

JAMMU RISING

NEWS P-3 NEWS P-5 NEWS P-12 NATIONAL P-8 SPORT P-7



VKMI Organizes a Comprehensive Session on Toxic Accumulation, Effects, and Detoxification.....



US: Joe Biden awards George Soros the Presidential Medal of Freedom; Elon Musk reacts



CS reviews implementation of PM Gati Shakti in J&K



A bleak Q3 awaits FMCG companies?



Will ICC adopt a new system for Test cricket?

Price: Rs.2 | Page 12 | Vol. No.: 15 | Issue No: 6 Postal Registration No. JK-458/16-18 epaper.dailyjammurising.in RNI No: JKENG/2011/40494

BRIEF NEWS

DC Samba Issues Directive To Curb Illegal Land Conversions

The Deputy Commissioner of Samba has directed all revenue authorities and officers to refrain from registering any documents related to the sale or purchase of real estate projects that fall under the purview of the JK Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016, unless registered with JKRERA.

■Turn to page 2

India Condemns Pak Airstrikes On Afghanistan

India on Monday “unequivocally” condemned Pakistani airstrikes on Afghanistan and said it is Islamabad’s old practice to blame its neighbours for its internal failures.

Pakistan carried out airstrikes in certain areas in Afghanistan in what it said was aimed at target

■Turn to page 2

Flight Operations Resume At Srinagar Airport After Snow-Led Disruption

Flight operations at the Srinagar International Airport, disrupted on Monday due to heavy overnight snowfall in the Kashmir valley, have resumed, officials said.

“Operations at the Srinagar airport have resumed with the first flight arriving from Amritsar,” an Airports Authority of India (AAI) official said.

The flights were delayed early on Monday following heavy overnight snowfall, and men and machinery worked to clear the snow from the runway.

■Turn to page 2

Two HMPV Cases Confirmed In Karnataka: ICMR

The Indian Council of Medical Research has detected two cases of Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) in Karnataka through routine surveillance for multiple respiratory viral pathogens, the Union health ministry said on Monday.

A three-month-old female infant with a history of bronchopneumonia was diagnosed with HMPV after being admitted to Baptist Hospital in Bengaluru. She has already been discharged, the ministry said.

An eight-month-old male infant with a history of bronchopneumonia tested positive for HMPV on January 3 after being admitted to Baptist Hospital. He is now recovering, it said.

It is important to note that neither of the patients have any history of international travel, the ministry underlined.

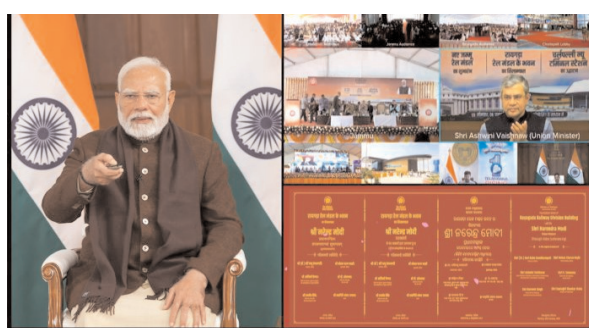
■Turn to page 2

J&K's integration into national railway network monumental step: PM

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday virtually inaugurated the new Jammu Railway Division, calling it a historic milestone in the development of Jammu and Kashmir’s connectivity and infrastructure.

Jammu local businessesJammu and Kashmir tourism
Addressing the nation during the ceremony, PM Modi, congratulated the people of Jammu and Kashmir, saying, “Integration of J&K into the national railway network is a monumental step to



wards transforming Indian Railways into a global leader in efficiency, speed, and passenger experience.”

“The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Link (USBRL) project is a landmark achievement that demonstrates India’s engineering excellence.”

Highlighting the feats of modern engineering, he said, “India’s first cable-stayed rail bridge, the Anji Khad Bridge, and the iconic arch bridge over the Chenab River—the world’s highest railway bridge—are marvels that are making waves globally.”

The Prime Minister emphasized that the new Jammu Railway Division would not only benefit the people of Jammu and Kashmir but also extend its advantages to Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Ladakh.

PM Modi described the inauguration as a symbol of India’s collective progress under the vision of “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas,” filling colors in the dream of “Vikshit Bharat (Developed India).”

“To achieve Vikshit Bharat, it is essential to develop Indian Railways,” he said, adding

■Turn to page 2

Direct rail service to Kashmir won’t negatively impact Jammu: CM

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday allayed fears of any negative fallout on Jammu after the launch of direct rail service between Kashmir and the rest of the country anytime soon, saying his government will ensure that the region benefits immensely by the completion of the long-pending project.

Abdullah was speaking at a function organised here in connection with



the virtual inauguration of the Jammu railway division by Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of the start of direct train service to Kashmir from Katra, with the final trial

run scheduled for Tuesday.

“Two days ago, we got this good news through media that the trial train reached Katra from Srinagar. It is expected that

very soon, the prime minister will inaugurate this section which will complete the railway line and immensely benefit the

■Turn to page 2

Heavy Snowfall in J&K higher reaches, moderate snow, rain in plains

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

Heavy snowfall occurred in the higher reaches while moderate snow and rain lashed the plains of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday.

Jammu local businessesJammu and Kashmir tourism
The Meteorological (MeT) department officials said heavy snowfall occurred in Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonamarg and other higher reaches of

J&K during the last 24 hours.

A MeT office statement said, “On January 6, generally cloudy weather with light to moderate rain (Plains of Jammu)/snow at most places of J&K. Improvement from January 6 afternoon. On January 7 and 10, generally cloudy weather with dry weather. On January 11 and 12, generally cloudy weather with light snow at isolated to scattered

places. On January 13 and 15, generally dry weather.”

The weather department also issued an advisory, saying that in view of fresh snowfall, sub-freezing temperatures and icy conditions over roads (plains/higher reaches), tourists, travellers and transporters are advised to plan accordingly. It has also advised people to follow the administrative and traffic

■Turn to page 2

China says its world’s biggest dam over brahmaputra will not impact water flows to India

NEW DELHI, JAN 6

China on Monday reiterated its plan to build the world’s biggest dam over the Brahmaputra River in Tibet near the Indian border, saying the planned project has gone through rigorous scientific verification and will not have any negative impact on downstream countries — India and Bangladesh.

The project, estimated to cost around USD 137 billion, is located in the ecologically fragile Himalayan region along a tectonic plate boundary



where earthquakes occur frequently.

China’s construction of the hydropower project over in the Yarlung Tsangpo River (the Tibetan name for Brahmaputra River) downstream

has gone through rigorous scientific verification and will not have any negative impact on the ecological environment, geology and water resources of the downstream countries, Chinese Foreign

Ministry’s new spokesman Guo Jiakun told a media briefing here.

On the contrary, it will be conducive to downstream disaster prevention and mitigation and response to climate change to a certain extent, he said, replying to a question that India has expressed its concerns over the dam and the issue figured in the Indian officials talks with the visiting and US National Security Advisor Sullivan.

■Turn to page 2

For J&K, Indian railways is spearheading a new era of development , integration: LG

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today inaugurated the new Jammu Railway Division, through virtual mode.

Jammu local businesses
On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha expressed gratitude to Hon’ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi for dedicating the new Jammu Railway Division.

“This new division is very important from strategic point of view. It will also stimulate economic growth, employment generation, infrastructure development and creation of new tourist circuits” he said.

Speaking on the remarkable progress



achieved in developing a comprehensive railway network in the UT, the Lieutenant Governor said the Indian Railways stands at the forefront of our journey toward a developed and self-reliant J&K.

“For Jammu and Kashmir, Indian Railways is spearheading a new era of development and integration. Udhampur-Srina-

gar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) will seamlessly connect Kashmir to Kanyakumari, boosting tourism, trade, and employment opportunities in the region,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said, by connecting Kashmir to the national railway network, Indian Railways has laid the foundation for a prosper

■Turn to page 2

Prakash Parv celebrated with religious fervour, gaiety in Kashmir

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

The birth anniversary of the founder of the Khalsa Panth, Guru Gobind Singh, also known as Prakash Parv, was celebrated with religious fervor and gaiety in the Kashmir Valley on Monday.

Jammu and Kashmir tourism
The largest gathering took place at the Gurdwara Chatti Patshahi in Rainawari, Srinagar, where a large number of members of the Sikh community, including



men, women, and children, gathered despite the cold weather conditions to pay obeisance.

Special prayers were offered for peace, stability, and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir and the whole of India during the

occasion.

The day was celebrated with fervour in other parts of the Valley as well, including Tral, Baramulla, Anantnag, and Pulwama.

A member of the com

■Turn to page 2

EAM Jaishankar holds talks with US NSA sullivan, reviews India-US ties in last 4 years

NEW DELHI, JAN 6

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday held talks with US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, broadly reviewing the trajectory of India-US global strategic partnership in the last four years under the Biden administration.

Sullivan is on a visit to India two weeks ahead of Donald Trump’s inauguration as the 47th president of the US.

In a post on X, Jaishankar complimented Sullivan for his “personal contribution” to forging a “closer and stronger” India-US partnership.

One of the most significant meas-



ures initiated to expand the bilateral ties was the US-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology or iCET.

The iCET was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Joe Biden in May 2022 with an aim to forge greater collaboration between India and the US in areas of critical technologies such

as artificial intelligence, semiconductors, biotech, and defence innovation.

“Delighted to meet US NSA @JakeSullivan46 in New Delhi today morning,” Jaishankar said.

“Continued our ongoing discussions on deepening bilateral, regional and global cooperation. Valued the openness of our conversations in the last four years. Appreciated his personal contribution to forging a closer and stronger India-US partnership,” he added.

Sullivan will also hold wide-ranging talks with his Indian counter

■Turn to page 2

Modi resumed J&K rail extension work after gap of 50 Years: Dr Jitendra

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

A new chapter was etched in the history of Jammu and Kashmir and Indian Railways today as Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the New Jammu Railway Division virtually. At the landmark event, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public

Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the first train had arrived at the Jammu Railway Station way back in 1972 but for as long as 50 years after that, there was no further progress and we had to wait for over half a century for Narendra Modi to take over as the Prime Minister and resume the rail extension work in J&K after a gap of 50 years. He said, some day the question would be posed why the successive governments during these long years did not give pri-

ority to this sector in J&K or were there certain elements not in support of Kashmir valley getting connected to the rest of India by railway and thus becoming a part of the national mainstream.

Jammu local businessesJammu and Kashmir tourism
Dr Jitendra Singh highlighted the transformative rail infrastructure projects underway in the region, underscoring their role in connecting Jammu

■Turn to page 2

DC Samba Issues Directive To Curb Illegal Land Conversions

The directive also mandates strict enforcement to prevent illegal colonies and prohibits the conversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes without proper authorization, ensuring compliance with the law.

India Condemns Pak Airstrikes On Afghanistan

ing some terrorist hideouts.

“We have noted the media reports on airstrikes on Afghan civilians, including women and children, in which several precious lives have been lost. We unequivocally condemn any attack on innocent civilians,” External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

“It is an old practice of Pakistan to blame its neighbours for its own internal failures. We have also noted the response of an Afghan spokesperson in this regard,” he said. (Agencies)

J&K’s integration into national railway network monumental step: PM

that the past decade has witnessed a transformational change in railway infrastructure modernization, enhanced connectivity, and improved facilities for passengers.

He stated that the government has laid more than 30,000 kilometers of new railway tracks in the last 10 years, nearing 100% electrification, compared to just 35% in 2014. Additionally, he noted that the country has eliminated all manual crossings on broad-gauge tracks.

“Today is a big day for new-age connectivity. It shows that the entire nation is moving forward together,” PM Modi remarked.

The Prime Minister stressed that new railway divisions, terminals, and modernized stations are creating unprecedented opportunities for trade, business, and employment. Jammu local businesses

“The development of railways is creating lakhs of job opportunities. In the last 10 years, lakhs of youth have been employed in the railways, and initiatives like Gati Shakti University will further enhance the workforce’s skillset,” he said.

Referring to the strides in high-speed train services, PM Modi noted that more than 50 Vande Bharat trains are now operational, connecting long distances in shorter times and setting a benchmark for modern Indian trains.

“The time is not far when bullet trains will traverse across the country, making railway journeys memorable,” he added.

The Prime Minister also lauded India’s expanding metro network, which has grown from just 5 cities in 2005 to 21 cities today, with over 1,000 kilometers of operational tracks.

Stressing the importance of indigenous development, PM Modi said, “Under the ‘Made in India’ initiative, railway stations are being modernized, and high-speed train corridors are being developed. This will ensure India leads from the front in connectivity and infrastructure.”

He reiterated the government’s commitment to making Indian Railways the backbone of a developed and self-reliant India, saying, “This is not just about connectivity but also about fulfilling aspirations and creating a better future for millions.”

Heavy Snowfall in J&K higher reaches, moderate snow, rain in plains advisory.

Srinagar recorded minus 0.5, Gulmarg minus 4.5 and Pahalgam minus 1.4 as the minimum temperature.

Jammu city had 9.3, Katra town 9.2, Batote 2.8, Banihal 2.3 and Bhaderwah 3.6 as the night’s lowest temperature.

The 40-day-long period of extreme winter cold started on December 21 and will end on January 30.

At present, all water bodies, including lakes, springs, ponds, streams and wells, are partially frozen.

Doctors have advised people to exercise caution and not to expose themselves to long periods of cold. People of high-risk age groups, including children and elderly people, have been, especially, advised to avoid long exposure to cold. Hypothermia combined with respiratory tract infection is the main cause of myocardial infarction leading to heart attack and heart failure globally.

Fresh snowfall has brought cheer to scores of tourists presently enjoying their holiday in Gulmarg and other hill stations. All hotels in Gulmarg, Pahalgam and most in Srinagar city are completely sold out these days. Jammu local businesses

EAM Jaishankar holds talks with US NSA Sullivan, reviews India-US ties in last 4 years

part Ajit Doval to review the progress in cooperation under the ICET as well as the bilateral defence engagement.

Last year, the two sides unveiled a raft of transformative initiatives to deepen the India-US cooperation in areas of semiconductors, critical minerals, advanced telecommunication and defence space.

Sullivan’s trip comes days after Jaishankar concluded a six-day visit to the US.

Ahead of his trip, a Biden administration spokesperson said Sullivan’s talks with Doval will cover a range of issues across the “breadth of the US-India partnership — from space, defence, and strategic technology cooperation to shared security priorities in the Indo-Pacific and beyond”.

The India-US defence cooperation also witnessed a major upswing in the last four years.

In October, India inked a mega deal with the US to procure 31 Predator long-endurance drones from American defence major General Atomics under the foreign military sales route at a cost of nearly USD 4 billion.

India is procuring the drones to boost its military’s combat prowess along the contested borders with China.

While the Navy will get 15 Sea Guardian drones, the Indian Air Force and the Army will each get eight Sky Guardian drones.

