district and sub-divisional levels.

The DC acknowledged the challenges posed by the forecasted rains and snowfall and affirmed that the administration has mobilized all necessary teams to ensure the Republic Day celebrations proceed without disruption.

On the security front, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted robust measures, noting that the police is already geared up and security has been beefed



up with daily frisking exercises and other necessary actions.

Inviting widespread public participation, the DC clarified there is no need for any passes to visit venues and urged residents to join in large numbers. "With the coordinated efforts of

all the departments, we assure smooth celebrations," he said.

On IMD's weather advisory, Baramulla DC cautioned against unnecessary travel during snowfall.

He said that emergency response centres are fully functional. "Police in Baramulla and Sopore have also issued helpline numbers for public assistance."

He added that the administration remains on high alert, prioritizing road clearance across over 4,000 Kilometers, alongside uninterrupted essential services like power and water supply—(KNO)

Administration fully prepared for forecasted weather: DC Srinagar

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Jan 22: Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Thursday said that the administration is fully prepared in view of the forecast for heavy rain and snowfall across Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking with reporters on the sidelines of a function, Akshay Labroo said that "we are only waiting for snow. Let it snow, we are fully prepared."

The weather department has forecast heavy rain and snowfall, warning that two western disturbances in quick succession are likely to affect Jammu and Kashmir



between January 22 and 24, and again from the night of January 26 to the forenoon of January 28.

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Admin mandates staff stay at stations

KNO CORRESPONDENT

Baramulla, Jan 22: Following the weather warnings issued by the Meteorological Department, Baramulla administration Thursday ordered its officers not to leave their stations without prior approval.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the Deputy Commissioner in a circular directed the officers to remain at their respective stations and seek prior permission before leaving the district.

The order applies to Additional Deputy Commissioners, Sub Divisional Magistrates, Tehsildars, Naib Tehsildars and Patwari Halqas.

The administration has warned that any violation of the instructions will be dealt with strictly—(KNO)

Sindh Nallah water quality improving, pollution concern remains



RAJA SYED RATHER

Srinagar, Jan 22: The water quality of Sindh Nallah from Wayil to Sonamarg has been found to meet Class-B primary water standards, but the presence of sewage discharges from various drains continues to threaten the river's health.

A report submitted by the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee (JKPCC) to the National Green Tribunal (NGT) highlights ongoing pollution sources despite overall acceptable water parameters.

As per the report filed in connection with the case titled "Sindh

Nallah Polluted, Trout Habitat Threatened", several drains, originating from tourist hotspots and municipal areas, are discharging domestic sewage and solid waste directly into the river. These discharges were observed at key locations, including Kangan Main Market, 254 Transit Camp Sonamarg, and near Thajwas Hotel.

While the physico-chemical and biological parameters of Sindh Nallah currently fall within permissible limits, the report highlights that sewage inflows from secondary sources and small rivulets near Wusan, Mammer, and Kulan are contributing to surface runoff and

intermittent pollution.

The JKPCC has assured the NGT that measures are being taken to impose environmental compensation on those responsible for polluting the waterway. The committee has sought four weeks to submit a detailed action plan and further reports.

The Sindh Nallah, stretching from Wayil to Sonamarg, falls under the jurisdiction of the Block Development Officers of Kangan and Gund, as well as the Sonamarg Development Authority. Notices have been issued to these agencies for violations of Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, and for environmental compensation.

In particular, show cause notices have been served to the Block Development Officers of Kangan and Gund, with references dated October 25, 2025. Both officers are respondents in ongoing legal cases concerning plastic pollution and environmental violations affecting the region's water bodies—(KNO)

DC Kupwara interacts with martyrs' families



KT NEWS DESK

Kupwara, Jan 22: On the eve of the forthcoming 77th Republic Day, the Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikhand Suse, today organised a tea party-cum-interaction with Veer Naris, Veer Mata and Veer Pita at Mini Meeting Hall of DC Office complex Kupwara.

The event was held as a mark of respect and remembrance for the families of the brave soldiers who laid down their lives in the service of the nation.

During the interaction, the DC personally met each family member, acknowledged the supreme sacrifice of their loved ones and reaffirmed the unwavering support of the District Administration towards their welfare.

On the occasion, the DC appealed to the families to avail benefits under various centrally sponsored welfare schemes meant for ex-servicemen and their dependents. He also facilitated their visit to the Centre of Excellence established at the DC Office Complex, Kupwara, aimed at improving service delivery and public facilitation.

Col. S.S. Raja (Retd.), Zila Sainik Welfare Officer, expressed heartfelt gratitude on behalf of Veer Naris and ex-servicemen to the DC for his thoughtful initiative, valuable time and for organising the meaningful event in honour of the families of the fallen heroes.

The meeting was attended by ACR Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad, Veer Naris, Veer Mata, Veer Pita and Ex-servicemen.

Athletes, officials unite for road safety in Baramulla

WARIS FAYAZ

Sopore, Jan 22: In a bid to promote road safety and to curb violations, national athletes Thursday joined the Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) in Baramulla for an awareness campaign.

ARTO Baramulla, Mudasir Wani, said that the event was aimed to educate the people on regulations to prevent accidents.

Citing government data, he revealed that over 28,000 accidents occurred in the last five years in J&K, claiming around 4,000 lives due to traffic violations.

"We took along some national

athletes for this road show to make people aware of traffic rules and minimize the violations and accidents," Wani added.

He said that over 50 lakh challans have been issued so far in the district. "Yet despite awareness campaigns, people still resort to violations like not wearing seat belts or helmets."

Urging students to spread the message, Baramulla ARTO identified over speeding as a major cause of accidents and warned habitual offenders to avoid violations or face strict legal action.

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Drug peddler arrested in Pulwama

KNO

Srinagar, Jan 22: In its continued crackdown against drug menace, Police in Pulwama achieved a major success during routine naka checking at Circular Road near Tahab Crossing.

According to a statement, during the checking, a person carrying a nylon bag was intercepted by the Naka Party of Police Station Pulwama. During search, contraband

substance including Charas-Chura like substance weighing 1.760 kilograms and Charas powder-like substance weighing 475 grams was recovered from his possession. The accused has been identified as Imtiyaz Ahmad Chat son of Ghulam Nabi resident of Dangerpora, A/P Rangmullah, who was instantly arrested.

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EDITORIAL

Friday Brief: Embracing Simplicity As A Sacred Virtue

In an age defined by relentless consumption and complex desires, the Islamic teachings on Qana'ah (contentment) and simplicity offer a profound antidote to spiritual and societal restlessness. The Quran and Hadith do not merely recommend a simple life; they present it as a conscious, dignified choice that leads to inner peace, gratitude, and closeness to God. This is a liberation from the tyranny of

endless want and the anxiety of worldly competition. The Quran repeatedly redirects the believer's focus from worldly accumulation to eternal success. It reminds us that worldly life is but "play and amusement, adornment and boasting among yourselves, and competition in increase of wealth and children" (57:20), a fleeting distraction. True prosperity is defined not by abundance, but by a heart at peace:

"And whoever is mindful of Allah, He will make a way out for them, and provide for them from sources they could never imagine" (65:2-3). This divine promise places trust in God, not in material stockpiles, at the centre of a believer's livelihood. Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) was the perfect exemplar of this ethos. His life was a model of majestic simplicity; his home was humble, his diet

was modest, and his clothing was plain. He (PBUH) said, "Live in this world as if you are a stranger or a traveller." He (PBUH) warned against luxury and extravagance, teaching that true richness is "richness of the soul". The simplicity cultivates gratitude (shukr), allowing one to find profound joy in blessings, however small. Ultimately, Islamic simplicity is an act of worship. It is a practical affirmation

that our hearts are attached to the Creator, not the creation. By adopting moderation in our possessions, speech, and desires, we align our lives with the divine injunction of balance (wasatiyyah). In a chaotic world, this disciplined simplicity becomes a source of immense spiritual strength, personal dignity, and societal harmony—a direct path to the contentment that God loves.

AI For All - Building An Inclusive Future For Women, Youth, And The Workforce

The power of AI in India will not be measured by the sophistication of its algorithms, but by its capacity to level the playing field

Kavita Bhatia

As India gears up to host the India-AI Impact Summit 2026, the most impactful stories are not about algorithms or automation, but about inclusion. The true promise of AI lies in amplifying human potential, especially among women, informal workers, and the youth who have long remained at the periphery of the formal economy.