The high-altitude long-endurance drones are capable of remaining airborne for over 35 hours and can carry four Hellfire missiles and around 450 kg of bombs. (Agencies)

China says its world’s biggest dam over brahmaputra will not impact water flows to India

Sullivan, currently visiting Delhi, held talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday broadly reviewing the trajectory of the India-US global strategic partnership in the last four years under the Biden administration.

Sullivan is on a visit to India two weeks ahead of Donald Trump’s inauguration as the 47th president of the US.

Last month, China approved plans to build a dam over the Brahmaputra River called Yarlung Zangbo in Tibet close to the Indian border.

As per the plan, the massive dam will be built at a huge gorge in the Himalayan reaches where the Brahmaputra makes a huge U-turn to flow into Arunachal Pradesh and then to Bangladesh.

In its first reaction to the proposed dam on Jan 3, India urged China to ensure that the interests of downstream states of the Brahmaputra are not harmed by activities in upstream areas.

“We will continue to monitor and take necessary measures to protect our interests,” External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told media in Delhi.

“As a lower riparian state with established user rights to the waters of the river, we have consistently expressed, through expert-level as well as diplomatic channels, our views and concerns to the Chinese side over mega projects on rivers in their territory,” Jaiswal said.

“These have been reiterated, along with the need for transparency and consultation with downstream countries, following the latest report,” he said.

“The Chinese side has been urged to ensure that the interests of downstream states of the Brahmaputra are not harmed by activities in upstream areas,” he added.

On Dec 27, another Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Mao Ning, defended China’s plan to build the world’s largest dam on the Brahmaputra River in Tibet, saying the project will not negatively affect lower riparian states and that safety issues have been addressed through decades of studies.

“The project will not negatively affect the lower reaches,” she said, referring to the concerns in India and Bangladesh, which are the lower riparian states.

China will continue to maintain communication with countries at the lower reaches through existing channels and step up cooperation on disaster prevention and relief for the benefit of the people by the river,” she said.

She said China’s hydropower development in the lower reaches of the Yarlung Zangbo River aims to speed up the development of clean energy and respond to climate change and extreme hydrological disasters. (Agencies)

Two HMPV Cases Confirmed In Karnataka: ICMR

It emphasised that HMPV is already in circulation globally, including in India, and cases of respiratory illnesses associated with it have been reported in various countries.

Furthermore, based on the current data from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) network, there has been no unusual surge in Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) or Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) cases in the country, it added.

The ministry said it is monitoring the situation through all available surveillance channels. The ICMR will continue to track trends in HMPV circulation throughout the year.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is already providing timely updates regarding the situation in China to further inform the ongoing measures.

The recent preparedness drill conducted across the country has shown that India is well-equipped to handle any potential increase in respiratory illnesses and public health interventions can be deployed promptly if needed, the ministry stated.

Amid reports of rising cases of respiratory illnesses in China in the past few weeks, a meeting of the Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) was held under the chairmanship of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) on Saturday. (Agencies)

For J&K, Indian railways is spearheading a new era of development and integration: LG

ous and integrated future for Jammu and Kashmir.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the infrastructure development across the sectors has set new benchmarks in the UT of J&K.

“With a strong emphasis on infrastructure,

sustainability, and innovation, we are laying the foundation for a future where economic growth and improved livelihoods go hand in hand and everyone is empowered to make this vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 a reality,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said, the enhanced connectivity is already unlocking the potential of Jammu and Kashmir. Improved transportation efficiency is stimulating trade, encouraging industrialization, and enabling the movement of raw materials and finished goods.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted that with better access to markets, the socio-economic upliftment of the region is being realized, and tourism is receiving a much-needed boost.

The Lieutenant Governor also spoke on several transformative railway projects in the pipeline for Jammu and Kashmir, demonstrating Indian Railways’ unwavering commitment to improving regional connectivity and fostering socio-economic development.

Surveys are ongoing for the Anantnag-Bijbehara-Pahalgam (78km) and Awantipora-Shopian (28kms) rail lines. DPR is under examination for new line between Baramulla-Uri (46kms), Baramulla-Kupwara (39kms), Jammu-Poonch via Akhnoor, Rajouri (223kms), Manwal-Talra via Ramkote, Billawar and Dunera (117kms), Sopore-Kupwara (37kms), Pathankot-Leh (664kms), Bilaspur-Manali-Leh (489kms) and doubling of Baramulla-Banihal line, he said.

By linking key towns and regions, these projects promise to unlock the region’s untapped potential and boost local economies, the Lieutenant Governor further added.

In view of the rapid industrialization taking place in J&K and emergence of Jammu, Samba and Kathua as industrial hubs, the Lieutenant Governor emphasized that Indian Railways should explore possibilities for establishment of Railways’ Private Freight Terminal to facilitate the transportation of goods and products of traders and industries of these areas.

The Lieutenant Governor lauded the efforts of every stakeholder and also recalled the contribution of Late Shri Devender Singh Rana for a new Jammu Railway Division.

He further informed that the Z-morh tunnel will be inaugurated by the Hon’ble Prime Minister soon.

The creation of the Jammu Railway Division, with 742.1 KM comprising Pathankot – Jammu – Udhampur – Srinagar – Baramulla, Bhogpur Sirwal – Pathankot, Batala – Pathankot and Pathankot to Joginder Nagar sections, will significantly benefit Jammu and Kashmir and surrounding regions, fulfilling the long pending aspiration of the people and improving connectivity to other parts of India. It will create employment opportunities, infrastructure development, promote tourism and lead to overall socio-economic development of the region.

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences (Independent Charge), MoS PMO, DoPT Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Atomic Energy, Space, Dr Jitendra Singh; Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah; Member of Parliament, Jugal Kishore Sharma; Members of Legislative Assembly Sunil Sharma and Vikram Randhawa; Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo; General Manager Northern Railways, Ashok Kumar Verma; senior officials, political leaders and prominent citizens from all walks of life were present during the UT level function at Railway Station Jammu.

Modi resumed J&K rail extension work after gap of 50 Years: Dr Jitendra

and Kashmir with the national mainstream and catalyzing economic and social progress.

Speaking at the ceremony, Dr. Jitendra Singh remarked, “The establishment of this railway division is not merely a logistical milestone but a reaffirmation of our commitment to integrate Jammu and Kashmir with India’s economic growth trajectory.” He recalled the challenges and delays that had plagued the region’s rail connectivity in the past but noted how recent years have witnessed unprecedented advancements.

A key highlight was the Minister’s reference to the world’s highest railway bridge, standing taller than the Eiffel Tower, which now symbolizes the technological and infrastructural might of Indian Railways. “What was once deemed impossible is now a reality. This bridge stands as a testament to India’s engineering prowess and commitment to progress,” he stated.

The New Jammu Railway Division will serve as a critical junction, facilitating faster passenger and freight movement while boosting the local economy. In addition, Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized the broader expansion of rail connectivity in Jammu and Kashmir, including the introduction of Vande Bharat trains and strategically located stoppages to cater to public demand. He also shared plans for upcoming initiatives, such as making smaller stations like Sangaldan vital junctions, thereby enabling seamless connectivity even in remote areas.

The Union Minister lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision for rail and road infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir, which has transformed the region into one of North India’s best-connected destinations. “Whether by road, rail, or air, Jammu is now a hub of connectivity, set to unlock immense opportunities in tourism, trade, and employment,” Dr. Jitendra Singh added. Jammu local businesses

Reflecting on the project’s significance, the Minister appealed to the public to embrace this new era of connectivity, urging everyone to envision a brighter future for the next generation. He concluded with optimism, stating that the new railway division is not just an infrastructural achievement but a step toward fostering unity and development across the region.

With these advancements, the rail network in

Jammu and Kashmir is poised to become a game-changer, bridging distances, fostering inclusivity, and contributing to India’s collective progress. As trains begin to traverse these newly developed tracks, the dreams of a more connected, prosperous Jammu and Kashmir edge closer to reality.

The inauguration marked a pivotal moment in the government’s effort to integrate the region further into the nation’s fold, setting the stage for unprecedented growth and prosperity.

Direct rail service to Kashmir won’t negatively impact Jammu: CM

people of the region,” the chief minister said.

However, he said there are some concerns among the people related to the rail service, especially in Jammu.

“It is often said that when rail service reached Jammu from Pathankot (Punjab), the situation in Pathankot became a bit difficult. Here too, at some places, there is a notion that if trains reach Kashmir directly from Jammu, the latter might face the same situation as Pathankot.

“On behalf of my government, I want to assure the people of Jammu that the rail service to Kashmir will have no impact on the region. Rather, we assure that Jammu will benefit from it as it will enhance trade and tourism, besides increasing travel between the two regions,” Abdullah said.

Praising the prime minister for his efforts to improve connectivity and road network in Jammu and Kashmir, Abdullah said the expansion of railway line to Poonch-Rajouri in Jammu and beyond Baramulla in Kashmir will be the responsibility of the Jammu railway division.

“In my previous tenure as chief minister, the last function I attended was the inauguration of the Katra railway station. After assuming charge again, this is my first major function. And both are linked to railways and held under the leadership of Modi,” he said.

The inauguration of the Jammu division is the biggest proof of the efforts of the prime minister to improve connectivity and road network in the region, he said.

The ongoing work on the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra expressway project, four-laning of the Jammu-Srinagar national highway, Z-morh and Zojila tunnels to provide all-weather road connectivity to Ladakh, along with airport expansion will further enhance connectivity on their completion, he said.

Lauding the railway ministry, Abdullah said that people used to get down from the train in Pathankot before it slowly reached Jammu, but in the last four decades, the railway service kept expanding — first from Jammu to Udhampur, and then from Udhampur to Katra.

Similarly, rail service started in Kashmir from Srinagar to Baramulla, and was extended to Anantnag and Banihal and later to Sangaldan, he said.

Referring to the steep hike in air fare during the winter months when most of roads remain closed in Kashmir due to heavy snowfall, Abdullah said, “We are forced to buy air tickets worth Rs 5,000 for Rs 25,000... I hope the new rail service will not only benefit the railways, but also boost trade and industries with the induction of cargo trains.”

Congratulating the people of J-K on getting a separate railway division in Jammu, Abdullah said it was a long-pending demand which has been fulfilled now.

“I am thankful to Prime Minister Modi and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw,” he said.

“The biggest thing is our coordination and control will not be from Firozpur (railway division), but from Jammu. And in this, we will definitely see benefits in recruitment. A small part of Punjab and a part of Himachal Pradesh have been added to this as well,” Abdullah said.

Prakash Parv celebrated with religious fervour and gaiety in Kashmir

munity while throwing light on the occasion at the Gurudwara in Anantnag said that the day is being observed as the Prakash Parv of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

He said the birth of Guru Gobind Singh has taken place only to eradicate cruelty and to protect the oppressed.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has extended warm greetings to the Sikh community and all those celebrating the birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. He highlighted the life and teachings of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, who exemplified truth, honesty, and loyalty to his people.

All Parties Sikh Coordination Committee (APSCC) on Sunday greeted the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the occasion of the birth anniversary of the founder of Khalsa Panth, Guru Gobind Singh. APSCC also prayed for peace and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir on the occasion of Gurupurab.

All political and social activists of the Kashmir valley have also extended their greeting to the members of the Sikh community on the occasion.

Flight Operations Resume At Srinagar Airport After Snow-Led Disruption

“The snow clearance operations are in progress at the runway. All airlines have pushed their flights after 9:30 am,” the AAI official had earlier said.

The airport’s operations were hit by dense fog on Saturday and Sunday, leading to flight delays, diversions and cancellations.

VKMI Organizes a Comprehensive Session on Toxin Accumulation, Effects, and Detoxification....



JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6
Vichar Kranti Manch International (VKMI) organized a symposium on "Toxin Accumulation and Its Excretion." Dr. Suresh Gupta, a retired scientist from RRL and State Senior Vice President of Bhartiya Yog Sansthan, was the Chief Guest, while Prof. Virender Gupta, a noted social activist, presided over the event. Dr. Shreyansh Kumar Jain, President of VKMI, delivered the keynote address, introducing the subject and explaining: What Are Toxins? Toxins are harmful substances that disrupt the body's normal functioning. These can come from external sources such as polluted air, water, food, and chemicals or be produced internally as metabolic by-products. Accumulation of toxins can weaken the immune system, hinder organ function, and increase the risk of chronic diseases. Therefore, regular detoxification is vital for maintaining overall health. Dr. Jain elaborated that toxins accumulate on four levels—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual—negatively affecting well-being. 1. Physical Level External sources of physical toxins include processed foods, pollution, pesticides, cosmetics, and household products. Internal sources include metabolic waste and free radicals. When detoxifying organs such as the liver, kidneys, and lymphatic system are overwhelmed, toxins accumulate in tissues, leading to inflammation, fatigue, and disease. 2. Mental Level Mental toxins arise from chronic stress, negative thinking, anxiety, and

information overload. Prolonged exposure to mental stress increases cortisol levels, resulting in hormonal imbalances, insomnia, and reduced cognitive function. 3. Emotional Level Unresolved emotions like anger, resentment, fear, and grief accumulate as emotional toxins, affecting mental clarity, relationships, and physical health, often manifesting as psychosomatic illnesses. 4. Spiritual Level Spiritual toxins result from a disconnection from one's purpose, lack of self-awareness, and inner unrest. Living without mindfulness or a higher sense of connection can lead to existential emptiness and dissatisfaction. Mr. Ashok Gupta, Vice President of VKMI, shed light on the effects of toxins on health, such as: Weakened Immune System: Increased susceptibility to infections and chronic diseases. Digestive Issues: Bloating, constipation, and poor nutrient absorption. Hormonal Imbalances: Stress-related disruptions causing fatigue and mood swings. Neurological Disorders: Brain fog, memory loss, and decreased focus. Inflammation: A major factor in chronic conditions like arthritis, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. Mr. Parmod Jain, a retired SBI manager and a true naturopath, explained various methods for toxin excretion, including: Physical Detoxification Healthy Diet: Increase intake of fiber-rich foods, fruits, vegetables, and herbs like turmeric, ginger, and garlic. Drink plenty of water to support kidney function. Avoid processed foods, refined sugar, alcohol, and artificial additives. Exercise: Regular phys-

ical activity promotes lymphatic drainage and sweating, aiding toxin removal. Yoga and aerobic exercises are particularly beneficial. Fasting: Periodic or intermittent fasting gives the digestive system rest, allowing the body to repair and eliminate toxins. Hydrotherapy: Warm baths, steam baths, and contrast showers stimulate circulation and help detoxify the skin. Dr. Suresh Gupta, the Chief Guest and a Yogacharya, spoke about detoxification through a yogic way of life, highlighting key yogic practices: Shatkarma (Six Purification Techniques) Jal Neti: Cleanses nasal passages. Dhauti: Removes digestive tract toxins. Kapalabhati: Clears the respiratory system and enhances lung function. Nauli: Stimulates digestive organs. Basti: Cleanses the colon. Trataka: Enhances focus and cleanses the eyes. Asanas (Postures) Twisting poses, inversions, and forward bends help in detoxifying internal organs and calming the nervous system. Pranayama (Breathing Techniques) Nadi Shodhana: Balances energy channels and detoxifies subtle blocks. Bhastrika: Energizes the body and clears the lungs. Mr. C.M. Sharma, retired Executive Engineer and General Secretary of VKMI, spoke on meditation and mindfulness, emphasizing their role in reducing mental toxins and enhancing spiritual clarity. He also touched on the role of naturopathy in detoxification, including: Colon Cleansing: Enemas and colon irrigation. Mud Therapy: Applying mud packs to absorb toxins and reduce inflammation. Juice Therapy: Fresh juices from vegetables like carrots and beets aid detoxification. Hydrotherapy: Hot and cold water treatments to enhance circulation and skin detox. Dr. Jain also shared homemade remedies for detoxification, such as: Liver Detox: Warm lemon water in the morning and turmeric tea. Digestive Cleanse: Triphala, an Ayurvedic blend, and ginger tea. Kidney Detox: Coriander-cumin water and cranberry juice. Respiratory Cleanse:

Javid Dar, Nasir Aslam review snow clearance, restoration of essential services at Kupwara

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development, and Panchayati Raj, Javed Ahmad Dar and Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, today impressed upon the officers of district administration Kupwara to work with utmost dedication and co-ordination to tackle any situation facing the people of this far flung and frontier district during the snowfall period. They said this while jointly chairing a meeting of district and sectoral officers at Kupwara held to review progress on snow clearance and restoration of essential services after recent spell of snowfall in the district. Among others, MLA Lolab, Qaiser Jamsheed Lone, MLA Langate, Khursheed Ahmad Sheikh and Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan were present in the meeting. On the occasion, Javid Dar enjoined upon the officers of line departments to work in tandem to ease the sufferings of the people in this harsh winter season. He impressed upon the officers to be friendly and humane with the people who have a lot of expectations with the administration and the government in resolving their issues. Advisor to CM impressed upon the officers to ensure stronger coordination at all levels to effec-



tively tackle any situation during the snowfall season. On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner apprised the dignitaries about the progress on snow clearance and status of power and water supply in the district post snowfall. She said that some of the areas of district Kupwara including Lolab, Kralpora and higher reaches of Keran, Jumanagud, Machil and Chowkibal have received snowfall. Adequate men and machinery of line departments is available on tground to tackle any situation. The Deputy Commissioner informed that 150 km road length out of 243.5 km falling under R&B department stands cleared from the snow. Besides, 65 Km out of 183 km have been cleared by PMGSY. Out of 150 km road length falling under BRO, 50 km stands cleared. Besides, 124 km have also been cleared by MED department

Javid Ahmad Dar directed the officers to intensify the efforts and ensure clearance of all roads falling under their jurisdiction. Regarding Power supply, it was informed that all 107 11KV feeders are functional in the district. Besides, out of 254 lift/gravity PHE schemes, 3 schemes were affected out of which 2 have been restored and 1 is non-functional. The Minister was informed that low voltage power supply impacts the proper functioning of water supply schemes in Lolab sub division which are majorly lift based schemes. Javid Dar directed the concerned PHE Engineer for projecting the issue to his office so that alternative for Gensets shall be explored to ensure uninterrupted water supply to the people. The Minister directed the concerned officers for connecting left out habitations under Jal Jeevan Mission so that every household gets the piped drinking wa-

ter supply. The Minister and the Advisor also reviewed the functioning of Control Rooms. They were informed that Control Rooms at District Level, Sub Division Level and Tehsil level have been established by the District Administration to address the distressed calls and provide immediate support to the people in coordination with the line departments. Reviewing Health sector, the Deputy Commissioner and CMO put forward the demand for posting of Gynecologist and Anesthetist to the Sub District Hospital Sogam, SDH Kralpora, SDH Tangdar and SDH Kupwara before the Minister and Advisor who assured the same. The Minister also reviewed the status of ration and essential commodities. MLA Lolab, Qaiser Jamsheed Lone and MLA Langate, Khursheed Ahmad Sheikh also spoke and put forth issues of their constituencies.

Dy CM participates in Guru Gobind Singh Ji's Jayanti celebrations at Nowshera



JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today paid a visit to the revered Gurudwara in Nowshera to join the celebrations of 358th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. While interacting with the devotees and people, he extended his heartfelt greetings and prayed for peace, harmony and prosperity to all on this auspicious occasion. Later, the Deputy CM inspected the ongoing construction work of car parking facility being devel-

oped by the Municipal Committee Nowshera at the Bus Stand. The project, being raised with an estimated cost of Rs 4.75 crore, is a significant step towards addressing parking challenges in the area. During the inspection, Surinder Choudhary directed the executing agency to expedite the construction work, ensuring its timely completion. He emphasized that this facility will greatly benefit locals and visitors by providing a convenient and organized parking space. "This project is a much-needed

initiative to cater to the growing demands of the region. Once completed, it will improve the overall traffic management and ease the lives of commuters," said the Deputy CM. The visit underscored the government's commitment towards improving urban infrastructure and promoting communal harmony through meaningful engagements and development initiatives. ADC Nowshera, Babu Ram Tandon and senior officer accompanied the Dy CM during this inspection.

DC Baramulla visits Gurdwara Chatti Padshahi

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

In a spirit of unity and celebration, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa Monday extended heartfelt greetings to the Sikh community and all those celebrating the 358th birth anniversary of the 10th Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji. On the occasion, Minga Sherpa visited the Chatti Padshahi Gurdwara in Baramulla and joined devotees to participate in the religious festivities. In his message, the DC lauded the life and teachings of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, emphasizing his role as a spiritual leader, warrior, poet and philosopher. Minga Sherpa further highlighted Guru Gobind Singh Ji's unwavering commitment to justice, equality and compassion, which continues to inspire generations across the world. Meanwhile, gurdwaras across the



district witnessed special prayers, kirtans and langars to pay homage and honor the legacy of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

DC Kupwara inspects snow clearance ops, visits key locations

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

In order to assess the snow clearance operations and evaluate the overall post-snowfall situation in Kralpora area, Chowkibal and other towns of Kupwara district, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan conducted a comprehensive tour on Monday. During the tour, the DC reviewed snow clearance activities being undertaken on Chowkibal - Tangdar road and Chowkibal-Manchattar road and inspected efforts to ensure roads are cleared off snow. As part of her extensive tour, the DC visited the R&B Snow Control Room at Kralpora to review the deployment and functioning of snow clearance machinery. She inspected the availability and operational status of snow removal equipment and other machinery. She interacted with the staff on duty and appreciated their efforts in ensuring prompt action during snowfall. The DC directed the R&B and Beacon authorities to sprinkle salt on slippery spots of the roads. During her visit to Sub District Hospital Kralpora, the DC interacted with the staff and patients, ensuring that healthcare services are functioning efficiently despite the inclement weather.



She reviewed the availability of essential medicines, heating arrangements, and other facilities, instructing hospital management to address any shortcomings promptly. The DC also visited the main market area of Reddi Chowkibal and Kralpora to check the clearance of snow from roads and inner links and interacted with public ensuring that their concerns are addressed promptly. While interacting with locals, DC listened to their grievances and assured them that the administration is working round the clock to restore all essential services. She assured the public that the administration is fully committed to mitigate the challenges posed by the harsh weather besides reiterated that the district administration is monitoring the situation round the clock and urged all departments to maintain coordination to ensure minimal disruption.

Yudhvir Sethi organises First-Ever Rozgar Mela in East Constituency



JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

In a groundbreaking initiative aimed at empowering the youth, Yudhvir Sethi, BJP leader and MLA East Constituency, today organized the first-ever Rozgar Mela in East Constituency.

The event witnessed the participation of representatives from various multinational companies, marking a significant step towards addressing the employment concerns of the constituency's youth.

Speaking on the occasion, Yudhvir Sethi emphasized the importance of creating opportunities for young people and equipping them with the tools to achieve self-reliance. "This

Rozgar Mela is a testament to our commitment to ensuring that the youth of East Constituency have access to meaningful employment opportunities. We are determined to bridge the gap between job seekers and potential employers, fostering a brighter future for our younger generation," he stated.

Sethi lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his visionary leadership, highlighting how the Central Government's initiatives have been instrumental in creating a conducive environment for employment generation.

Yudhvir Sethi also urged the youth to actively participate in and benefit from the plethora of centrally spon-

sored schemes designed to enhance skill development, entrepreneurship, and job creation.

"The Central Government under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched transformative programs like Skill India, Startup India, and the PM Mudra Yojana. I urge the youth of East Constituency to come forward and take full advantage of these schemes to realize their potential and contribute to nation-building," he added.

Sethi further assured the gathering of his unwavering commitment to addressing local concerns. He promised to continue working tirelessly to bring similar employment-oriented initiatives to the constituency. "This Rozgar Mela is just the beginning. We are planning to organize more such events and workshops to equip our youth with the skills and opportunities they need to excel in today's competitive world," he affirmed.

The event concluded with participating companies shortlisting several candidates for various roles, giving a direct impetus to the employment drive.

MLA Yudhvir Sethi's initiative was widely appreciated by attendees, who expressed their gratitude for this much-needed effort to address unemployment in the constituency.

Arnia Potato and Agro Producers Cooperative Ltd. holds annual general body meeting

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

Arnia Potato and Agro Producer Cooperative Ltd. holds Annual General Body Meeting in Arnia Town. The General Body Meeting saw the participation of over 150 members including BODs, farmers.

The meeting was presided over by President Sourav Singh and CEO Sidharth Verma special invitee was Mr.Vikrant Dogra Chairman J&K Dairy Coop federation ltd, CBBO expert Meenakshi , Mr.Basant Saini member of Kisan Advisory Board along with AR Mr.Karan Gupta and officials from the Department of Agriculture,Horticulture and Cooperative.

The CEO Sidharth Verma gave full account of the working and Financials for year 2023 and 2024 also gave the detail account of list of activities and future vision of the FPO which is to increase the membership and business by 1cr.

The meeting provided a vital platform for farmers to engage in meaningful discussions and share experiences about the agricultural landscape, particularly regarding potato cultivation and other agro-based activities. A key highlight of the event was the presence of agriculture department officers,



who educated the attendees about new government schemes and policies designed to support farmers and improve agricultural practices.

The officers also led an interactive session, answering queries and addressing concerns raised by the farmers. This initiative was aimed at enhancing awareness of available resources and guiding farmers on how to take advantage of various schemes for better productivity, sustainability, and profitability.

"We are proud to see such a strong turnout today, with a wide range of discussions that

will help shape the future of our cooperative and the broader agricultural community. The support of the agriculture department is invaluable, and we look forward to further collaboration to bring about positive change," said the President of Arnia Potato and Agro Producer Cooperative Ltd.

The BODS of Arnia FPO extended special thanks to Dr. A S reen (the director, agriculture) for all nessary support under Seed village program and The department of horticulture (Planning and marketing) for traning support.

Jammu Police's remarkable achievements in the war against drugs in 2024

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

To facilitate treatment of Drug addicts, largest "Police Drug DE-addiction, Rehabilitation, Mental Health Care Centre" Channi,Jammu made functional since March-2024"

In a determined effort to combat the growing menace of drugs, the Jammu Police undertook extensive operations throughout 2024, achieving significant success in their mission to curb narco-crimes in the district.

As part of its anti-drug drive, the police registered 200 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act and arrested 300 individuals involved in drug peddling.83 vehicles involved in these cases were also seized.It is pertinent to mention here that 153 FIR's were registered in heroin (Chitta) cases alone and 246 individuals arrested in these cases.

Among those arrested, 19 hardcore drug peddlers were booked under the stringent PIT NDPS Act, reflecting the department's zero-tolerance approach toward habitual offenders.

In a remarkable move to dismantle the economic foundations of drug trafficking, the Jammu Police attached 11 Immovable properties (residential/commercial), worth Rs.4,69,91,369/- and 03 Movable Properties (Vehicles), worth Rs 12,50,000/- in the district under the NDPS Act were seized during the year-2024. The confiscation of these illegally acquired assets repre-

sents a critical step in disrupting the financial networks of drug syndicates.

04 Drug hotspots were demolished during 2024 and Jammu Police is working seriously on all fronts to demolish the remaining drug hotspots with the active support of civil administration and General Public.

The police also recovered contraband and psychotropic substances including 43.854 Kgs heroin valued several hundred crores in the black market. This recovery underscores the magnitude of the narcotics trade in the region and the police's relentless efforts to intercept and eradicate the supply chain.

Recognizing the importance of public awareness in the fight against drug abuse, the Jammu Police conducted 19 Drug awareness programs, 52 PCPG meetings, 47 Thana Diwas and 62 Debates across the district in 2024. These initiatives aimed to educate the public, especially the youth, about the dangers of drug abuse and to promote a drug-free society. The campaigns were well-received and have played a crucial role in fostering community support for anti-drug initiatives.

The Jammu Police's efforts in 2024 mark a significant stride in the ongoing battle against drugs. By combining enforcement with awareness, they have set a robust precedent for tackling the drug menace and safeguarding the future of the community.

Jammu Police is working intensively to uproot the chains of drug supply in the region and

fully committed for rehabilitation of drug addicts.To facilitate the Drug DE-addiction/Rehabilitation of Drug addicts,J&K Police during 2024 made functional one of the largest and well equipped "Police Drug DE-addiction, Rehabilitation and Mental Health Care Centre Channi,Jammu."It is pertinent to mention here that Police Drug Deaddiction Centre was made functional by at DPL Jammu in 2013 and this year in the month of March ,it was shifted to newly constructed building equipped with all the latest facilities for treatment of drug addicts at Channi,Jammu.Since 2013 till 31.12.2024,16645 drug consumers/addicts visited OPD of Police Drug DE-addiction Centre Jammu for treatment and while as number of IPD patients/drug addicts is 1915 during the same period. In the year 2024 only,1486 patients/drug addicts visited OPD of Police Drug DE-addiction Centre and IPD number during the same period was 287.J&K police is making serious efforts to further upgrade the DE-addiction facilities for victims of drug menace.

Jammu Police is striving hard and taking every possible step to make people especially youth aware to eradicate drug menace.

We request the General Public to come forward and share information about drug peddling or consumption on 100 with Police for the cause.Your identity will be kept confidential.

Tarun Bajaj inaugurates POWERGRID's Intra - regional cultural meet “Abhiyvakti -2024”

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

Emerging artists from different parts of Jammu & Kashmir, H.P, Punjab & Haryana states, in colorful dresses and colourful presentation marked the annual Intra -Regional cultural festival “Abhiyvakti-2024”. The cultural festival & traditional Handicrafts Exhibition was organized by Northern Region Transmission System-II of Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. at Golden Jubilee Convention Centre, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

Tarun Bajaj, Executive Director, Northern Region Transmission System- II was the Chief Guest on the occasion. Shri Tarun Bajaj inaugurated the Handicrafts & Cultural Meet in presence of large number of guests, POWERGRID employees & families.