Guided by the vision of "Making AI in India and Making AI Work for India," the Cabinet approved the IndiaAI Mission in March 2024. Under the leadership of Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Hon'ble Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, the IndiaAI Mission team began work on strategically designing and implementing key initiatives such as IndiaAI Compute Capacity, the IndiaAI Innovation Centre (IAC), the IndiaAI Datasets Platform, the IndiaAI Application Development Initiative, IndiaAI FutureSkills, IndiaAI Startup Financing, and Safe & Trusted AI.

The Mission's focus on inclusive growth is strongly reflected in the IndiaAI Innovation Centre, which is developing multilingual Large Language Models and domain-specific foundational models tailored to India's diverse socio-economic contexts. These models, trained using the national GPU grid, are being designed to serve women entrepreneurs, farmers, gig workers, and small retailers through vernacular AI assistants, micro-advisory tools, and sector-specific knowledge engines.

While much of the global dialogue around AI has focused on productivity gains and competitiveness, in India, its most powerful impact may be its ability to democratize access to work, to learning, to safety, and to opportunity. This vision of AI as a tool for inclusion will be at the heart of the India-AI Impact Summit 2026, to be held in February.



Bringing together policymakers, innovators and industry leaders, we aim to chart a discourse around how AI can be harnessed for People, Progress, and the Planet.

In India's expanding gig and platform economy, women are increasingly shaping a new digital workforce, one empowered by AI. Whether it is women entrepreneurs leveraging AI-driven marketplaces, or women drivers and delivery partners navigating safely through AI-powered safety systems, the technology is quietly reshaping agency and opportunity. Take, for instance, beauty and wellness platforms that use AI-based matching algorithms to pair customers with service professionals based on proximity, skill, and past performance. A majority of these professionals are women who now enjoy flexible hours, predictable income, and enhanced safety through AI-enabled verification and tracking. Similarly, ride-hailing platforms have integrated intelligent safety systems from real-time location sharing to

voice-activated emergency features allowing women drivers to work with greater confidence and independence. While these systems existed before, AI has increased safety, reliability and efficiency of these platforms.

In rural and semi-urban India, AI-enabled financial tools are promoting digital inclusion. Vernacular AI assistants and voice-based digital payment systems are helping women overcome literacy and language barriers, enabling them to manage finances independently and securely.

For India's youth, AI is not merely a tool; it is an entry point into a new economy. Across states, government and private sector collaborations are building a pipeline of AI-skilled talent, from basic digital literacy to advanced machine learning. The Government of India has recently launched the YUVA AI for All National AI Literacy Campaign under the IndiaAI Mission. Anchored on National Youth Day, the initiative aims to create foundational AI awareness among lakhs of students

and young learners through a short, self-paced "AI 101" course. By leveraging existing school, higher education, and digital learning ecosystems, YUVA AI for All seeks to democratise access to AI knowledge, positioning AI literacy as a core life skill rather than a specialised privilege, and ensuring that India's youth across regions, languages, and socio-economic backgrounds are prepared to participate meaningfully in the AI-driven economy.

AI's role in inclusion extends beyond employment into public welfare. Startups like MyGate and SafeHouse Tech use AI-driven analytics to strengthen safety for women in residential and workplace settings. AI-powered grievance redressal systems are being integrated into government helplines such as 112 India, enabling quicker response times and data-driven deployment of emergency services.

In the agriculture sector, AI tools such as Kisan AI use machine learning models to predict pest infestations and weather-related risks, empowering women farmers to make informed, resilient decisions. Similarly, fintech innovators like Indifi and Kinara Capital are leveraging AI-driven credit scoring to extend credit to women-led enterprises that have historically lacked access to formal financial systems. This vision is also reflected in NITI Aayog's report, AI for Inclusive Societal Development. The report shows how AI can empower India's 490 million informal workers by expanding access to healthcare, education, skilling, and financial inclusion. It highlights how AI-driven tools can boost productivity and resilience for millions who form the backbone of India's economy.

As AI becomes increasingly integrated into economic and social systems, ensuring its ethical and inclusive use has become a national priority. Anchored in the principle of "AI for All," India's approach focuses on

fairness, transparency, and accountability to ensure that technology amplifies opportunity rather than inequality. By embedding AI into everyday platforms from payments and logistics to education and public services India is building an inclusive digital ecosystem that empowers people at every level. India has also implemented the Digital ShramSetu, a national mission dedicated to integrating cutting-edge technologies into India's informal economy. The implementation model is built on four pillars: identifying key needs by sector or persona, empowering state governments for execution, creating an enabling regulatory environment, and forming partnerships to drive down costs and ensure broad access. It will bring together government, businesses, and NGOs, all operating under a rigorous system for measuring impact. This model of accessibility and equity offers a compelling blueprint for the Global South on how AI can enable large-scale social and economic transformation.

If the first wave of India's digital revolution, led by Digital India and UPI, connected citizens, the next must ensure that AI connects them to opportunity. That means designing systems that are multilingual, gender-sensitive, and accessible, where the rural woman entrepreneur, the data labeler from Nagaland, and the young coder from Bhopal all have a stake in India's AI future.

The power of AI in India will not be measured by the sophistication of its algorithms, but by its capacity to level the playing field. Women, youth, and informal workers are not passive beneficiaries, they are becoming the architects of a more equitable AI economy. As the world looks toward India at the India-AI Impact Summit 2026, it will see a nation proving that inclusion is not a byproduct of technology, it is its greatest innovation.

The writer is Scientist 'G', Group Coordinator, MeitY; COO IndiaAI Mission

In An Age Of Vulnerability, Why Is Help So Hard To Ask For?

We talk about feelings more than ever, but belonging means rethinking care

Kim Samuel

Walk through an airport bookstore, scroll the podcast charts, or listen to a leadership keynote, and you'll likely find lessons on boundaries and burnout. Celebrities talk about therapy with a casualness that would have been unthinkable a generation ago. Coaches tell C-suite executives to "lead with vulnerability." And bestselling books like The Gifts of Imperfection, You Should Talk to Someone, and The Body Keeps the Score have given the world a common vocabulary for talking about anxiety, shame, and trauma.

It's easy to conclude that we're living in the Golden Age of Vulnerability. And that's good news. All these developments are positive for a culture that, for too long, encouraged silence around the work of personal healing. Yet—even as our culture embraces vulnerability—many of us are reckoning with a seemingly contradictory trend. It can feel harder than ever to ask for help.

To say, "I'm struggling," takes honesty. To ask, "Can you help me?" is to request time, attention, and follow-through. It risks inconvenience. It risks rejection. It can even feel like a status shift: the helper stays competent while the helped becomes "needy." Psychologists have been describing versions of this for decades. Asking for help can threaten



self-esteem because it can imply inferiority or loss of control. Many people feel a quiet fear that they'll be judged as less capable or more dependent.

All this makes sense in a society that prizes rugged autonomy as

moral virtue.

These days, the aversion to asking for help is often less a fear that other people are cruel than a worry that they're simply tired or over-committed. Research on suicide risk underscores how dangerous this can

become: feeling like a burden is one reason people stop reaching out. Of course, the issue isn't limited to a crisis. Everyday resistance to reaching out can degrade the quality of life and deepen an epidemic of loneliness and social isolation.

Still, here's some welcome news: We are often wrong about how unwilling people are to help.

In a series of studies in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, people underestimated—by as much as 50 percent—how likely others were to comply with a direct request for help. At the same time, potential helpers tend to underestimate how uncomfortable asking feels, including the role of embarrassment. People who need support hold back, while people who might help assume they would have been asked.

To address a crisis of belonging in today's world, we need a shift in how we think about asking for help.

In modern life, help is often interpreted through a scorekeeping lens: Who owes whom, who has taken too much, what's fair. There are reasons this mindset takes hold. Much of life runs on transactions. Exchange is explicit, time feels scarce, and many people feel they're barely keeping up. Under stress, the logic of the marketplace leaks into relationships. The "don't owe anyone" instinct can start to look like an ethical ideal.