The cultural festival encompassing talent from various States & UTs of Northern Region-II swayed the audience to the beats of colorful folk dances plays and songs highlighting rich composite culture of the Region. It was a major event for the employees and their family members as amateur talent of the Region gathered to highlight their cultural traditions.

In the programme, items drawn from different areas of the Region successfully man-

aged to depict their cultural items namely Aisa Desh hai Mera by Abdullapur substation, Rangla Punjab by Amritsar substation, Ek Naya Shamshan by the artists of Kaithal substation, Adhuri Kahani by Kishenpur substation, Taj Mahal ka Tender by Chandigarh Substation, Sarhad ke Aar Par by Patiala Substation, Abhaya se Durga Tak by the artists of Moga substation, Ladakh key Vikas gatha ka jeshan by Ladakh Substation, Jigiri by artists of Hamirpur substation and Dhara 370 presented by the troupe of Regional Office Jammu. The audience was held spell bound by artists, each of whom performed like a thorough professional.

Besides, a traditional Handicrafts Exhibition comprising Crafts, Arts, & Fine Arts, were displayed which had been made by the employees of POWERGRID and their families.

Welcome address was delivered by Shri Vinod P Baxla, General Manager (HR), NRTS-II

Teams from RHQ,Jammu and Ladakh won first and second positions whereas Team from Abdullapur was declared joint third with Team Moga, Consolation prize went to host Amritsar Team. At the end of function winners as well as participants of Cultural function were presented trophies & mementos by the Chief Guest

and in Handicrafts Exhibition the participants whose items were selected as the first, second & third were also given away prizes by Shri Tarun Bajaj. Shri Sukhdev Singh DGMamritsar) presented vote of thanks.

POWER GRID CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED is a Maharatna Enterprise under the Ministry of Power having its regional headquarters in Northern Region-II at Jammu. POWERGRID is engaged in inter-state bulk power transmission. POWERGRID has 178,975 ckm of transmission lines, 280 Substations, and more than 5,43,961 MVA of transformation capacity.

With the adoption of the latest technological tools and techniques, and enhanced use of automation and digital solutions, POWERGRID has been able to maintain an average transmission system availability >99%. POWERGRID's performance has been consistently Excellent by achieving very difficult measurable parameters which are set in the MoU signed with the Ministry of Power, Government of India.

POWERGRID, Northern Region -II with headquarters in Jammu has its Transmission System spread over in the States of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, parts of Haryana, and UT of Chandigarh, Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir

MLA Arvind meets LG Sinha, highlights key issues of Jammu West Constituency



JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

Arvind Gupta, senior BJP leader and MLA Jammu West, met with Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha and discussed several pressing issues concerning the welfare of the people in the Jammu West constituency.

During the meeting, Arvind Gupta raised the need for significant improvements in the medical infrastructure at the Sub-District Hospital, Sarwal. He emphasized the importance of strengthening the hospital's emergency wing to function 24*7 by equipping it with modern medical facilities, an Intensive Care Unit (ICU), and a

Blood Bank. Such upgrades, he stated, would significantly reduce the dependency on the overburdened Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu.

Furthermore, the MLA stressed the need to enhance the emergency services at GMC Jammu and its associated hospitals. He proposed the deployment of professional Medical Services Managers and the establishment of Medical Boards to oversee the treatment of critical patients, thus minimizing referrals and providing timely care to those in need.

The senior BJP leader also brought attention to the need for extending Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) benefits

to all pensioners in Jammu and Kashmir. While acknowledging the current coverage for certain categories, he urged the administration to either expand the scheme or introduce a similar initiative for pensioners not currently covered under the scheme.

Addressing the needs of the elderly, Arvind Gupta called for the establishment of Senior Citizens Day Care Centers, similar to the one in Roop Nagar, in other parts of the city. He emphasized that these centers are essential for the welfare and social engagement of senior citizens. Additionally, he highlighted the dire condition of educational institutes in Jammu City, which suffer from inadequate infrastructure, poor management, and insufficient subject-wise staffing. Immediate intervention, he suggested, is necessary to improve the quality of education in the region.

Arvind also proposed the establishment of night shelters for the homeless in Jammu and other cities of the region. These shelters, he explained, would provide relief to those who lack basic amenities and protection, especially during harsh weather conditions.

Arvind Gupta reaffirmed his commitment to the welfare of his constituents and urged the Lieutenant Governor to prioritize these issues. He expressed confidence in the administration's ability to address these concerns effectively, ensuring a better quality of life for the people of Jammu West.

Indian Army organises Ex-Servicemen rally at Dul, Kishtwar

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

In a commendable initiative to reconnect with its veteran community, the Indian Army organized a highly successful Ex-Servicemen Rally at Dul, Kishtwar. The event, graced by Brigadier Jai Bhagwan Singh Rath, Commander, 5 Sector ASSAM RIFLES, served as a vital platform to strengthen the bond between the Indian Army and its retired personnel while addressing their welfare needs and concerns.

The rally brought together a large number of Ex-Servicemen, Veer Naris, and widows from Kishtwar and the surrounding areas. These attendees were given an opportunity to voice their grievances, interact with officials, and gain valuable information about various welfare schemes designed specifically for veterans and their families. The Indian Army's continued efforts to support its

extended family were prominently showcased during the event.

The event included several interactive sessions, where grievances were heard and addressed on the spot. Assistance booths were also set up to provide guidance on accessing entitlements such as pensions, medical care under the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS), and other benefits. The rally provided an avenue to discuss welfare measures and ensure that retired personnel and their families are aware of the resources available to them.

Brigadier Jai Bhagwan Singh Rath, while addressing the rally, reiterated the Indian Army's unwavering commitment to the welfare of its veterans and their families. In his speech, he emphasized, "The Indian Army's bond with its veterans and their families is eternal. This rally is a testament to

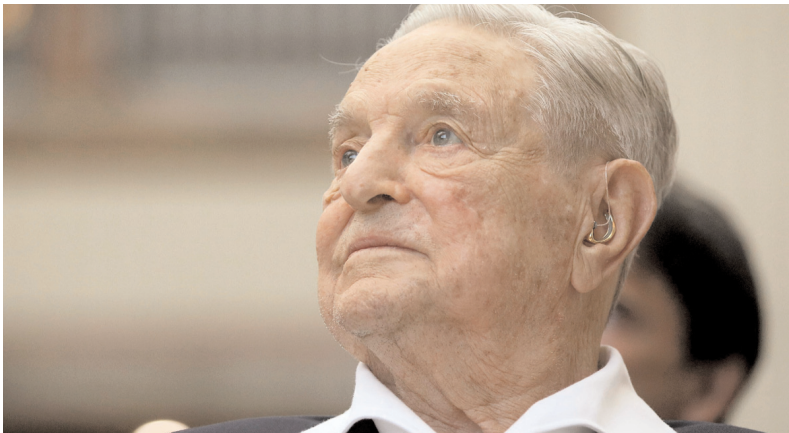
our unwavering commitment to their welfare, ensuring they receive the respect and support they truly deserve."

The participants expressed heartfelt gratitude for the Army's efforts in organizing the rally and for its continued support of the veteran community. Veer Naris and widows particularly appreciated the Indian Army's outreach, which reaffirmed their sense of belonging and recognition.

The rally not only bridged the gap between the Indian Army and its veteran community but also fostered a spirit of camaraderie and trust. It highlighted the Army's dedication to honoring the sacrifices of its veterans and their families while ensuring their well-being. This initiative stands as a shining example of the Indian Army's commitment to maintaining lifelong bonds with its extended family.

US: Joe Biden awards George Soros the Presidential Medal of Freedom; Elon Musk reacts

NEW DELHI, JAN 6
President Joe Biden presented the US' highest civilian award to controversial philanthropist George Soros, along with 18 others, for their contributions to America and the world.
Reacting to the award, Tesla CEO Elon Musk criticised Biden and called it a "travesty".
"A travesty that Biden is giving Soros the Medal of Freedom," Musk wrote on X.
The Presidential Medal of Freedom is presented to individuals who have made exemplary contributions to the prosperity, values, or security of the United States, world peace, or other significant societal, public or private endeavours.
According to an official White House statement, Soros, an investor and founder of the Open Society Foundations, was recognised for his global initiatives to "strengthen democracy, human rights, education and social justice."
Controversial legacy of Soros in 1930 to a Jewish family in Hungary, Soros escaped Nazi occupation o build a life of freedom for himself. By



founding Open Society Foundations, Soros spent billions on promoting democratic values, human rights, and social causes across the world.
Soros's involvement in politics has raised lot of eyebrows in the past. He has been accused of influencing regime changes, and funding movements such as the Arab Spring as well.
Recently, Soros's name popped up linking to controversies relating to the Adani Group in India. In 2023, US short-seller firm Hindenburg released a report alleging business tycoon Gautam Adani improperly used tax havens and flagged concerns about high debt levels at the company.
The Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) alleged that the Adani Group used opaque Mauritius-based funds to channel investments into its companies. Soros's Open Society Foundations is a donor to OCCRP.
Also, this is not the first time Musk has said something against Soros. Last year, Musk slammed Soros by stating that he "hates humanity". He had also compared Soros to the Marvel character Magneto, fictional Holocaust survivor with powers and controversial world-view.

UP police warn public against cyber scams during Mahakumbh; deploys state-of-the-art security measures

NEW DELHI, JAN 6
The state's police is constantly monitoring search engines to identify fake websites. In addition, cyber warriors are constantly debunking fake information and misinformation. Uttar Pradesh police is also constantly posting precautions that must be taken during the Mahakumbh, broadcasting the 112 number to be called in case of a mishap and also propagating the use of the 'UP Cop' app.
'Show largeheartedness like Muslims': Top Islamic cleric stokes row claiming waqf land is used for mahakumbh
2,500 water police personnel deployed to ensure safety in Ganga and Yamuna ahead of Kumbh Mela
The intensive security measures put in place for the Mahakumbh are being



studied by the Ujjain police where the next Kumbh will take place.
There are many firsts being implemented in this Mahakumbh to ensure the safety of all pilgrims. For instance, tethered drones are being deployed. Not only are these more stable than other drones, their signals too cannot be interfered with or jammed. Similarly, underwater drones with the capacity to plunge 100 metres into water and work in low visibility will be deployed.
Also, four kinds of QR codes have been provided for police, transport, mela information and medical emergencies; help will reach within minutes of scanning these.

GI tag is the fine link between people, places and products: Subhajit Saha

NEW DELHI, JAN 6
In the new year, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states may earn a dozen new Geographical Indication (GI) tags if everything goes well. Some of these include native agricultural and handicrafts products. Today, there is a never-seen-before awareness, surrounding the benefits of receiving GI tags, within the government and private societies. Subhajit Saha is a name to reckon with in the field of GI as he actively supported and promoted the use of GI to popularise the local talent, crafts and landmarks. In an interview with THE WEEK, Subhajit Saha, Founder of IPRAS and Head

Legal & IPR for Resolute Group, throws light on the background work needed to get a GI registration, his personal experiences and how GI tags economically benefit people and places.
Q. Can you briefly talk about how you got associated with Geographical Indication (GI) Tags and Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)?
I started my IPR journey in 2004, when I joined Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in the IPR centre. The main objective was to spread IP awareness, capacity building and offer IPR facilitation services to stakeholders. Along with Patents, Trademarks, Designs and Copyrights, GI was also on our radar. It all began with the Pochampally IKAT GI registration in 2004 and since then it has been no looking back. Initially, it was all about awareness and sensitisation with the beginning of GI movement in India back then. The next phase was to register these products. Hence, a part of my profession that was to register GIs, then turned into a passion. I also run an NGO IPRAS founded in 2023 to help artisans for branding and connecting to market

opportunities. This is how I got associated with GI and facilitated more than 30 GI registrations from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Madhya Pradesh till date.
Q. Why and how important are GI tags for places, events, food etc?
Geographical Indications (GI) of Goods are defined as that aspect of IPRs referring to a country or to a place situated therein as being the country or place of origin of that product. Typically, such a name conveys an assurance of quality and distinctiveness, which is essentially attributable to the fact of its origin in that defined geographical locality. So, GI is the fine link between people, places and products. The most important attribute is the legal right, which the producers and artisans get to use the name and brand their product by excluding others. The other aspect is the premium which the GI tags give to a product and hence better pricing and good returns. GI tags give an undoubted assurance to the consumer that the product is of certain standard and has a legacy and reputation, which helps to connect consumers better. GI prevents rural

exodus as more and more community and groups get involved in making the product and become entrepreneurs. GI not only makes the product famous but also the place and people associated with it thus opening new avenues of tourism and investments in the region.
Q. Talk about the role and contribution in helping organisations and governments earn GI tag. Describe the efforts and steps involved.
A GI tag is a community right and is given to a group of producers, FPO's and association. Government and organisations can act as facilitators to support with funds, technical data and at times some documentation. GI registration in India takes 12 to 18 months in a smooth sailing case. It begins with an awareness session in the area of origin to bring in the producers and association together to make them aware of the GI as a legal right and IPR. Then what benefits they will get with the registration and the value proposition. If there is no society, association or trust, we then form one and then make them file the application. Once the application.

Bangladesh cancels judges' training programme in India amid strained ties

NEW DELHI, JAN 6
Amid strained ties, Bangladesh's interim government cancelled a planned training programme for 50 judges and judicial officials in India on Sunday.
The cancellation was following a directive from the Bangladesh Supreme Court, The Daily Star newspaper reported. Bangladesh's law ministry confirmed the cancellation, however, no further explanation was provided.
Monk Chinmoy Das's lawyer predicted he would be denied bail: 'He will be detained as a symbol of fear'
Hundreds march in Bangladesh to mark student-led uprising that ousted PM Sheikh Hasina
About 50 lower judiciary judges were planned to undergo a one-day training programme from February 10 at the National Judicial Academy and the State Judicial Academy in Madhya Pradesh.
The trainee judges selected under the program were district and sessions judges or its equivalent officers, additional district and sessions judges, joint district judges, senior assistant judges



and assistant judges.
Since the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, India and Bangladesh have witnessed strained ties. Hasina fled to New Delhi on August 5 last year following a massive protest led by students over quota reforms.
There have been also a series of attacks on Hindu community members and their places of worship after the interim government headed by Muhammad Yunus came to power on August 8.
The arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das on sedition charges also raised concerns after he was denied bail. India has raised its concerns with Dhaka and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Bangladesh amid strained ties. He stressed India's support for Bangladesh's democratic values.

CM Mamata Banerjee felicitates 95 Indian fishermen released by Bangladesh

NEW DELHI, JAN 6
West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee met and honoured 95 fishermen on Monday who had been detained in Bangladesh for over two months after inadvertently crossing into Bangladeshi waters. She also announced compensation of Rs 2 lakh for the family of another fisherman who died during the detainment process.
On Sunday, India and Bangladesh conducted a mutual exchange of fishermen who had crossed their international maritime borders. Bangladesh released 95 Indian fishermen, while India freed 90 Bangladeshi fishermen. The exchange was overseen by coast guard and administrative officials from both countries.
The Union Ministry of External Affairs stated that several Indian fishermen were detained by Bangladesh in recent months after unintentionally crossing the maritime border. Indian authorities had also apprehended Bangladeshi fishermen in similar circumstances.
The Indian government worked diligently to secure the release of the detained fishermen, leading to the reciprocal repatriation of fishermen from both sides.
The rescued Indian fishermen were brought to Ganga Sagar in South 24 Parganas, where CM Banerjee met them on Monday. She emphasised the West Bengal government's proactive role in alerting the Centre and making



concerted efforts to bring the fishermen back home.
"We tracked them through identity cards that we have given to every fisherman in West Bengal. Our administration found out they have been detained in Bangladesh," the chief minister said.
WB govt's lack of cooperation with BSF leading to infiltration, says LoP Suwendu Adhikari
her first visit to Sandeshkhali since turmoil, CM Mamata Banerjee focuses on peace, harmony and govt schemes
CM Banerjee also wondered if the fishermen were physically assaulted during their stay in the neighbouring country after seeing some of them struggling to walk. She asked the South 24 Parganas DM and other district officials to ensure their proper treatment.
About the Bangladeshi fishermen who were in West Bengal, she said, "We extended utmost care to the

Bangladeshi fishermen. Many of them were unwell, and we provided them with the necessary treatment. It was essential for us to uphold the reputation of India and West Bengal."
Meanwhile, the chief minister, who was in Sagar Island to inspect the preparation for the upcoming Ganga Sagar Mela (fair) said that her government plans to build a bridge over the Muri Ganga River.
"Once the bridge is completed, people will be able to drive straight to the mela. I asked the Centre to build it. But now it will be constructed by the state government," CM Banerjee said.
She also expressed disappointment that her proposal to grant national status to the Ganga Sagar Mela had been ignored. "The Centre provides thousands of crores to Kumbha Mela but nothing to Ganga Sagar. We respect Kumbha but Ganga Sagar is nothing less."

Congress war room set for Delhi Assembly elections. What's the party's strategy?

NEW DELHI, JAN 6
The Congress, which once ruled the state, failed to open its account in the last two Assembly polls and is expecting to turn the tide this time The Week News Desk By The Week News Desk Updated: January 06, 2025 14:57 IST
Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and his sister and party's Wayanad candidate Priyanka Gandhi during a public meeting, at Mananthavady in the districts | PTI
Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi | PTI
With hardly a month left for the Delhi Assembly Elections, the Congress has already set up a war room in the state, in a bid to regain its waning foothold. Though Delhi will witness a three-pronged fight between the AAP, BJP and Congress.
The Congress, which once ruled the state, failed to open its account in the last two Assembly polls and is expecting to turn the tide this time. While both BJP and the AAP have announced candidates for all 70 seats, the Congress could only so far release the first list of 48 candidates.
While the party couldn't wrest even a single seat in Delhi in the recently-concluded Lok Sabha elections even while it was in an alliance with AAP, the state election will not be a cakewalk either,



considering that it is independently contesting the elections.
War room ready
While the war room and manifesto preparation for the elections began as early as December, the party is now devising a strategy by roping in senior leaders. As per reports, chief ministers, deputy chief ministers of Congress-ruled states and national spokespersons have been tasked with holding press conferences and meetings to convince voters of the guarantees put forth by the party.
They include Himachal Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, Telangana CM REvanth Reddy and Rajasthan former deputy chief minister and Congress leader Sachin Pilot.
The party will also organise election rallies which will see senior leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi participate in it. Party President Mallikarjun Kharge will also address voters at the mega rally.
Targeting both AAP and BJP
Despite AAP being an INDIA ally, the Congress is in no mood to go soft on AAP, as evident from its initial campaign. Congress leader Ajay Maken addressing AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal as "anti-national" shows that Congress isn't shy of targeting Kejriwal himself. The party has also selected its sharpest weapon, Sandeep Dixit, to take on Kejriwal in his constituency. It is also fielding Mahila Congress National President Alka Lamba in Atishi's constituency Kalkaji.

NOTICE
I Parshotam Singh F/o Piyush Rajput R/o Panghore (Ghou Manhasan) Teh Marh, Jammu, That My son namely Piyush Rajput has applied for registration of the birth as on 08-01-2018 at home, This notice it is enjoined upon the general public if any objection regarding the registration of birth of Piyush Rajput S/o Sh Parshotam Singh R/o Panghore (Ghou Manhasan) Teh Marh Distt Jammu as on 08-01-2018 at home, kindly file objection with in 7 days of publication of this notice in the court of Executive Magistrate Marh

EDITORIAL

Accountability and fairness in Government Quarters (Bungalows)

The recent High Court order directing BJP politicians to vacate government quarters following the end of their official tenure is a much-needed step toward enforcing accountability. Public resources, including government-provided accommodations, are meant to serve active officials and must not become privileges that linger post-tenure. While the compliance of these politicians with the court's orders is commendable, it raises critical questions about financial accountability.

Sat Sharma and ex Deputy C M Kavinder Gupta both from BJP should be punished according to law and estate department should get rent and electricity charges for last so many years without more delay.

Who bears the cost of rent, maintenance, and associated utilities for the period they overstayed? Public funds must not be burdened by private non-compliance. The onus should fall squarely on the individuals who continued to occupy these properties without rightful entitlement. A comprehensive mechanism is needed to ensure that all dues, including penalties for overstaying, are recovered transparently and fairly.

This incident underscores a broader systemic issue of entitlement within political circles, often leading to misuse of taxpayer-funded resources. The judiciary’s intervention is a reminder that democratic governance is rooted in equity and accountability. Politicians, who represent the people, must lead by example, ensuring that public resources are not exploited for personal convenience.

Moving forward, the government should institute stricter policies for the timely handover of quarters, supported by automatic penalties for non-compliance. Such measures will not only safeguard public assets but also uphold the principles of fairness and responsibility, essential for fostering trust in governance. Ultimately, public servants must remember that their privileges are not personal but a means to serve the nation.

Rise of AI in digital learning compared to traditional learning methodologies

VIJAY GARG

The conventional teaching methods towards modernisation brought about through the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI). IBEF has published statistics indicating that the Indian edtech market is expected to grow from a value of \$700-800 million in 2021 to \$30 billion by 2031. This growth shows the penchant for digital learning solutions that rely on AI to provide more personalised, efficient, and accessible education. Besides, a report by KPMG says that India is now the second-largest market for e-learning, after the United States, clearly indicating the country's strong digital learning transformation.

Artificial intelligence

One of the problems which India is witnessing is the imbalance between school enrolment and higher education enrolment. Interestingly, about 25 crores students take admission in the schools every year, and just about 28% continue the higher studies, as per the TG Sitharam, chairman of the All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). This lag is primarily due to the economic constraints. The majority of the students find it extremely difficult to deal with the massive fee for higher studies, leaving millions of bright minds outside the opportunity spectrum. Perhaps, AI is the medium through which this problem can be addressed. It is providing affordable, accessible, and high-quality learning platforms. Students can pursue higher education irrespective of their geographical or financial limitations through AI-enabled platforms. It can potentially increase the percentage of higher education enrolments and offer more equitable access to learning.

Also, another issue that poses a significant challenge is the shortage of quality teachers. According to the UNESCO study, India has over 1 million unfilled teaching vacancies, and approximately 1.1 lakh schools carry out functions with only a single teacher. This problem mainly exists in remote regions across the country. Sadly, about 65% to teaching staff remains unfilled in these towns. Now, AI's role in this scenario becomes

extremely useful, as it acts like a supplementary teaching tool. With the shortage of this level of teachers, AI-powered platforms can serve as virtual teaching assistants, helping bridge the gap by providing students access to learning course books, personalised guidance, and more interactive learning experiences.

Beyond just the technological progress, AI also stands as a powerful tool that has the capability to democratise education. Tools like adaptive learning technologies can modify lessons for individual students, enhancing their educational journey. Adaptive learning, a fundamental aspect of AI in education, allows platforms to adjust the difficulty of the material based on a student's progress. Popenici and Kerr (2017) describe how the applications of AIED are rapidly evolving, reshaping how education is delivered. Generative AI technologies, which create interactive and engaging content, are attracting significant investment and are instrumental in the growing development of the AIED industry. AIED's adaptive learning techniques have proven to boost test results by 62%, with AI-driven learning improving overall student performance by 30% and reducing anxiety by 20%.

The edition of ChatGPT has been specifically designed for the higher education institutions. Its fundamental idea is to boost the privacy features along with security. This signifies that how AI is flexible and adjusting to the education scenario. These innovative offerings imply that how AI can bring a paradigm shift the future classrooms. Such innovations clearly reflect the potential of AI to shape future classrooms. It makes learning experiences efficient, tailored, and engaging at the same time.

In fact, our country, AI could be just what the education system has desperately craved for. With the high growth rate in population, facilitating quality, low-cost education becomes a hurdle. AI thus presents a promising solution. It helps to scale learning opportunities, making them more accessible and affordable. AI-based platforms create personalised learning paths tailored to

each student's needs, interests, and experience, unlike traditional classrooms that use a one-size-fits-all approach.

AI is making education much more accessible. For students with disabilities, tools like text-to-speech and speech recognition give them the chance to interact with lessons in ways that suit their needs. AI also helps non-native speakers by translating educational content into different languages, removing language barriers that often hold students back. In many cases, traditional classrooms can't fully address the unique needs of all students, especially those with disabilities or language difficulties. AI fills in these gaps, making sure that education reaches more people and is more inclusive. It's not about replacing teachers or changing the core of learning but about giving more students a better chance to succeed, regardless of their abilities or language skills.

AI also augments the process of assessment. Through adaptive assessments, AI can adjust the level of difficulty of tests and quizzes based on previous submissions. Students are constantly given the prospect and motivation to learn and improve in specific areas, as they receive timely and relevant feedback on what needs to be changed. On the other hand, traditional evaluations are more static and it offers minimum feedback. It doesn't offer any bigger scope to self learning. Also, for a teacher in a traditional classroom set up, to closely monitor each student's progress and learning style, especially in large class sizes. However, AI enables platforms to monitor each student's learning patterns, evaluating how they interact with the content and making recommendations for improving learning outcomes. It is nearly impossible to duplicate this level of thorough understanding in a conventional learning environment. AI provides quicker, more accurate support while also saving time for both teachers and students.

AI has much more unique features than traditional methods in the form of gamified learning and interactive content. AI technologies can formulate content that recreates a stimulating environment in which students are

more than passive recipients of information while learning something new. We are very much aware that the traditional learning is mainly restricted to classroom lectures and textbooks, but AI enables to engage in much effective way to comprehend some of the complex subjects. This method helps students only to keep the information in a better way but also inspire and motivates them.

Moreover, the rise of AI in education does not mean that it will replace teachers; rather, it improves their role. By handling tasks like grading and administrative duties, AI frees up educators to focus on mentoring and personalised student interactions—areas where human connection is essential. In other ways, we can simply put out that AI is like an instructor in the classroom, which provides real-time recommendations/suggestions and feedback to help the students.

AI eliminates the hurdles which the traditional learning usually faces. These are restricted due to cost and location. Moreover, it encourages more inclusive and accessible educational experience. The best part is that students can have this opportunity to learn as per their wishes.

Conventional classroom education methods bank on lectures which is not always the best way to learn, but AI tools are able to meet the needs of all students. Time and the availability of the teacher also become limitations for today's traditional classrooms. On the other hand, technology allows students to access learning materials whenever they want. Traditional forms of evaluation are unable to provide detailed feedback on the student's performance, but AI enables students to get immediate feedback and understand how to improve even before the action.

As India gets ready to flag its position in the global edtech market, AI can help overcome important education challenges like teacher shortages and high costs. By making use of AI, India can offer quality education to millions of students, making learning fairer and more effective for everyone. The future of education is digital, and AI is leading the way.

Why is the depreciation of the rupee not stopping?

- DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

Sustained outflows after the September 2024 stock peak weakened the rupee as investors moved to safer assets amid speculation of a rise in US interest rates. Trade deficits, such as the high trade deficit, highlight external dependence on imports, especially for energy, widening the current account deficit during rupee weakness. India's crude oil import bill rose with the rupee depreciation, widening the 2024 trade deficit to close to \$75 billion.

Global events such as tariff threats and the BRICS currency dispute add to volatility by creating uncertainties for India's external trade and investment. The US President's 2024 tariff warning against the currency plans of the BRICS countries triggered a market sell-off, weakening India's external stability. Heavy reliance on foreign exchange reserves to stabilize the rupee restricts long-term monetary flexibility during sustained global market turmoil.

The rupee exhausted more than \$20 billion in reserves in a single quarter to pull the rupee back to 85.53 in December 2024. A weak rupee constrains domestic monetary policies, raising inflation through costlier imports while reducing fiscal space to address growth concerns. The cost of crude oil imports rose 15% in December 2024, putting pressure on policymakers to

effectively balance currency management and fiscal expansion strategies.

Protectionist trade measures, such as tariffs or sanctions, can undermine currency stability by disrupting the trade balance. Political instability or conflict between major economies creates volatility, boosting demand for the safe-haven dollar and weakening emerging market currencies. The Russia-Ukraine war led to a surge in global crude oil prices, which put pressure on India's import bill and depreciated the rupee. Tight monetary policies in advanced economies lead to capital outflows from India, putting pressure on the rupee.

The US Federal Reserve's rate hike plan in 2022-23 led to foreign portfolio outflows, which weakened the rupee.

A widening trade deficit due to a rise in imports compared to exports leads to foreign exchange outflows, weakening the rupee. India's record trade deficit in 2022 due to rising crude oil and gold imports drives rupee depreciation. High domestic inflation depreciates the currency value, making exports less competitive and imports costlier. Rising prices of inelastic imports such as crude oil push up India's import bills, weakening the rupee in 2023. A decline in domestic and foreign investment indicates weak economic growth, discouraging currency inflows. In 2024, declining corporate performance and rising stock valua-

tions led to foreign portfolio investment outflows. Central bank interventions to stabilize the currency are limited by foreign exchange reserves and can provide only temporary relief. A late RBI intervention in December 2024 managed to temporarily stabilize the rupee at 85.53 per dollar. A fiscally constrained government reduces its ability to manage external shocks, thereby weakening confidence in currency stability. India's record fiscal deficit during the pandemic limited government measures to boost external resilience. The government's clear stance on currency policies boosts investor confidence and reduces speculative pressure. The RBI governor's ruling out of de-dollarization in 2024 reassured the market, temporarily easing concerns of rupee depreciation.

Measures to strengthen external resilience include boosting exports and focusing on value-added manufacturing and services to increase foreign exchange earnings and reduce trade imbalances. Strengthening sectors such as pharmaceuticals and IT can help reduce the trade deficit and stabilize the rupee. Reduce dependence on volatile crude oil and essential imports by entering into long-term agreements with diversified suppliers. Expanding crude oil imports from Russia and Middle Eastern countries reduces average oil import costs in 2023. Build strong reserves through sovereign wealth

funds and gold accumulation for effective currency stabilization.