Behavioural research shows how quickly the frame changes

behaviour. In a famous field experiment in Israeli daycares, when researchers introduced a small fine for late pickups, late pickups increased. The fine turned a moral obligation into a transaction. Parents stopped feeling: "I'm making a teacher wait." They started feeling: "I'm paying for extra time." When you switch the frame—from social to monetary—you change the behaviour.

Transactional scorekeeping turns care and support into a form of accounting.

And all this is anathema to belonging. Belonging requires the opposite premise: that people are allowed to need, and allowed to be temporarily out of balance. This kind of grace makes life humane. The alternative to transaction is reciprocity: a living relationship where people take turns carrying weight over time. Reciprocity isn't a rigid balancing of payments. It's continuity. It's trust built across uneven seasons. The gift keeps moving.

What does reciprocity sound like in practice? "I'll cover your kid's pickup today—and I know I can count on you someday when I need it." It looks like coworkers who trade support during intense weeks without turning it into a moral scorecard. It looks like friends who don't keep a ledger of who texted first, who hosted last, or who needed more this year. The point isn't to keep everything balanced in the moment. The point is to keep the relationship

strong over time. It's the long-game of community.

We can all do our part to shift from transaction to reciprocity, one small practice at a time. For parents, it can be as simple as modeling it out loud: "We ask for help in this family—and we help others when we can." For schools, it can be one clear rule teachers repeat and reward: asking for help with an assignment is part of doing well, not a sign you're behind. For workplaces, it can be a standing norm that makes support ordinary: Bring questions, and treat asking as professionalism. And for each of us, it can be a personal discipline: Practice asking for help before you're desperate. Sit with the discomfort. Make the small ask anyway.

AI is making this cultural shift urgent. Chatbots will only get better at offering the frictionless comfort of a "friend" who never gets tired and never says no.

But here's the thing: We need to need other people.

While we should celebrate society's growing embrace of vulnerability, we need to take a step further toward: It's time for a focus on building a culture of mutual care.

Kim Samuel is the founder and chief belonging officer of the Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness and the author of On Belonging: Finding Connection in an Age of Isolation.

Source: Psychology Today

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

Div Com Kashmir reviews Republic Day Preparations at Bakshi Stadium

Extends open invitation to general public for participation in national festival at Bakshi Stadium

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JANUARY 22: In preparation for the forthcoming Republic Day celebrations, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, Thursday visited Bakshi Stadium, the main venue for the event, to re-view the status of arrangements and ensure final readiness.

During the inspection, the Divisional Commissioner, as per an official statement, assessed key arrangements including the podium, sound systems, seating, sanitation facilities, and other logistical aspects. He directed all concerned officers to ensure top-notch preparedness and emphasized glitch-free functioning of sound systems managed by the Information Department, Police, and R&B, given the significance of the national event.

Keeping in view the prevailing inclement weather conditions, the Divisional Commissioner instructed for



the installation of waterproof canopies over the stands and directed concerned agencies

to ensure adequate manpower readiness for snow clearance from the ground, if required.

The Chief Engineers of KPDC, MED, R&B, and PHE briefed the Divisional

Commissioner on the progress and preparedness of their respective departments. He also inspected the video walls installed around the stadium to ensure clear visibility of the programme for participants and attendees.

Also, the Divisional Commissioner reiterated instructions regarding timely distribution of refreshments, proper sanitation of bathrooms and green rooms, strict adherence to the National Flag unfurling protocol, and compliance with prescribed timelines for cultural programmes.

Meanwhile, the Div Com extended open invitation to general public for the participation and celebration of National Festival at Bakshi Stadium.

The Divisional Commissioner was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Akshay Labroo, Commissioner SMC, SSP Srinagar, SSP Security, and other senior officers from civil and security departments.

Vande Mataram Campaign

Kathua hosts torch rally, thousands join to celebrate



KT News Desk

KATHUA, JANUARY 22: As part of the ongoing National Pride – Vande Mataram Campaign, the District Administration Kathua organised a grand and iconic Vishal Torch Rally last evening at the Sports Stadium, attracting thousands of people and reflecting unprecedented public enthusiasm and deep-rooted patriotic spirit.

Students, government employees and members of civil society assembled in unison to express their collective commitment to national unity and pride. Holding torches, the participants marched a complete lap of the Sports Stadium while collectively reciting Vande Mataram, transforming the venue into a vibrant spectacle of patriotism and national fervour.

The Torch Rally, as per an official statement, was led by Deputy

Commissioner, Rajesh Sharma along with Additional Deputy Commissioner, Vishajjeet Singh, district officers and officials. The leadership presence of the district administration added to the significance of the event and reinforced the message of collective responsibility towards upholding national ideals and constitutional values.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner hailed the massive public participation and observed that such large-scale outreach activities play a pivotal role in strengthening patriotism, unity and constitutional consciousness, particularly among the youth. "The Vishal Torch Rally symbolised the enduring spirit of nationalism and the shared resolve of the people to contribute towards a strong, united and progressive India," he noted.

KU's CCCP records notable success, 17 candidates qualify JKCCE mains

KT News Desk

Jan 22: The University of Kashmir (KU) has recorded a significant academic milestone as 17 candidates from the first batch of its Civil Services Residential Coaching Programme at the varsity's Centre for Career Counselling & Placement (CCCP) have qualified the Jammu & Kashmir Combined Competitive Examination (CCE)-2024 Mains, the results of which were announced recently, and advanced to the interview stage.

Congratulating the successful candidates, Vice-Chancellor, KU, Prof Nilofer Khan, as per a statement issued by KU on Thursday, described the outcome as deeply encouraging and commended the CCCP team for their commitment and professionalism. She noted that the results show the University's resolve to empower youth through high-quality academic support and guidance.

"I have personally monitored the programme and made frequent visits to the Centre to ensure that the vision we set is effectively implemented on the ground," she said.

Prof Khan also lauded the efforts of the Overseeing Committee, headed by the Dean Research KU, Prof.



Mohammad Sultan Bhat, including Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, Director CCCP KU, Prof. Nazir Ahmad, Special Secretary to the VC Accounts Officer/ FA KU Ms. Zafira, for providing effective monitoring and guidance to the programme.

The Civil Services Residential Coaching Programme was launched to address a long-standing societal demand for institutionally supported civil services coaching in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly for economically underprivileged and female aspirants. As a fully residential initiative, the programme provides a structured and enabling academic environment aimed at enhancing students' preparation

and success.

Under the programme, students are provided free-of-cost accommodation, access to a 24x7 air-conditioned library, uninterrupted high-speed internet connectivity, structured test series, continuous mentoring, and a range of academic support services. This fully supported residential model makes the initiative the first-of-its-kind in the region.

The faculty and staff of the Centre for Career Counselling & Placement extended heartfelt congratulations to all 17 qualified candidates, noting that their dedication and perseverance have brought pride to the University.

The varsity wished the candidates every success in the forthcoming interview stage.

Digital crop survey training programme concludes in Jammu



KT News Desk

JAMMU, JANUARY 22: The Divisional-level Training and Capacity Building Programme on Digital Crop Survey (DCS) concluded Thursday at the Conference Hall, Directorate of Agriculture Jammu. The programme was organized under the directions of Director Agriculture, Anil Gupta and under the supervision of Joint Director Agriculture (Extension, Sanjay Anand.

On the concluding day, the programme, as per an official statement, witnessed active participation from 60 district-level, sub-divisional-level and field officers from Kishtwar and Doda districts. The training programme, which commenced on January 2, 2026, recorded participation of about 600 officers from the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments, representing all districts of Jammu Division.

During the programme, Subject Matter Specialist (RL), Dharmesh Vaid and Technical Officer DCS AgriStack, (DoA), Sandeep Dogra, imparted hands-on training on the Digital Crop Survey mobile application. The sessions covered key aspects of the Digital Crop Survey including digital data collection, validation processes and integration with the AgriStack framework.

The programme aimed at strengthening the capacity of field functionaries for effective implementation of the Digital Crop Survey, ensuring generation of accurate crop data and facilitating

Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan

Frontline workers imparted IEC training at Bhaderwah



KT News Desk

BHADERWAH, JANUARY 22: The Social Welfare Department on Thursday organized a one-day training programme for frontline workers to strengthen awareness, prevention and community-level intervention against the menace of drug abuse- a key Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) initiative.