According to the Reserve Bank, record foreign exchange reserves of \$600 billion in 2021 helped manage volatility during the pandemic. Enter into agreements to settle trade in local currencies, reducing dependence on the US dollar and mitigating exchange rate risks. The India-Russia Rupee-Ruble Trading Mechanism eased pressure on foreign exchange reserves during the Russia-Ukraine crisis. Prioritize low-cost and long-term borrowings while reducing short-term external debt to avoid currency risks.

India's increased issuance of sovereign green bonds helped attract stable foreign investment while reducing repayment volatility in 2023. A strong external sector is important for India's economic resilience amid global uncertainties. By promoting export competitiveness, ensuring prudent fiscal policy, diversifying foreign exchange reserves, and increasing bilateral trade in rupees, India can reduce currency volatility. A visionary strategy emphasizing structural reforms and global economic integration will ensure long-term stability and strengthen India's position in the global economy.

Will ICC adopt a new system for Test cricket?

NEW DELHI, JAN 6

The ICC in collaboration with cricket boards of India, Australia and England is exploring the possibility of a two-tier Test system to facilitate more series between big three nations.

The Age reported that Jay Shah, the new ICC chairman, is set to meet Cricket Australia chair Mike Baird and his England counterpart Richard Thompson later this month to discuss the finer points.

"Any plan for a move to two divisions in Test cricket would kick in after the end of the current Future Tours Program in 2027," The Age reported.

The BCCI is currently gearing up for its Special General Meeting on January 12 in Mumbai where interim secretary Devajit Saikia is expected to get a full-time role. Saikia was appointed in the interim role after Shah vacated his post last month to take over as ICC chairman.

A BCCI official indicated that the discussion floated around the ICC corridors in 2016, the first-time when a two-tier Test system was seriously considered.

"We don't have any news of any such move as yet. Currently, preparations



are being made for SGM and the recent tour to Australia too needs to be discussed.

"There was such a move sometime back, but we haven't heard anything since," a BCCI source told PTI.

The BCCI and cricket bodies of Zimbabwe and Bangladesh opposed the move, citing the possibility of decreasing revenue.

They had also argued that smaller nations would miss out on the opportunity of playing against top teams if such a system comes into existence.

However, nine years down the road the modalities have changed and even

some of the reputed experts such as former Indian skipper Ravi Shastri are supporting the division.

"I've been a firm believer in that if you want Test cricket to survive and be alive and thriving, I think that's the way to go.

"The top teams play against each other more often, so there is a contest; you want contests," Shastri told SEN during the recent fifth Test between India and Australia.

Even some of the top players such as England Test skipper Ben Stokes had criticised the current model of World Test Championship.

Harmanpreet rested for Ireland ODIs; Smriti to lead

NEW DELHI, JAN 6

Captain Harmanpreet Kaur and pacer Renuka Singh Thakur have been rested for India women's three-match home ODI series against Ireland, Board of Control for Cricket in India announced on Monday.

Opener Smriti Mandhana will lead the side in the series, starting on January 10 at Rajkot, in the absence of Harmanpreet.

Harmanpreet had suffered a knee injury during the home series against the West Indies last month, forcing her to sit out of the last two T20Is before returning to play three ODIs.

Before that, the 35-year-old had sustained a neck injury during the match against Pakistan in the Women's T20 World Cup in Dubai in October last year.

Lead pacer Renuka was the player of the series in the one-dayers against the West Indies after taking 10 wickets from three matches.

In the past, a stress fracture on the



back had troubled her, so the move to rest her for the series against Ireland could be to ease her workload.

squad for ODI series against Ireland: Smriti Mandhana (captain), Deepti Sharma (vice-captain), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Jemimah Ro-

drigues, Uma Chetry (w/k), Richa Ghosh (w/k), Tejal Hasabnis, Raghvi Bist, Minnu Mani, Priya Mishra, Tanuja Kanwer, Titas Sadhu, Saima Thakor, Sayali Satghare.

Schedule: Ireland's tour of India

ODI: January 10

ODI: January 12

Abhishek Bachchan joins European T20 League as co-owner

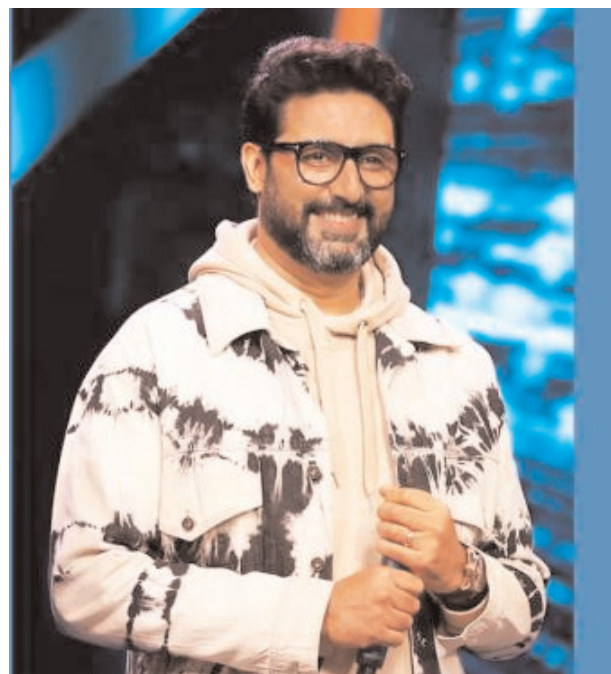
NEW DELHI, JAN 6

The European T20 Premier League (ETPL), a privately-owned franchise tournament in partnership with three member cricket nations -- Ireland, Scotland and the Netherlands -- has taken a significant leap forward with renowned actor, entrepreneur, and sports enthusiast Abhishek Bachchan investing in the property as a co-owner.

The ETPL, which has been sanctioned by the International Cricket Council (ICC), is set to get underway from July 15th - August 3rd, 2025, and will feature the best of talent from the three nations rubbing shoulders with world-class players from across the world in true European style. Abhishek Bachchan's addition adds substantial global appeal and stature to the league.

The league will feature six teams -- Dublin, Belfast, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. This working group is tasked with steering key decision-making processes and overseeing the establishment and resourcing of a dedicated administrative entity to manage the tournament.

Speaking about his investment in the European T20 Premier League, Abhishek Bachchan said, "Cricket is



not just a sport; it's a unifying force that transcends boundaries. The ETPL is the ideal platform to showcase cricket's growing global appeal. With cricket being included in the 2028 Olympics, its popularity will further surge. I'm humbled and excited about this unique collaboration between the cricket boards of Ireland, Scotland, and the Netherlands.

Warren Deutrom, CEO of Cricket Ireland and Chair of the ETPL, welcomed Abhishek's involvement: "We are delighted to welcome Abhishek Bachchan as a co-owner of the ETPL. His

deep passion for sports and entrepreneurial acumen add tremendous value to our vision of elevating the status and profile of European cricket. With ICC's support, Abhishek's commitment to our shared vision, alongside the exceptional expertise brought to the tournament by Saurav, Priyanka and Dhiraj from Rules Sports Tech, we believe we can create a cricket experience that elevates the game, inspires young talent, and provides a tremendous platform for European cricket on the global cricketing stage."

"I sincerely thank the ICC and the three boards for their

tireless work, and I have immense faith in our team to bring this event to fruition. I congratulate Warren Saurav (Banerjee, Director, ETPL), Priyanka (Kaul, Director, ETPL), Dhiraj, Andrew and countless others who have been working hard over the last year to make this a reality. I am dedicated to working with all stakeholders to ensure that the ETPL becomes a resounding success, bringing cricket closer to millions across Europe. This is just the beginning. It's time to roll up our sleeves and let the games begin."

Saurav Banerjee, Director, ETPL, highlighted the region's potential: "Cricket, the second most-watched sport globally, is gaining significant momentum in Europe. With 34 out of 108 ICC members from this region, we aim to make cricket a major sport here, building a legacy that players, fans, and stakeholders can proudly celebrate. This would not have been possible without the support of Cricket Ireland, who have been tirelessly working with us over the last year to make this happen. We also look forward to working closely with Abhishek, whose commitment to sports and active involvement has been truly inspiring."

'I Was Just Getting Bumrah'd'

NEW DELHI, JAN 6

When Usman Khawaja speaks, expect nothing but candour.

Following Australia's series-claiming win over India in the 5th Test in Sydney, Khawaja made an honest assessment of his batting and his frailties against India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah.

Khawaja, who got out to Bumrah in six of his nine innings before Sunday, was relieved to not face 'absolute nightmare' Bumrah in the final innings of the Sydney Test of the 2024-25 Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

"I was just getting Bumrah'd" Khawaja told ABC Sport.

"It's a shame he was (injured) but thank god for us. Today would've been an absolute nightmare facing him on that wicket. As soon as we didn't see him out there we thought 'alright, we've got a chance here'. He's the toughest bowler I've ever faced."

Bumrah was laid low by a back spasm and missed bowling in the Australia's



2nd innings in Sydney, preventing him from playing a part in India's defence of 162 to save the series. Australia cantered to victory with six wickets to spare, Khawaja top scoring with 41 and the hosts bagging the series 3-1.

Another of Bumrah's bunnies, Travis Head said: 'I think there were 15 people

really pleased that Bumrah didn't bowl today. He's a great performer, he had an exceptional tour.'

Head made 34 not out in his 46-run stand with Khawaja for the fourth wicket, which stabilised things for Australia after Prasidh Krishna's three early strikes.

Australia debacle exposes India's Bumrah dependence

NEW DELHI, JAN 6

India's 3-1 defeat in Australia exposed the fragility of their top order, but equally unmissable was how much they rely on pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, who gave it all until he broke down in the series finale in Sydney.

The seam-bowling genius finished the five-Test series with 32 wickets at an average of 13.06 and was the obvious choice for the player-of-the-series award despite being on the losing side.

Bumrah, laid low by a back spasm, was not available to bowl in Australia's second innings in the low-scoring thriller in Sydney where the hosts prevailed by six wickets to reclaim the Border-Gavaskar Trophy after a decade.

"It's a little disappointing in the end because I probably missed out on the spiciest wicket of the series," a dejected Bumrah said after India lost the series even though his own stature grew.

Australia run-machine Travis Head said he could not think of a better individual display than Bumrah's superlative performance in the series.

Former India opener Wasim Jaffer said Bumrah alone kept alive India's



hopes of levelling the series in Sydney until his injury.

"Every time Bumrah stood at the top of his mark this series Aus cricket fans held their breath and only "Have rarely seen a cricketer dominate the Aussie psyche so much..."

But there is a limit even for arguably the best all-format bowler of his generation, who was over-bowled with little support from the other end.

His new-ball partner Mohammed Siraj, who finished with 20 wickets, was inconsistent and expensive in the low-scoring series.

Akash Deep bowled well in Brisbane and Melbourne before a back injury cut short his tour, while Prasidh Krishna claimed six wickets in the only Test he played in Sydney.

The difference between the bowling averages of Bumrah and his seam-bowling teammates stood at 21.76, suggesting Bumrah operated as India's one-man army with the ball.

He bowled 53.2 overs in Melbourne - the highest in his 45-Test career - and skipper Rohit Sharma conceded they over-bowled Bumrah. "If somebody is in such a

great form, you want to try and maximise that form," Rohit said after the Melbourne Test.

"That is what we've been trying to do with Bumrah."

Apart from mentoring the young seamers in the squad, Bumrah also led India in Perth and Sydney, with Rohit skipping the first Test and being dropped from the last.

The Australia tour adds another layer of sheen to Bumrah's reputation as a premier bowler of his era, but India will return worrying about their shallow pace reserve ahead of their England tour in June-July.

Anthony Davis Makes NBA History

NEW DELHI, JAN 6

Los Angeles Lakers star Anthony Davis has further cemented his legacy in basketball history by surpassing Hall of Famer Elvin Hayes to claim sole possession of 25th place on the NBA's all-time blocks list.

Despite being listed as a doubtful starter due to a left ankle strain, Davis took to the court and delivered a record-breaking performance.

At Sunday's game at the Toyota Center in Houston, Davis added another accolade to his already impressive resume. The Lakers forward made history, securing the 25th spot on the all-time block list.

'With his block at the 5:07 mark of the first quarter tonight at Houston, Anthony Davis passed Elvin Hayes (1,771) into 25th place all-time in NBA history, per Lakers,' reported Ryan Ward of Lakers Nation, a fan site for the LA Lakers.

Davis now boasts 1,772



career blocks, surpassing Hayes' record. Jermaine O'Neal, currently 24th on the list, sits within striking distance with 1,820 blocks.

Heading into the game, Davis was averaging 25.8 points, 11.8 rebounds, 3.6 assists, 1.3 steals, and 2.1 blocks per game. He had been shooting 52.2% from

the field and 31.4% from three-point range over 32 appearances this season.

The Lakers' social media channels were quick to celebrate the achievement. 'AD's Block Party, All Invited. Welcome to 25th All-Time, Brow,' read a celebratory post featuring an image of the Lakers star.

Although Davis returned to the court after missing two games in December due to an ankle strain, the Lakers fell short against the Houston Rockets, losing 119-115.

Davis contributed 30 points, 13 rebounds, and two assists in the game, though the effort wasn't enough to secure a victory.

Davis also shared his thoughts on team-mate LeBron James' recent milestone, where James surpassed Michael Jordan for the most career 30-point games in NBA history. Davis, a long-time fan of Jordan, couldn't resist a playful jab. 'It bothers me, but took him 7 more seasons,' he joked.

The comparison between the two basketball legends remains a topic of debate, with Jordan achieving the feat in just 15 seasons, while James needed 22. Despite the banter, Davis' remarks reflect the strong camaraderie between the two Lakers stars.

Owner & Editor Ashok Atri Ph: 0191-2464363 Mob. 9419192797,

Printer & Publisher: Satish Mahajan Mob: Associate Editor Satish Mahajan 7889664902, 9797554966 , R.C.Bhat , Sr.Correspondent,Mobile no.9596678333 G.K. Offset Printing Press Shivalikpuram Roop Nagar Jammu, Published at: H.No. 219 Sector 1 Housing Colony Channi Himmat Jammu. Email :- jammurising555@gmail.com, editor.dailyjammurising.in

A bleak Q3 awaits FMCG companies?

Economists see reforms in the air ahead of Budget

NEW DELHI, JAN 6
Hit by inflation, higher input costs and pricing measures, fast-moving consumer goods companies are expected to see a contraction in their gross margin and a modest-to-flat operating profit in the October-December quarter.

Several FMCG makers are likely to log a low single-digit rise in their revenue, returning to the cycle of value-driven growth.

One of the reasons could be that a number of companies have opted for a price hike in the December quarter due to rising costs of input items such as copra, vegetable oil, and palm oil.

The price hikes came at a time when the urban market was dragged down by lowered consumption due to high food inflation.

However, the rural market, which is slightly above one-third of the total FMCG market, stayed ahead of it.

Some of the listed FMCG companies, such as Dabur and Marico, shared their updates for the third quarter of FY25, and analysts expect either flat or low single-digit volume growth.

Home-grown firm Dabur expects a "low single-digit growth" in the December quarter along with a "flattish operating profit" as it faced inflationary headwinds in some of the segments.

"In Q3, inflationary pressures were witnessed in some segments which were partially mitigated through tactical price increases and cost-efficiency initiatives.

"We anticipate flattish operating profit growth in Q3," said Dabur in an update for Q3/FY25.

Besides, in the December quarter, rural consumption for FMCG was resilient and continued to grow faster than urban, said the company which owns brands such as Dabur Chyawanprash, Dabur Honey, Dabur Pudina Hara, Dabur Lal Tail, Dabur Amla, Dabur Red Paste, Real and Vatika.

It further said that alternative channels like modern trade, e-commerce, and quick commerce continued to post strong growth, while general trade, which mainly consists of neighbourhood kirana stores, was under pressure



in the October-December period.

Marico expressed similar views, saying, "During the quarter, the sector witnessed steady demand trends on the back of improving rural consumption and stable sentiment in urban vis-à-vis the preceding quarter."

Over domestic volume growth, Marico said it expects an 'uptick' in the December quarter but on a sequential basis and said its operating profit growth will be 'modest' due to higher input costs.

It expects a "higher-than-anticipated gross margin contraction" as key inputs faced 'higher-than-expected' inflation, said a quarterly update by Marico, which owns brands such as Saffola, Parachute, Hair & Care, Nihar and Livon, among others.

"Among key inputs, copra prices remained firm at higher-than-expected levels and vegetable oil prices moved up during the quarter, while crude oil derivatives remained range-bound.

"The rising trend in input costs is expected to result in a higher-than-anticipated gross margin contraction on a year-on-year basis, as the company continues to favour consumer franchise expansion in the current environment," said Marico.

According to Nuvama, the urban demand scenario is challenging due to in-

flationary pressures, low wage growth and higher housing rental costs.

"Urban slow down shall continue for two-three more quarters," it said, adding, "Rural demand continues to report a gradual recovery and outpace urban demand aided by freebies and good rains."

Also, due to price hikes in categories such as soaps, snacks and tea, consumers are going for smaller packs, which "negatively impacts volume", it added.

Margins in categories such as soaps, snacks and tea are "under high pressure" due to almost 30 per cent YoY inflation in palm oil and tea, it added.

, the late arrival of winter in the December quarter has also impacted the topline as the sale of season-specific products a body lotion, Chavayanprash etc. could not be picked up.

Anand Ramanathan, partner, consumer products and retail sector leader, Deloitte India, said the challenge from D2C brands and the growth in quick commerce will continue to put pressure on margins.

However, he also added: "Harvest season from January to April will ease some of the pressure on margins in agricultural commodities which will help ease the pressure on commodity prices."

NEW DELHI, JAN 6
Following the lacklustre growth numbers in the second quarter (Q2FY25), economists believe the upcoming Union Budget for 2025-26 should focus on reforms that will stimulate consumption, manufacturing and spur employment.

India's growth unexpectedly slowed to 5.4 per cent in the second quarter, due to low capital formation, weak consumption, besides adverse weather impact.

"We anticipate the government will continue to prioritise and enhance efforts towards skill development and employment generation, maintaining the positive momentum.

"This would help harness the demographic dividend, drive economic growth from both supply and demand sides and boost consumption through higher incomes," said Rumki Majumdar, economist, Deloitte India.

In the July Budget, Finance Minister (FM) Nirmala Sitharaman announced initiatives such as employment-linked incentives and internship programmes.

Economists reckon the upcoming Budget has to continue support to the MSME sector and industrial clusters with export potential and high labour intensity.

"I also feel there is a need for some consumption stimulus. FM may reinforce some of the reforms agenda announced in the last budget," said Rajani Sinha, chief economist, CareEdge.

While a comprehensive review of the Income-tax Act has been on the cards, economists believe that in order to boost consumption the FM must consider tax breaks to put more money in the pockets of people.

"We need to have income tax breaks across the board to increase consumption which has been a major challenge.

"At the same time capital expenditure has to be expedited to push investment and draw in more private interest," Madan Sabnavis, chief economist, Bank of Baroda said.

In the earlier pre-Budget discus-



sions with the finance ministry, the economists were divided on whether the government should take an approach of consumer demand-led development or investment and export-led growth.

If it is any indication, Sitharaman recently spoke about the greater multiplier effects of capex in the economy compared to revenue expenditure.

She had said: "It is not going to benefit if we just spend money or put money in the hands of people to promote immediate consumption...the multiplier that it gives is far lesser than the multiplier that will gain when people are given jobs, and capital assets are built."

Sabnavis also suggested that the finance ministry should consider the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for small and medium enterprises to push output and also link PLI with employment as part of the reforms it plans to take in the upcoming financial year.

Among other major reforms, economists believe a revised customs duty structure to rationalise and simplify it for ease of trade, removal of duty inversion, and reduction of disputes may also be on cards.

The Budget may take into account the risk of volatility in global trade, which has increased after the US election, with potential measures such as higher import tariffs and tax cuts to promote manufacturing in the US.

"We expect the government to im-

plement a range of measures to enhance the competitiveness of Indian products on the global stage.

"These may include tariff rationalisation, duty exemptions and remission schemes, which would help lower the cost of Indian exports," Majumdar added.

Economists believe that controlling inflation has to be a priority for the government and the Budget may address the issue by incentivising value chain development projects, promoting digital marketplaces to provide farmers direct access to buyers.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in its Budget proposals, has called for targeted interventions such as reducing excise duty on fuel which forms a substantial portion of the overall household consumption basket and bringing down marginal tax rates for personal income up to \$20 lakh per annum. It has also suggested introducing consumption vouchers, targeted at low-income groups, to stimulate demand for specified goods and services over a designated period.

"While recent quarters have shown promising signs of recovery in rural consumption, targeted government interventions, such as increasing per unit benefit under its key schemes like MGNREGS, PM-KISAN and PMAY, and providing consumption vouchers to low-income households, can further enhance the rural recovery," said Chandrajit Banerjee, director general, CII.

Falling poverty claims in SBI report spark concerns about methodology

NEW DELHI, JAN 6
xxxxState Bank of India (SBI), in a report on Friday, claimed a significant decline in the headline poverty ratio in rural areas on account of enhanced physical infrastructure, higher consumption growth in the bottom fractile and direct benefit transfers (DBTs).

Using the latest annual Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) data for August 2023-July 2024, the report claimed that poverty ratio in rural areas declined to 4.86 per cent in FY24 from 7.2 per cent in FY23.

Similarly, the poverty ratio in urban areas fell to 4.09 per cent from 4.6 per cent during the same period.

The SBI report estimated the poverty lines in FY24 at Rs 1,632 for rural areas and Rs 1,944 for urban areas by adjusting for decadal inflation and the imputation factor in the poverty line set by the Suresh Tendulkar Committee in 2011.

R Ramakumar, professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, said, the SBI report uses a flawed poverty line as the Tendulkar poverty line is not a poverty line, but just a "destitutional line."

And, the previous government had to appoint the C Rangarajan committee to address criticism around it.

"It uses a method for updating the poverty line that does not account for changes in the consumption basket of households.

"Due to this, they end up using a very low poverty line.

"The poverty lines used for 2023-24 in the SBI report amount to just Rs 55 per day in rural areas and Rs 65 per day for urban areas.

"Unsurprisingly, they have underestimated the poverty line to obtain a lower estimate of poverty," he added.

Echoing similar views, Pronob Sen, former chief statistician of India, said that poverty lines are usually estimated by basing them on certain developmental norms, which keeps on



improving as time progresses.

He said to still use the norms prescribed more than a decade ago does not exude confidence in the fairness of the exercise.

"Poverty has no doubt reduced, but the question is the extent to which it has happened.

"Simply adjusting the Tendulkar line for inflation is completely wrong on account of the changes in consumption basket and the difference in the methodology of earlier consumption surveys and current HCES.

"At least use the same principles enunciated by professor Tendulkar and calculate the poverty line afresh," he added.

Methodologically, the current HCES uses a modified mixed reference period (MMRP) in which the recall period for expenditure on items like edible oil, egg, meat, milk, vegetables and fruits is 'last 7 days'.

For items like clothing, bedding, footwear, education, durable goods and medical, it is 'last 365 days'.

For all other items, the recall period is 'last 30 days'.

Earlier consumption expenditure surveys used the mixed reference period (MRP) method in which only two categories of recall periods existed.

Besides, the sampling methodol-

ogy has also undergone a significant change in the current HCES.

For example, second stage stratum classification is now made on the basis of land for rural areas and car ownership for urban areas.

This is unlike previous exercises where the divisions were made based on household status and household activity for rural areas and monthly per-capita income for urban areas.

Santosh Mehrotra, visiting professor at University of Bath, UK, said such a sampling frame gives disproportionate representation to affluent sections of the society.

This results in recording of higher consumption expenditure, which then distorts the picture.

"How can poverty have fallen when job growth and real wages came down with the inflation eating away all the resources of the poor.

190 million workers (2021-22) in India are earning just up to Rs 100 per day (in real terms at 2010 prices) which can be categorised as "absolutely poor."

This compares to just 106.1 million workers in 2011-12.

"Before jumping to a conclusion that India has been able to end poverty, we should interrogate the labour markets," he added.

Why Sensex And Nifty Are Falling

NEW DELHI, JAN 6
Independent market analyst Deepak Jasani, formerly head of research, Retail at HDFC Securities, tells Prasanna D Zore/Rediff.com that investors need not panic and at this point it is not prudent to blame the sudden fall in markets today to emergence of two cases of the Human Metapneumo Virus in Karnataka.

Here's why he thinks the markets are falling today and what retail investors must do irrespective of market conditions

1. Disappointing Corporate Earnings and Weakening Rupee

Net-net foreigners (foreign institutional investors) still find Indian markets expensive given the fact that the (corporate earnings) growth has not resumed and the rupee continues to depreciate (against the US dollar; the rupee is trading near 86 to a US dollar in the futures market; weakening rupee is bad for an economy that is net importer of crude but benefits companies that earn dollars via their exports).

See now they (the FIIs) will continue to monitor the emerging data points (the macro economic data points like inflation, fiscal deficit, growth in manufacturing and services sector, etc) and if they see some rays of hope in the new data than they may come back to India and they will stop selling also. But we don't know when that will happen.

When will the macro and micro data start improving? We'll have to wait and watch out for these data points.

2. The Immediate Reason Could Be...

The immediate justification (for today's fall) could be the HMPV (Human Metapneumonirus; India's ICMR declared that two cases of HMPV were found in Karnataka.



The immediate reason that people (market experts) may want to attribute to today's fall would be the emergence of two cases in India.

3. GDP Concern

The main issue, however, is about earnings growth and related valuations, the rupee depreciation and the lesser possibility of concerns over GDP growth resumption in the near term. One cannot say whether they will continue to sell in this quarter (they have been net sellers to the tune of 1.9 lakh crore in the last three months of 2024 and have been net sellers to the tune of Rs 4.500 crore in the three trading days of January 2025), in the next quarter because they ultimately want to make money. They will buy India only if valuations (in relation to

earnings) become reasonable and their expectation of economic growth improves. These are some reasons why the FIIs may not be very gung ho about India at this point of time.

4. Fear Over Trump Starting A Tariff War

That is not a concern for us at this point of time. Actually it may be better for India. At this point of time there is no need to get panicky about it.

5. Knee-jerk reaction over HMPV virus cases?

I don't know whether that is the main reason for the fall but as of now we are just attributing this reason to the fall, whether this is the right reason or the only reason, I don't know.

Nobody can find any other reason at this point of time. We know only when the FII numbers are out in the evening.

PM Modi’s visionary approach: Leveraging PBD to enhance India’s global profile through tourism, diaspora engagement



New Delhi, Jan 6

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has made remarkable strides in its efforts to boost tourism, deepen cultural exchanges, and elevate its global profile. One of the most significant achievements in this regard is the launch of the ‘Chalo India’ campaign. This is an initiative designed to harness the power and influence of the Indian diaspora in promoting India as a vibrant and diverse tourism destination. The campaign is a direct response to Prime Minister Modi’s call for members of the Indian diaspora to invite at least five foreign friends to visit India, with a view to fostering

cross-cultural connections and promoting India’s unique offerings across the globe. Odisha, which is rich in history, culture, and natural beauty, comes under the spotlight. It is at the forefront of this transformative tourism drive. As a prominent tourism hub, Odisha’s vibrant landscapes, ancient temples, pristine beaches, and wildlife sanctuaries embody the essence of India’s diverse heritage. The Chalo India initiative has already begun to showcase Odisha’s vast tourism potential, positioning the state as a key player in India’s growing tourism sector. Through the upcoming Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention, the world will witness

Odisha’s contribution to India’s cultural and tourism identity, shining a spotlight on its remarkable diversity. The Chalo India initiative not only promotes tourism but also invites diaspora members to actively engage in spreading India’s cultural richness. Through the campaign, they are encouraged to serve as ambassadors for Incredible India, facilitating the introduction of foreign visitors to India’s unparalleled cultural and historical landmarks. The fact that there is no upper limit on how many friends a diaspora member can invite to India is a testament to the belief that every individual’s contribution matters in creating an authentic global dialogue. The PBD celebrations will highlight the extraordinary achievements of the Indian diaspora worldwide. This year’s exhibitions, focused on the Ramayana, technology, and the archiving of the history of the diaspora, offer a glimpse into how Indian expatriates have become a vehicle for the propagation of India’s cultural ethos and values. By acting as emissaries for India, the diaspora has demonstrated its vital role in not just promoting tourism but also preserving and sharing the traditions that define India.

From struggle to success: Seema Devi’s journey of transformation with Jeevika Yojana

Vaishali (Bihar), Jan 6

Seema Devi, a resilient resident of Bihar’s Vaishali, once found herself in despair, as managing her household was a challenge, but when her husband fell seriously ill, the weight of her responsibilities became overwhelming. Facing the dual challenge of treating her sick husband and raising her children, she was uncertain how she would navigate this difficult phase. However, today, she stands strong, managing her family and earning a livelihood of Rs 1,000 daily, a remarkable turnaround she credits to the Jeevika Yojana. Speaking to IANS, Seema opened up about her transformative journey. “My husband had respiratory problems, and during his treatment, I heard about the Jeevika Yojana from some of the women in the hospital. They encouraged me to join the programme, and with their help, I became a part of the scheme,” she recalled. The first instalment of Rs 10,000 she received from the scheme became her stepping stone. Encouraged by the sup-



port from the women around her, Seema ventured on a new path. “With the guidance of the Jeevika group, I purchased a goat, sold it, and used the proceeds to start a small shop,” she added. Now, her small business is thriving, and Seema earns Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,200 a day. “My children are going to school and getting the education they deserve,” Seema beamed, her face reflecting the pride of a mother who had fought against all odds. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has also lauded the impact of the Jeevika Yojana, calling it a lifeline for women in the state. “Earlier, women faced numerous challenges. But with the Jeevika self-help groups,

which we fondly call Jeevika Didis, women have been empowered to move forward. If they need any assistance, we are here to help,” he said. The Jeevika Yojana, a transformative initiative in Bihar, offers financial support to women from economically weaker backgrounds. Under this scheme, groups of 10 to 12 women come together, form a collective, and open a bank account. The women in these groups can avail of loans to kick-start small businesses, thereby uplifting their families and communities. For women like Seema Devi, Jeevika Yojana has truly been a blessing, helping them rise above financial struggles and secure a brighter future for themselves and their families.