Officials from multiple departments, as per an official statement, were imparted skill and knowledge to mobilize communities in Panchayats, schools and municipal wards for a decisive fight against drug abuse.

The Trainers elaborated on the

physical, psychological and social impact of drug abuse, advocating strategies like school-based interventions, peer education, counselling and reducing stigma for those in recovery and mobilizing communities by using IEC tools.

The programme concluded with participants taking the Drug Abuse Prevention Pledge, reaffirming their commitment to building a healthy, drug-free society.

The orientation session was held as part of Phase-II of the anti-drug IEC Campaign. Tehsil Social Welfare Officer, Child Development Project Officer and Station House Officer were also spoke on the occasion.

GCW Parade ground hosts special event to mark Vande Mataram Legacy

KT News Desk

JAMMU, JANUARY 22: Government College for Women Parade Ground organised a special programme as part of phase II of celebration of commemoration of "150 Years of National Pride – Vande Mataram" in the college. The event was conducted under the patronage of Principal, Dr. Ravender K. Tickoo and guidance of Dean Students Welfare led by Dr. Seema Malpotra.

The programme, as per an official statement, witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, who gathered to relive the spirit of nationalism through a movie screening based on the theme of Vande Mataram and India's freedom struggle. The screening highlighted the historical significance of the song and its role in uniting the nation during the independence movement.

Later, students and faculty members recited Vande Mataram, filling the campus environment with national pride. The event concluded on a meaningful note, leaving students inspired and proud of the nation's rich legacy. The programme successfully reinforced the message of unity, patriotism and respect for India's national identity among the young minds. The event was coordinated by Ishita and Kajal and ended with a vote of thanks by Kanan Kapoor.

DC Poonch reviews youth empowerment, employment plan



KT News Desk

POONCH, JANUARY 22: Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Ashok Kumar Sharma, Thursday chaired a meeting in the Conference Hall of the DC Office to review and strengthen the Youth Empowerment and Engagement Plan in the district.

The meeting, as per an official statement, focused on the effective implementation of various centrally sponsored schemes aimed at generating employment and self-employment opportunities for the youth.

The Deputy Commissioner held detailed discussions with concerned officers on ongoing government initiatives aligning with local employment needs. Emphasis was laid on ensuring maximum outreach of welfare schemes and encouraging youth participation in skill development, entrepreneurship and livelihood generation programmes.

It was decided that eligible youth would be provided employment opportunities under different government-sponsored schemes, with special focus on skill enhancement, vocational training and support for self-employment ventures. The Deputy Commissioner directed

officers to identify potential beneficiaries, streamline procedures and ensure timely delivery of benefits to the youth.

The DC stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among all departments to empower young people and make them active contributors to the socio-economic development of the district. He also called for regular monitoring and awareness campaigns to ensure transparency and effective implementation of the schemes.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer, Shama un Ahmed; Assistant Commissioner Development, Shakeel Ahmed Malik; Principal GDC Poonch; Professors from GDC Surankote, Mandi and Mendhar; Chief Medical Officer; Deputy Director Employment; District Social Welfare Officer; District Panchayat Officer; Assistant Director FCS & CA; District Information Officer; Chief Horticulture Officer; Chief Agriculture Officer; Chief Animal Husbandry Officer; District Sheep Husbandry Officer; Assistant Labour Commissioner; Assistant Floriculture Officer; Superintendent ITI Poonch; DYSSO; LDM J&K Bank, besides other concerned officers.

DC flags off Road Safety Awareness Bike Rally in Doda

KT News Desk

DODA, JANUARY 22: To mark National Road Safety Month 2026, an Awareness-cum-Bike Rally was Thursday organised by the Motor Vehicles Department (MVD) in collaboration with a local Two-Wheeler Showroom. The rally, as per an official statement, flagged off by the Deputy Commissioner, Harvinder Singh from the DC Office Complex was organised to sensitise road users to the importance of following traffic rules, wearing helmet, avoiding over-speeding and drunken driving and promoting responsible driving habits. Participants carried placards and banners highlighting key

road safety messages and traffic symbols under the theme "Sadak Suraksha, Jeevan Raksha."

ARTO, Kapil Deol; DySP Headquarters, Krishan Rattan, officials from the District Administration, Motor Vehicles Department and civil society members attended the flag off event. A large number of bike riders participated in the rally, strictly adhering to all prescribed safety measures.

The Deputy Commissioner appealed to citizens to be responsible road users, emphasising that road safety is a shared responsibility, while strict adherence to traffic rules can significantly minimize road accidents and fatalities.

DLC clears 109 orphan care cases under Mission Vatsalya in Poonch



KT News Desk

POONCH, JANUARY 22: The District Level Committee Thursday reviewed the Sponsorship cum Foster Care cases under Mission Vatsalya initiative here at a meeting chaired by Deputy Commissioner, Ashok Kumar Sharma.

As many as 109 cases of orphan children were placed before the Committee. After detailed discussion, scrutiny and deliberation the cases were approved.

The District Child Protection Officer, Khalil A Bandy presented a comprehensive briefing on the cases, highlighting the background, eligibility and need based assessment of the beneficiaries under the scheme.

The meeting, as per an official

statement, was attended by the Chairman, Child Welfare Committee, PO NIC and other concerned officers and stakeholders, who actively participated in the deliberations and offered valuable inputs.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the significance of ensuring timely care, protection, and financial support to orphan and vulnerable children and reiterated the district administration's commitment towards effective implementation of child welfare schemes.

The meeting concluded with directions for expeditious processing and implementation of the approved cases to ensure that the intended benefits reach the deserving children at the earliest.

JKPSC denies bias, manipulation in Judicial (Main) 2025 Exams

KT News Desk

Jammu, Jan 22: In response to media and social media news items regarding fairness of the J&K Civil Services Judicial (Main) 2025 Examination, the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (J&K PSC) on Thursday clarified that the examinations are conducted in completely fair manner with no scope for bias, manipulation, or external influence.

In a statement issued here, the JKPS said that the selection and recruitment of individual candidates are made strictly as per merit and under rules irrespective of their religion, region, language etc.

"The examinations are conducted with complete fairness and full transparency, strictly in accordance with established rules and procedures. Every candidate is treated equally, and the process is governed by robust safeguards that leave no scope for bias, manipulation, or external influence," it said. "The evaluation process is conducted at the highest possible standards of confidentiality and security. It is designed to be completely impenetrable, ensuring that the evaluator cannot, at any point, ascertain the identity of the candidate whose answer sheet is being evaluated, thus, ensuring a fool-proof process."

This strict anonymity and the uncompromising framework of the Commission guarantees complete objectivity and leaves no room for influence, interference, or bias, the JKPS said adding that the Commission embodies integrity, fairness, and moral responsibility in both letter and spirit.

The Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (J&K PSC) conducted the J&K Civil Services Judicial (Main) 2025 w.e.f. 16.11.2025 to 26.11.2025 at Jammu and Srinagar centres.

DC Budgam reviews R-Day arrangements at Sports Stadium Urges people to participate in celebrations

KT News Desk

Budgam, Jan 22: Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, on Thursday conducted a comprehensive review of the arrangements being put in place at Sports Stadium Budgam for the forthcoming Republic Day celebrations 2026.

During the visit, the DC inspected the venue and took a detailed assessment of preparations related to seating arrangements, stage setup, security, sanitation, drinking water, power supply, medical facilities and overall logistics to ensure smooth and dignified conduct of the district-level function.

The DC directed the R&B Department, Municipal Council Budgam, Jal Shakti Department, KPDCL, Information Department and Health Department to work in close coordination and ensure flawless and



time-bound preparations. He emphasized that all departments must adhere strictly to assigned timelines and maintain high standards befitting the national occasion.

Stressing the importance of weather preparedness, the DC laid special emphasis on robust snow clearance measures, particularly on approach roads, parking areas and within the stadium premises, to avoid any inconvenience to participants and the general public in view of prevailing winter conditions. He instructed the Health Department to

ensure availability of medical teams, ambulances and emergency response facilities at the venue, while KPDCL was asked to guarantee uninterrupted power supply with adequate back-up arrangements.

The Municipal Council and Jal Shakti Department were directed to ensure cleanliness, sanitation and adequate drinking water facilities.

Highlighting the significance of Republic Day as a symbol of India's constitutional values, unity and democratic ethos, the DC said that the celebrations

should reflect patriotism, inclusiveness and collective participation. He urged all officers and staff to put in their best efforts to make the event memorable and inspiring.

The Deputy Commissioner invited the general public to participate in large numbers in the grand district-level Republic Day celebrations and be part of the national fervour.

"Republic Day is a moment of pride for every citizen. We must ensure that the celebrations are conducted with dignity, discipline and enthusiasm, showcasing our commitment to the Constitution and the spirit of nation-building," the DC remarked.

Besides, ADC Budgam, Mehraj ud-din Shah; CPO Budgam, Javaid Ahmad; PO ICDS, Summer Naik; CEO, CMO, ACD, ACP, Senior officers from various departments accompanied the DC during the inspection.

DC Baramulla lays foundation stone of Transit Accommodation at Dak Bungalow



KT NEWS DESK

Baramulla, Jan 22: Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, on Thursday laid the foundation stone of a Transit Accommodation facility at Dak Bungalow, Baramulla, with an estimated allotted cost of 135.85 lakh.

The project is aimed at strengthening accommodation infrastructure for visiting officers and officials, thereby enhancing administrative efficiency and facilitating smooth conduct of official activities in the district. The Deputy Commissioner informed that the project has a stipulated completion period of one year.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC emphasized the importance of timely execution and maintaining high-quality construction standards. He directed the executing agency to adhere strictly to technical specifications and ensure judicious utilization of funds. The Deputy Commissioner also instructed concerned officers to closely monitor the progress of work so that the project is completed within the prescribed timeframe.

Chief Planning Officer Baramulla Nissar Ahmad, engineers from R&B and others officials from the concerned departments were present on the occasion.

I&B ministry's tableau showcases evolution of storytelling via media cinema

PTI

New Delhi, Jan 22: From oral transmission of knowledge to information dissemination through print, broadcast media and the wonder of cinema, India's civilisation journey of storytelling has been showcased in the I&B ministry's tableau for the Republic Day parade on Kartavya Path.

Perhaps, the most iconic part of the float themed on 'Bharat Gatha: Shruti, Kriti, Drishti' is its rear portion, celebrating the old world charm of the silver screen through depiction of a classic box office of picture palace, a vintage camera and a hero and heroine holding an umbrella to complete the filmy scene.

A preview of the tableau that would be part of the 77th Republic

Day Parade here on January 26 was held by the defence ministry at the Rashtriya Rangshala in Delhi Cantonment.

Thirty tableaux -- 17 from various states and Union territories, and 13 from ministries and services -- will roll down the Kartavya Path during the ceremonial event whose dominant theme this year is 150 years of 'Vanda Mataram'.

Tableaux will be showcased by Assam (theme - Ashirakandi: The craft village), Gujarat (theme - Swatantrata ka Mantra: Vande Mataram), Jammu and Kashmir (theme - handicrafts and folk dances of J-K), West Bengal (theme -- Bengal in India's freedom movement), Uttar Pradesh (culture of Bundelkhand), and Rajasthan (Bikaner gold art -- Usta art), among other states and UTs.

Besides Air Headquarters (theme - Veteran Tableau: Nation Building through War), Naval Headquarters (theme - Samudra Se Samridhi) and Department of Military Affairs (a tri-Services tableau on Operation Sindoor, Victory through Jointness), the Ministry of Culture (theme - Vande Mataram: The Soul-Cry of a Nation) will also showcase a tableau each.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

10 soldiers killed

profound sorrow, the entire nation stands united with the bereaved families in solidarity and support. "10 injured soldiers have been airlifted to the hospital. Directed the senior officials to ensure best possible treatment. Praying for their speedy recovery," he said.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also expressed deep grief over the tragic accident. He conveyed heartfelt condolences to the families of the soldiers who lost their lives and wished a speedy recovery to those injured, lauding the swift rescue and evacuation efforts. (KNO)

Gusty winds sweep

Srinagar and Udhampur for the next two hours.

It warned of thundershowers and lightening with gusty winds of 50-60 kmph and moderate rainfall over these districts. "Srinagar and Jammu airports also reported gusty wind speed of up to 83 kmph and 37 kmph respectively in association with the fresh Western Disturbance," it said.

Meanwhile, an independent Kashmir based weather forecaster said that various areas across Jammu and Kashmir reported strong gusty winds, saying these winds are unusual for this time of the season.

"However, they are not localised or temperature-driven. Instead, they are linked to a unique and dynamically strong Western Disturbance, which carries intense wind fields within the system itself," he said.

He said that the gusty winds may subside in a few areas over the coming hours, but many places are likely to continue experiencing strong winds till the early morning hours tomorrow.

An official said that the Police personnel were engaged in clearing roads and assisting people after strong winds caused the roofs of several houses, complexes and buildings to cave in at various places across the Valley.

"Police teams from the concerned stations are on the ground, ensuring smooth traffic movement and providing timely assistance to affected residents," he said.

In view of the prevailing inclement weather conditions and the adverse weather forecast, the Srinagar District Administration advised people to refrain from venturing outside their homes and avoid unnecessary movement on roads.

It asked the general public to contact the District Emergency Operation Centre Srinagar and Police Control Room Srinagar, in case of any exigency and advised the people to strictly follow the advisory. (KNO)

Over 80% of

restoration work will begin soon. "We will restore the electricity at earliest. As of now, we have received faults on many 33KV and 11 KV lines. Besides, as a safety measure, we have tripped-down feeders in many areas."

"However, electricity is being supplied to the essential departments," he said.

An official said that the 33KV Shadimarg line was down due to the damage of rooftop

It also said that 33KV line was off from Grid station Lassipora and all 33 KV lines were under fault from grid station Shopian.

The official further informed that the 33KV lines were down of Narkara, Rajbagh, Rakhi

Arth, Bemina-I/II, Karanagar, Bemina JVC line, Wanganpora and Bemina grids, HMT, and Safakadal lines.

It also said that all 33KV line's fed from Badampora, Kangan, Potshahi, Nihalpora and Alastang Grid stations were off due general tripping in 220 KVA line.

The official further said that all feeders were off in Shopian. "All 33kv lines emanating from Awantipora grid are under fault. In Gulmarg, 33 KV was tripped off in Nihalpora-Gulmarg line as heavy winds are blowing in Tangmarg and surrounding areas."

"Sangam tripped on earth fault, 132 kV line went off from MB grid, Dooru line off due to 132kv outage. All 11KV feeders in respect of SSD TANGMARG are either under fault or are off due to non-availability of the 33KV line," the official said.

It also said that all 33KV lines pertaining to STD Bijbehara are down due to faults or grid outages and in respect of ED Bandipora, all 33kv lines are off.

"Due to outages of 33KV lines, all 11kv feeders are off pertains to circle -Ganderbal," the official said. (KNO)

Budgetary proposals

forthcoming Budget Session of J&K Legislative Assembly.

Deputy CM, Surinder Kumar Choudhary; Ministers Javid Ahmad Rana, Javid Ahmad Dar and Satish Sharma; Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo; ACS Jal Shakti, Shaleen Kabra; ACS to Chief Minister, Dheeraj Gupta; ACS Agriculture, Shailendra Kumar; Administrative Secretaries of other concerned departments, senior officers of finance department and other concerned departments attended the meeting.

During the deliberations, the Chief Minister reviewed sector-wise proposals, ongoing projects, and emerging challenges, while seeking focused inputs aimed at strengthening service delivery and development outcomes. "Budgetary allocations must move beyond routine exercises and should firmly be rooted in practicality, efficiency and measurable impact on the ground", he asserted.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah underscored the need for realistic planning, stating that proposals included in the budget should be implementable within defined timelines and capable of delivering tangible benefits to people. "Budgetary proposals should be practicable which can actually be translated on ground", he said.

The Chief Minister also called for convergence among departments to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure optimal utilisation of resources.

Highlighting the importance of sectors like water supply, agriculture, rural livelihoods and environmental conservation, the Chief Minister directed officials to prioritise initiatives that enhance service delivery, improve infrastructure, generate employment and directly address the needs of farmers and rural communities.

He further emphasised on accountability and outcome-based budgeting, instructing departments to align their proposals with clear performance indicators.

Pertinently, the pre-budget consultations are part of the Government's broader effort to craft a people-centric and development-oriented

budget.

CM to hold pre-budget

South Kashmir, and Central Kashmir on January 23 and 24.

Next week, he is expected to hold similar meetings with MLAs from the Jammu province.

As per the meeting notice, a copy of which is in possession of news agency--Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Omar Abdullah will tomorrow chair a meeting with MLAs from Srinagar, Ganderbal, and Budgam districts at the Civil Secretariat here between 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM.

On January 24, the Chief Minister will first meet MLAs from Anantnag, Kulgam, Shopian, and Pulwama districts between 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM. Later in the day, he will hold consultations with MLAs from Baramulla, Kupwara, and Bandipora districts from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

The Chief Minister is also expected to hold similar meetings with MLAs from the Jammu region next week to seek inputs for incorporation into the budget.

Omar Abdullah, who also serves as the Finance Minister of J&K, had also held such meetings with MLAs last year to gather their feedback on the budget.

The budget of Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory would be presented by Omar Abdullah on February 06 in the J & K Assembly. (KNO)

Cabinet clears

new vendors will be opened.

Sources said the cabinet also discussed the address to be delivered by the Lieutenant Governor on February 2, the first day of the Budget Session of the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly.

As per Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act-2019, the LG shall address the Assembly at the commencement of the first session of each year.

The Cabinet further authorized the Tourism Department and the Public Works (R&B) Department to sign the extended Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with BRO/Project Beacon on behalf of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, for completion of pending works on the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra track.

Besides, the Cabinet is understood to have given its nod to the creation of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to undertake Operation and Management (O&M) activities of the proposed Urban Water Transport System on the River Jhelum.

The Cabinet also gave its nod for the construction of a residential school for the wards of the pastoral population at Doombwani in Shopian district. The school will be built at a cost of Rs 27 crore, sources said. (KNO)

SMVDIME MBBS

college allocation issue for selected MBBS candidates of SMVD college. With BOPEE now issuing counselling schedule, students can move ahead with their students," reads the post. (KNO)

Snowfall, rain expected

Baramulla and Alooosa Bandipora were relatively warmer at minus 0.4 degrees Celsius each.

Gulmarg, the ski resort, recorded a minimum of minus 4.0 degrees Celsius, slightly higher than Wednesday's minus 5.0 degrees.

In the Jammu region, night temperatures remained largely above freezing in the plains. Jammu city recorded a minimum of 7.2 degrees Celsius, unchanged from the previous day, while Jammu Airport logged 7.3 degrees.

However, Banihal recorded minus 2.2 degrees Celsius, marginally higher than Wednesday's minus 2.3 degrees. Baderwah and Udhampur recorded minus 1.5 degrees and 1.0 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Ladakh continued to experience severe cold, with Leh recording minus 10.6 degrees Celsius, Hanle minus 11.0 degrees, and Kargil minus 8.4 degrees.

The Meteorological Department forecast widespread rain and snowfall across Jammu and Kashmir, with heavy precipitation likely over parts of the Pir Panjal range and south Kashmir during the night and continuing till Friday evening.

Officials said the plains of the Kashmir Valley may initially receive moderate rain before the precipitation gradually turns into light to moderate snowfall, with moderate to heavy snow expected over the lower and middle reaches.

The department also warned of the possibility of heavy rain or snowfall accompanied by gusty winds and hailstorms in some districts of the Pir Panjal range, Chenab Valley, and south Kashmir.

An advisory has been issued cautioning about the risk of landslides at a few vulnerable locations.

Meanwhile, the independent weather forecaster, Kashmir Weather, said that a strong western disturbance is likely to impact Jammu and Kashmir from Thursday afternoon, bringing widespread rain and snowfall across the region.

The system is expected to first affect the higher reaches of north Kashmir before spreading to most parts of the Union Territory by night. There is a high probability of snowfall across the Kashmir plains and parts of Poonch, Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban and Kathua, while the Jammu plains may receive moderate to heavy rainfall, the update said.

Although the western disturbance is expected to weaken within 24 hours, snowfall intensity during this period could remain high due to elevated moisture levels. The peak impact is likely from Wednesday night till Thursday late afternoon, with residual rain or snow possible in some areas until the morning of January 24.

Kashmir Weather said the system may trigger a sharp drop in temperatures, leading to a cold wave and prolonged cold conditions across the region for the remainder of the month.

Snow accumulation in the plains will depend on snow density, ranging from a few inches to over a foot in several areas, while higher reaches could receive two to four feet of fresh snowfall.

Strong wind gusts are also likely, and travel disruptions, including to flights, trains and road connectivity, are expected on January 23, it added. (KNO)

LoP Sharma calls on

Assembly session.

He emphasized the need for meaningful and constructive deliberations aimed at

EC terms SIR fair, just, reasonable; urges SC to reject pleas against electoral rolls revision

PTI

New Delhi, Jan 22: The Election Commission on Thursday termed the decision to undertake Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls "fair, just and reasonable", and urged the Supreme Court to reject pleas challenging the exercise in Bihar.

It argued that a roving and fishing enquiry into the special scrutiny cannot be done at the behest of a few NGOs and politicians.

"None of the 66 lakh persons, whose names were deleted in Bihar SIR, came to this court or high court or filed pleas with the Election Commission. A roving and fishing enquiry cannot be permitted at the instance of ADR (Association for Democratic Reforms) and the PUCL (People's Union for Civil Liberty) and a few parliamentarians," said senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi on behalf of the poll panel.

The submissions were made by the senior lawyer during the final hearing on a batch of petitions challenging the Election Commission's decision to undertake SIR in different states, including Bihar.

Referring to a judgment in which the top court had refused a plea seeking re-introduction of paper ballot and discarding the EVMs, he said, "In short, we must follow Europe. If they go for EVMs, then we must go for it. And if they go for a paper ballot, then we go for it." He said



one person writes an article in a newspaper, and the other files a petition in the top court referring to that.

Dwivedi urged the bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi to dismiss the pleas with cost while defending the SIR as a lawful and transparent exercise of statutory powers under the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

He argued that once the Election Commission invokes its powers under Section 21(3) of the 1950 Act, the manner and procedure of conducting a special revision are left entirely to its discretion.

Dwivedi argued that Section 21(3) operates independently of Section 21(2), which governs routine and periodical revisions. "There is no compulsion under Section 21(3) that every SIR must be identical in nature," he said.

He said the SIR exercise

had not been undertaken for nearly 20 years in Bihar and was conducted in response to changing demographic realities, including urbanisation and population movement.

According to Dwivedi, merely adopting a different methodology or deviating from the manual governing routine revisions could not, by itself, render the exercise suspect or ultra vires.

The CJ, however, observed that if the poll panel's argument that Section 21(3) grants unfettered discretion were accepted, "the case would end there".

Dwivedi placed significant reliance on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2003, which, he said, was enacted after the last SIR and introduced stricter requirements for establishing citizenship, including proof relating to parents' citizenship.

He pointed out that the amendment was passed

during the tenure of then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with bipartisan support, demonstrating legislative consensus on the need to examine citizenship due to increasing cross-border migration.

Justice Bagchi questioned whether the amended citizenship framework was a trigger for the present SIR, noting that the Election Commission's order did not explicitly cite trans-border or illegal migration as its basis.

"The word 'migration' ordinarily refers to lawful movement. Inter-state migration is a constitutional right," Justice Bagchi observed, adding that if the SIR was being defended solely as a roll revision exercise after two decades, the larger question of citizenship determination might not arise at all.

Dwivedi responded that the amendment had never been operationalised earlier and that the present SIR provided an appropriate opportunity to take note of the changed legal framework.

He clarified that the objective was to examine citizenship within the contours of Article 326 of the Constitution, which guarantees adult suffrage.

Emphasising transparency, Dwivedi said that Booth Level Agents (BLAs) conducted house-to-house verification, over five crore SMS alerts were sent to voters, and the

process strictly followed procedural safeguards.

Nearly 76 per cent of voters did not have to submit any documents, while others were permitted to furnish one of 11 prescribed documents, he highlighted.

Dwivedi said the SIR could not be labelled as "manifestly arbitrary".

Justice Bagchi, however, observed that "manifest arbitrariness" had evolved as a facet of substantive due process and was now applicable even to primary legislation.

Dwivedi cautioned against importing American notions of "due process" into Indian constitutional law, remarking that US courts often re-evaluate policy decisions, a practice the Supreme Court has consistently resisted.

"US court judgments have been cited... Where is the US following due procedure of law? President Trump can just pick the President of Venezuela for trial. Where is the due process, and now he wants Greenland also. Here, the petitioners want to import that," he said.

The CJ said that courts here have occasionally used the phrase "due process" without fully appreciating its American constitutional origins.

The petitioners argue that the SIR's departure from the "prescribed manner" of revision under Section 21(2) lacks transparency and could lead to the arbitrary exclusion of genuine citizens.

PM Modi to virtually inaugurate India Energy Week on Jan 27



PTI

Panaji, Jan 22: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate via video link the India Energy Week (IEW) 2026 conclave that is scheduled to be held in South Goa between January 27 and 30.

Director General of Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry, Gurmeet Singh, gave this information in a press conference here on Thursday.

Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri, United Arab Emirates' Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology Dr Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, Canada's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Tim Hodgson along with senior ministers from Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia and the Global South will attend the inauguration ceremony at Betul village in South Goa district, he said.

PM Modi will virtually address the delegates after the inauguration, he added.

The IEW will focus on strengthening energy security, mobilising investment and advancing practical,

scalable pathways for decarbonisation that can be adapted across economies at different stages of growth. The event will have delegations from the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia-Pacific which will underline the IEW's growing role in global energy diplomacy, Singh said.

The IEW is expected to welcome over 75,000 energy professionals from more than 120 countries, he said.

The 2025 edition of the IEW attracted over 68,000 participants, 570 exhibitors, 5,400 conference delegates and hosted hundred conference sessions featuring 540 global speakers.

The global energy conclave will provide a structured platform for dialogue, policy alignment and technical exchange, according to him.

The event will feature ministerial roundtables, CEO dialogues on global capital flows, public-private dialogues, technology showcases from multinationals, national energy companies and high-growth startups, social events and media engagements, Singh said.

Tehqeeq Diagnostic and Dialysis Centre becomes first in J&K to receive NABH accreditation

SRINAGAR: Tehqeeq Diagnostic and Dialysis Centre has achieved a significant milestone by becoming the first dialysis centre in Jammu and Kashmir to receive NABH (National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers) accreditation, setting a new benchmark in patient care and safety in the region.

The NABH accreditation is awarded to healthcare institutions that meet stringent national standards related to clinical excellence, patient safety, infrastructure, and ethical medical practices.

Commenting on the achievement, Managing Director Sajad Lone said the accreditation reflects the centre's long-standing commitment to quality healthcare. "This recognition is the result of the collective efforts of our doctors, nurses, technicians, and support staff, and the trust our patients have placed in us. NABH accreditation reinforces our resolve to deliver healthcare services



that are safe, ethical, and patient-centric," he said.

He further added that the milestone belongs to every patient and caregiver who has been part of Tehqeeq's journey. "Quality, safety, and dignity will always remain at the core of everything we do," Lone said.

Healthcare observers have termed the accreditation a landmark development for Jammu and Kashmir's healthcare sector, particularly in the field of dialysis services.

Tehqeeq Diagnostic and Dialysis Centre reiterated its commitment to continuously upgrading facilities and maintaining the highest standards of patient care.

India open to partners across economic spectrum; resilient against global debt concerns: Vaishnaw



Davos, Jan 22: A day after US President Donald Trump stated he will have a 'good' trade deal with India, senior Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday said it is very encouraging, given India's position and deep engagement on global trade matters.

Trump had said here last evening that

the US is going to have a good trade deal with India and described Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a "fantastic man" and his friend for whom he has great respect.

Asked about Trump's remarks, Vaishnaw told PTI, "Given India's position and deep engagement on trade

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Vaishnaw is leading a large Indian delegation here for the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, comprising Union ministers, as well as chief ministers and senior ministers from several states. Besides, more than 100 Indian CEOs are also here.

"I have great respect for your Prime Minister. He's a fantastic man and a friend of mine. We are going to have a good deal," Trump had said.

India deeply engaged on trade matters: Vaishnaw on Trump's remarks on US deal

PTI

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Shouldn't be forced to participate in 'unconstitutional penalty regime' before CCI: Apple to HC

PTI

New Delhi, Jan 22: Tech giant Apple Inc, which is facing probe by anti-trust regulator CCI over allegations of abusing its position on its app store, has told the Delhi High Court that it should not be forced to participate in an "unconstitutional penalty regime" that permits penalties based on a company's global turnover for indulging in anti-competitive practices.

In a rejoinder filed in its litigation with the regulator, Apple said permitting it to approach the appellate forum, i.e. the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal, once any such "unjust" penalty is imposed on it by the Competition



Commission of India (CCI) would mean that "constitutional harm" was already done.

The US-based company assured that its intention or purpose was not to delay or

stall the ongoing proceedings before the CCI but when the "source" of power itself was under challenge, it could not be compelled to first suffer the consequences.

Rebutting CCI's allegations

of delay, Apple also said the record reflected its "continual co-operation and timely engagement" in the investigation process.

In December, Apple had filed a petition challenging the amendment to the Competition Act, 2002, which allows CCI to impose penalties based on a company's global turnover.

It also challenged direction to furnish the firm's audited financial statements for several years.

In its rejoinder, Apple said it "embraced" competition as it pushed it to deliver the best, most innovative products and services for their users, and it always acted in compliance with applicable laws.

It asserted that its

"maximum penalty exposure", according to the amended law, could be approximately USD 38 billion, which was "manifestly arbitrary, irrational and grossly disproportionate", rendering the same to be ultra vires the provisions of Article 14 and Article 21 of the Constitution.

"(While the company) believe(s) that there is no basis for the imposition of any penalty against them. However, the petitioners have no choice but to bring this constitutional challenge now to avoid the entirely unjust outcome of the retrospective imposition of penalty against them based on global turnover derived from all products/ services," the rejoinder said.

'Regularly engaging in varied physical activities could extend lifespan'

PTI

[New Delhi, Jan 22: Regularly engaging in a variety of physical activity could be a good strategy for prolonging one's lifespan, according to a study.

Findings published in the British Medical Journal suggest that a mix of physical activity, rather than doing more of the same, could be linked to a lower risk of death, regardless of total quantity -- an active lifestyle is however still important in its own right.

The team, including researchers from the US' Harvard University's school of public health and China's First Affiliated Hospital of Chongqing Medical University, said that while physical activity has been consistently linked with a better physical and mental health, evidence is inconclusive as to how varied kinds of physical activity impacts one's health.

Over 70,700 women and 40,600 men, who reported engaging in physical activity and were free of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer, were looked at.

Physical activity assessments were collected over a follow-up period of 30 years.

Higher levels of physical activity were related with a lower baseline prevalence of hypertension, hypercholesterolaemia, body mass index, a higher energy intake, better quality of diet, and more variety in physical activity.

Walking was the most frequent type of leisure physical activity in both groups; men were more likely to jog and run than women. Walking was also associated with the lowest risk of death at 17 per cent for those who did the most walking, compared with those who did the least, while climbing stairs was associated with a 10 per cent lower risk.

Playing tennis, squash, or racquetball was related with a 15 per cent lower risk for those who played most, compared to those who played least and weight training or resistance exercises with a 13 per cent lower risk.

However, a greater variety of physical activity was associated with a lower risk of death.

India among those absent at signing ceremony of Trump's 'Board of Peace'

PTI

New Delhi, Jan 22: India was among the countries not present in Davos on Thursday when US President Donald Trump unveiled his "Board of Peace" that seeks to work towards bringing lasting peace to Gaza and possibly resolve global conflicts.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was among numerous global leaders that the US President has invited to join the board that was announced under the second phase of a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza strip.

France, the United Kingdom, China, Germany and many other leading nations also skipped the signing ceremony for Trump's "Board of Peace".

Trump hosted the ceremony on the margins of annual World Economic Forum in the Swiss mountain resort.

India is yet to take a call on it, people familiar with the matter said when asked about Trump's invite to PM Modi.

New Delhi is considering various aspects as the initiative involves sensitive issues, it is learnt.

India has been pushing



for a "two-State solution" to the Palestine question with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognised borders.

The countries that joined the Board of Peace included Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Egypt, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam.

A number of countries including Germany, Italy, Paraguay, Russia, Slovenia, Türkiye, and Ukraine have remained non-committal on the invitation.

Trump's "Board of

Peace" is being projected by Washington as a new international body to usher in peace and stability in Gaza and beyond, triggering speculations that it could throw a challenge to the United Nations.

Originally, the new body was to be tasked to oversee governance and coordinate funding for Gaza's redevelopment as the strip was devastated during the two years of Israeli military offensive.

However, the "charter" of the board says it is "an international organisation that seeks to promote stability, restore dependable and lawful

governance, and secure enduring peace in areas affected or threatened by conflict". It also says durable peace requires pragmatic judgment, common sense solutions, and the courage to depart from approaches and institutions that have too often failed.

The top level of the board will consist "exclusively" of heads of state under Trump's leadership.

Washington has already announced that the "Board of Peace" will play an essential role in fulfilling Trump's 20-point plan of providing strategic oversight, mobilising

international resources, and ensuring accountability as "Gaza transitions from conflict to peace and development".

The 20-point plan includes making Gaza a deradicalised terror-free zone that does not pose a threat to its neighbours and that it be redeveloped for the benefit of the people of the strip.

The White House last week announced forming a founding executive board to operationalize the Board of Peace's vision.

The members of the executive committee included US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, former British prime minister Tony Blair, US special envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff, businessman and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and World Bank president Ajay Banga.

The other two members of the committee are Marc Rowan, the CEO of New York-headquartered private equity firm Apollo Global Management and Robert Gabriel, a US national security adviser.

The executive board will oversee another administrative group called National Committee for the Administration of Gaza.

Russia ready to allocate USD 1 billion from frozen assets for rebuilding Gaza: Putin

PTI

Moscow, Jan 22: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday said that Moscow is ready to allocate USD 1 billion from its frozen assets for rebuilding Gaza within the framework of the Board of Peace Council initiated by US President Donald Trump.

Putin, who met Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas in the Kremlin, also said that a fully sovereign and functional Palestinian state is the only key to genuine settlement in West Asia. His remarks came as a group of leaders and senior officials from 19 countries joined Trump at a signing ceremony of the Board of Peace Charter in Davos, Switzerland.

"We believe that the creation and efficient functioning of a sovereign Palestinian state is the only path to a final resolution of the Middle East conflict," Putin said while welcoming Abbas, who arrived here on Wednesday night on a two-day visit for high-level talks.

Putin, who has received an invitation to join the Board of Peace, welcomed Trump's peace efforts and said Moscow is ready to allocate USD 1 billion from Russia's frozen assets in the US to it for rebuilding Gaza. During the



meeting, Abbas said that he considers Russia a great friend of the Palestinian people.

"Russia has been a great friend of Palestine for over 50 years. Every time we come to Moscow, we feel a special spiritual connection between our countries. Russia has always taken a strong position in support of the Palestinian people," Abbas said.

He expressed hope that with Moscow's help, it will be possible to achieve a peace built on compliance with UN resolutions.

Funds being transferred to the US-initiated Board of Peace should be allocated for the restoration of Palestine, Kremlin

Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said while talking to the media on Thursday afternoon.

"As President Putin stated yesterday, these billion dollars, through the Board of Peace, should be directed for humanitarian purposes to restore Palestine," he underscored.

Speaking late on Wednesday night at the National Security Council meeting, Putin thanked Trump for inviting him to join the Board of Peace and announced USD 1 billion as a donation from frozen assets, although the decision to join the Board will be taken after consultations with strategic partners.

US Senators introduce bipartisan bill to counter China's dominance in critical minerals

PTI

Washington, Jan 22: The Securing Essential and Critical US Resources and Elements (SECURE) Minerals Act, introduced last week by Republican Senator Todd Young of Indiana and Democratic Senator Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, aims at reducing US dependence on China by supporting domestic production, stabilising markets and encouraging long-term investment through policy-backed mechanisms.

The SECURE Act envisages the establishment of a Strategic Resilience Reserve (SRR) in an independent government corporation, run by a seven-member board appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

The SRR would focus on supporting the critical minerals market, including through stable prices, domestic

and allied production (including recycling), stockpiles, competitive markets and supply chain work, with minerals where the US is reliant on China, the bill said. "China's global dominance of critical minerals supply chains gives it significant leverage and leaves the US vulnerable to economic coercion. This bipartisan legislation is a historic investment in making the US economy more resilient and supporting good-paying jobs in key sectors like aerospace, autos and technology," Senator Shaheen said in a press release.

Delivering much-needed stability to the market, providing targeted investments and stockpiling key inputs will help insulate the US from foreign threats and will provide a significant, and cost-effective, boost to the American economy, he said.

We won't play in India but still hopeful of justice from ICC: Bangladesh

PTI

Dhaka, Jan 22: Bangladesh on Thursday refused to send its national cricket team for the T20 World Cup in India, effectively paving the way for Scotland to take its place in the tournament roster after the ICC dismissed the country's demand for a change of venue.

Bangladesh had been served an ultimatum by the world body on Wednesday to either agree to travel to India or risk being replaced as there was no credible threat to the safety of their players, officials or fans there. The country was given time till Thursday to make its decision.

However, taking a defiant



position Bangladesh's sports advisor Asif Nazrul, after a meeting with national team players, announced that the ICC's position was not acceptable to them.

"While our cricketers have

worked hard to qualify for the World Cup, the security risk regarding playing in India remains unchanged. This concern is not based on abstract analysis," Nazrul said.

England selector Luke Wright to step down after 2026 Men's T20 World Cup

(IANS)

London, Jan 22: Luke Wright will step down from his role as England men's selector after the upcoming T20 World Cup, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said on Thursday.

Wright, who has served in the position for three years after assuming charge in November 2022, informed the board of his decision made with an eye to having less travel and spending more time with his young family. His departure comes in the wake of England's 4-1 Ashes defeat in Australia.

"It has been a true honour and privilege to serve as an England Men's Selector over the past three years. I have fully immersed myself in the role and am incredibly proud of the players we have brought through. "The role demands significant travel and time away from home, and with a young family, the time feels right to pass the baton on to the next person. I now look forward with real interest and enthusiasm to whatever cricketing roles the future may hold.

Djokovic one away from 400 Grand Slam match wins



AP

Melbourne, Jan 22: Novak Djokovic and Stan Wawrinka made it a day for the ages at the Australian Open.

Djokovic improved to 399 wins in Grand Slam matches with a 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 victory over Francesco Maestrelli on Thursday, making the 38-year-old, 24-time major winner just one shy of becoming the first player ever to 400.

He's aiming to win an unprecedented 25th Grand Slam title. And if he does, he'll beat Ken Rosewall's record (aged 37 in 1972) as the oldest man in the Open era to win a major singles championship.

The Rosewall name was prominent on Day 5 at Melbourne Park, where he was among the invited VIPs.

Wawrinka, at 40 years, 310 days, became the first man over 40 to reach the third round of a major since Rosewall in 1978. It took a 4 1/2-hour 4-6, 6-3, 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 (3) comeback victory over 21-year-old qualifier Arthur Gea. That's the longest match of the 2026 tournament so far.

Wawrinka, who is retiring at the end of the year, will next face No. 9 Taylor Fritz. Before then, he told the crowd at

John Cain Arena: "I think I'll pick up a beer. I deserve one!"

His was one of three high-profile matches that finished around the same time, with Jannik Sinner continuing his bid for an Australian Open three-peat after beating James Duckworth 6-1, 6-4, 6-2 on Rod Laver Arena.

The defining feature of Naomi Osaka's first two rounds quickly moved from fashion to friction when her 6-3, 4-6, 6-2 win over Sorana Cirstea ended in tension.

"I think this was her last Australian Open so, OK, sorry she was mad about it," Osaka said.

Day and night With Sinner facing an Australian wild card, he got the prime time night slot and bumped 10-time Australian Open winner Djokovic into the afternoon session.

That didn't bother Djokovic as much as the dropped service game in the third set — his first of the tournament. It stung Djokovic, who broke the Italian qualifier at love in the next game and finished on an eight-point roll.

He said he took extra time out in the offseason and fine-tuned some skills as he chases his biggest goals.

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