BPSC protest: Prashant Kishor urges Rahul Gandhi, Tejashwi Yadav to join stir



Patna, Jan 6

On the fourth day of his hunger strike, Prashant Kishor, the chief of the Jan Suraj Party, called upon Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and former Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav to join the ongoing student movement in Bihar. Kishor expressed his willingness to support the cause from behind the scenes if they chose to lead. “This movement is not about any one individual; it is a fight against the flawed system in Bihar,” Kishor said while addressing the media in Patna. “I appeal to all political leaders — whether it is Tejashwi

Yadav, Rahul Gandhi, or anyone else — to stand with us. If the youth decide that these leaders will lead the movement, I am ready to step back and support them from behind,” he said. Kishor emphasized that the fight was a collective effort, not tied to any single political ideology or leader. To strengthen the movement, a 51-member Yuva Satyagraha Committee has been formed by uniting various student groups across Bihar. This committee aims to amplify the voices of the students and ensure their demands are met, as they challenge systemic issues in education, employment, and governance in the

state. Prashant Kishor, during his hunger strike, reaffirmed his commitment to the student-led movement in Bihar, stating that the fight would continue regardless of any government action against him. “Even if the administration arrests me, this Satyagraha will persist. The 51-member Yuva Satyagraha Committee will now lead this movement. This committee is dedicated to reforming Bihar’s broken system, and I fully support their efforts,” Kishor said. He emphasized that the movement has grown beyond addressing issues with the Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) and is now focused on overhauling the entire system in the state. Kishor also appealed to the people of Bihar, urging them to actively support the movement. “Sitting under quilts and blankets will not improve Bihar. It is your duty to stand with these young individuals,” he stated. He highlighted the resolve and determination of the youth leading the movement, describing it as a powerful force for change. “Our struggle will continue as a youth-led Jan Shakti. No matter how powerful the government is, there is no greater power than the power of the people,” he said.



Army personnel perform during the ex-servicemen rally organised by the Eastern Command of the Indian Army, in Dibrugarh, Assam.

CM Yogi to perform Ram Lalla’s ‘Abhishek’ during Pratishtha Dwadashi fest on Jan 11



AYODHYA, JAN 6

The holy city of Ayodhya is set to host Pratishtha Dwadashi festival from January 11 to 13, celebrating the first anniversary of Ram Lalla’s installa-

tion in the grand temple. On the opening day i.e. January 11, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will perform the sacred Abhishek of Shri Ram Lalla in the sanctum

sanctorum at 11 a.m. Following this, he will inaugurate a cultural programme at Angad Tila and address devotees. Devotional songs by renowned artists such as Sonu Nigam, Shankar Mahadevan and Malini Awasthi will also be released on the occasion. Champat Rai, General Secretary of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust gave out details of the three-day programme. “On January 11, corresponding to Paush Shukla Paksha, Dwadashi, Vikram Samvat 2001, we mark one year since the establishment of the newly built temple at Ayodhya Dham, the sacred birthplace of Maryada Purushottam Lord Shri Ram, the patron of Indian culture and Sanatan Dharma. Events will include vibrant kirtans at key locations across Ayodhya, such as Lata Chowk, Janmabhoomi Path, Shringar Haat, Ram Ki Paidi, Sugriva Fort, and Chhoti Devkali. Young artistes will enchant audiences with musical performances throughout the city,” he informed. He further informed that the three-day Shri Ram Raag-Seva program will take place in a pavilion near the temple’s sanctum sanctorum. The initiative, led by Ayodhya artist Yatindra Mishra with support from the Sangeet Natak Academy, will also present devotional offerings to Lord Shri Ram through music, dance, and instrumental performances. The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust has also extended invitations to saints and devotees from across the country. Champat Rai urged residents and pilgrims to participate in celebrations, making at least a one-day visit during the three-day festival to experience the spiritual atmosphere of Ayodhya.

ED raids at DMK MP Kathir Anand’s engineering college conclude after two days

Chennai, Jan 6

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) raids at Kingston Engineering College, owned by DMK MP Kathir Anand, in Tamil Nadu’s Vellore, ended on Sunday after two days. Anand, a two-term MP from the Vellore Lok Sabha constituency, is the son of DMK General Secretary and Tamil Nadu Water Resources Minister S. Duraimurugan, the number two in the Tamil Nadu cabinet led by Chief Minister M.K.Stalin. The raids, which lasted 44 hours, involved over 15 ED officials, who arrived in eight cars. Searches were conducted at multiple locations, including the college, the residences of Anand and Duraimurugan, and properties associated with their associates in Katpadi and Vellore. Sources revealed that the ED seized unaccounted cash, documents related to the college’s financial transactions, and a hard disk. College authorities, speaking

on condition of anonymity, stated that the seized money was meant for paying staff salaries and Pongal festival bonuses, and that it consisted of student fee collections. The searches are believed to be linked to a 2019 Income Tax case against Kathir Anand involving allegations of cash-for-votes during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. At the time, election officials confiscated Rs 11 crore from Anand’s associates, leading to the cancellation of the election in the Vellore constituency. Then President Ram Nath Kovind, acting on a recommendation from the Election Commission, rescinded the Lok Sabha election in Vellore due to the seizure of unaccounted cash from Anand’s associates. The election, initially scheduled for April 18, 2019, was cancelled two days earlier, on April 16. It was then held on August 5, 2019, in which Kathir Anand, representing the DMK, narrowly defeated A.C. Shanmugham

on condition of anonymity, stated that the seized money was meant for paying staff salaries and Pongal festival bonuses, and that it consisted of student fee collections. The searches are believed to be linked to a 2019 Income Tax case against Kathir Anand involving allegations of cash-for-votes during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. At the time, election officials confiscated Rs 11 crore from Anand’s associates, leading to the cancellation of the election in the Vellore constituency. Then President Ram Nath Kovind, acting on a recommendation from the Election Commission, rescinded the Lok Sabha election in Vellore due to the seizure of unaccounted cash from Anand’s associates. The election, initially scheduled for April 18, 2019, was cancelled two days earlier, on April 16. It was then held on August 5, 2019, in which Kathir Anand, representing the DMK, narrowly defeated A.C. Shanmugham

Delhi emerging as global model for sustainable public transport: CM Atishi on RRTS

NEW DELHI, JAN 6

In a significant boost to Delhi’s public transport infrastructure, Chief Minister Atishi on Sunday lauded the launch of key projects aimed at enhancing connectivity and remarked that the national capital is emerging as a global model for sustainable public transport. Speaking to IANS, she highlighted the Delhi government’s efforts and investments in making the national capital a model for sustainable and efficient transportation. The Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) line, connecting Sahibabad to New Ashok Nagar, is part of a broader initiative to integrate the National Capital Region (NCR) with Delhi. This project is a collaborative effort between the central government and the governments of Delhi,

Uttar Pradesh, and Haryana. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated the 13-kilometre stretch of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Namo Bharat corridor between Sahibabad and New Ashok Nagar. The project, constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 4,600 crore, marks a significant milestone in regional connectivity, providing Delhi with its first Namo Bharat connectivity. “The Delhi government has invested Rs 1,260 crore in the Delhi-Meerut RRTS line, which is expected to drive economic development in the capital,” said CM Atishi. In addition to the RRTS line, two major metro projects are being inaugurated, the extension of the Delhi Metro’s Magenta Line from Janakpuri West to Krishna Park and the new phase connecting Rithala

to Kundli. Elaborating on these achievements, CM Atishi remarked, “I would like to congratulate the people of Delhi. Today marks the inauguration of the RRTS line in Delhi, a joint initiative by the central and state governments. The RRTS line from Sahibabad to New Ashok Nagar is a crucial step towards connecting the NCR region with Delhi.” She further emphasised the Delhi government’s commitment to expanding metro connectivity: “Over the last 10 years, Delhi has witnessed metro expansion on a war footing. In this period, 200 kilometres of metro lines have been completed, while an additional 250 kilometres are currently under construction. The Delhi government has invested Rs 7,268 crore in the metro over the past decade.”

Who is Sara Ali Khan’s ‘jaan’ with whom she enjoys first dinner of 2025?



Bollywood actress Sara Ali Khan recently revealed that she spent the first dinner of 2025 with her “mommy jaan,” Amrita Singh.

Sara welcomed the new year in Goa, accompanied by her mother.

Sharing this beautiful moment, she posted a collage on Instagram Stories featuring her “Mommy Jaan” as they enjoyed their first dinner of the year together. The mother-daughter duo radiated joy as they posed for the pictures. The ‘Simmba’ actress shared some lovely selfies with her mother, Amrita.

In the pictures, Sara looked stunning in a green and black printed outfit with her hair neatly tied up and minimal earrings. Meanwhile, Amrita kept it casual in a multi-coloured shirt. Sara captioned the post, “First dinner of the year with Mommy Jaan.”

Yesterday, the ‘Atrangi Re’ star expressed her gratitude for the year 2024. In an emotional post, she reflected on the unforgettable moments that made the year special.

Sara wrote, “Thank you 2024 for all the sunrises, sunsets,

movies, masti, full moon rises, starry skies, pools, treks, friends, memories, saag, coffees, flights, workouts, mommy’s laughter, Iggy’s joy, doston ka Sahara, Kedarnath ki yatra, Rajdhani ke chakkar, Jaipur ka sand, cruise ke waters, behti hui Ganga, Ma ka UK, mera Uttarakhand aur itni sukh, shaanti. 2025 can’t wait to cherish all the moments of bliss I eagerly await while currently cherishing and reminiscing the moments that create this year.”

On the professional front, Sara is set to star in “Sky Force,” where she’ll share the screen with Akshay Kumar, Nimrat Kaur, and Veer Pahariya.

Produced by Dinesh Vijan, Amar Kaushik, and Jyoti Deshpande, the film will explore a lesser-known chapter of India’s history. It is set to release in theatres on January 24, 2025.

Additionally, she will appear in Anurag Basu’s upcoming anthology “Metro In Dino,” alongside an ensemble cast including Aditya Roy Kapur, Anupam Kher, Neena Gupta, Pankaj Tripathi, Konkona Sen Sharma, Ali Fazal, and Fatima Sana Shaikh.

Parineeti Chopra opens up about her emotional struggle



After kicking in the New Year with her politician husband Raghav Chadha in Delhi, the ‘Kesari’ actress is all set to head to Mumbai.

Parineeti recently used the stories section of her official Instagram handle and dropped an awe-worthy post regarding how she is going to miss the Delhi winters. Dressed in a cream coat, high-neck sweater, and a wollar cap, the actress wrote, “Not emotionally ready for Bombay Heat yet”.

Prior to this, Parineeti took to her Insta handle and shared her mantra for 2025. Her note went like this, “My mantra forever. Make it yours, this new year. You’ll always be brave in someone’s mind and coward in another’s, strong to one and fragile to another, good to one and terrible to another. You will be seen as annoying to one and comforting to another. Some will feel anxious around you and some will find peace in your company. Some will see you as “too much” while

others will see you as a gift”.

The ‘Hasee Toh Phasee’ star further added, “The world will look at you from their subjective point of view. The world is never going to agree on a definition of who you are. So you might as well live the way that feels true to your heart”.

Talking about her work, Parineeti last graced the silver screen with “Amar Singh Chamkila” opposite Diljit Dosanjh. Imtiaz Ali directed the biopic on the late Punjabi singer.

Up next, Parineeti is currently occupied with Anurag Singh’s much-anticipated thriller “Sanki”. The stunner will be sharing the screen with Varun Dhawan for the first time in her next.

In addition to this, Parineeti will also star in Karan Sharma’s “Shiddat 2”, along with Sunny Kaushal, Amyra Dastur, Mohit Raina, Diana Penty, Arjun Singh, and Radhikka Madan.

Neha Dhupia honours her late father-in-law with an emotional gesture

Bollywood actress Neha Dhupia recently paid a heartfelt tribute to her late father-in-law, the legendary cricketer Bishan Singh Bedi, through an emotional gesture.

Taking to her Instagram handle, Neha shared the story of a priceless gift she received from her late father-in-law—a vintage Indian cricket sweater he wore during his legendary career. She shared her images wearing his test cricket sweater, which is now a treasured family heirloom, the sweater holds both historical and sentimental significance.

For the caption, Neha, married to actor Angad Bedi wrote, “Wearing this sweater has a different kind of warmth...I remember so clearly when dad asked what would I like as a wedding present I asked him for his test cricket sweater and how it would be the most special gift for me ... so here it is, along with his strength, resilience, integrity and generosity I also feel a sense of honour donning this while watching my first test in person ... with my @angadbedi We miss you everyday dad ...”

The Singh Is Kinng actress also recalled the heartfelt moment she received the sweater as her wedding gift.

“When I married Angad, I had my heart set on one particular piece of memorabilia. It’s not just a sweater; it’s a piece of history that embodies the spirit and legacy of Indian cricket. I asked for it as a wedding gift, and dad graciously obliged. To me, it represents resilience, excellence, and an eternal connection to the sport he loved so much,” she shared.

Bishan Singh Bedi wore the sweater during his several historic matches. In a heartfelt tribute to his memory, Neha chose to wear the sweater this year while attending a Test match during the ongoing India vs Australia match.

Dhupia further expressed, “I feel



an overwhelming sense of pride and nostalgia wearing this sweater. It’s not just a souvenir; it’s a living reminder of the immense legacy my father-in-law has left behind. It represents an era of cricket that was played with unparalleled passion, grace, and integrity.”

For the unversed, former cricketer Bishan Singh Bedi passed away on October 23, 2023. He had been struggling with age-related health issues and had undergone several surgeries in the past few years.

Why is Kareena Kapoor Khan feeling hurt?



Bollywood actress Kareena Kapoor Khan recently shared an emotional post as she bid farewell to Switzerland, where she had been enjoying a memorable holiday with her family.

Accompanied by her husband Saif Ali Khan and their two children, Taimur and Jeh, the actress took to social media to express her feelings about leaving the picturesque destination.

On Tuesday, Bebo posted an image of the beautiful snowcapped mountains on her Instagram stories, writing, “Au revoir. Always hurts to leave...”

The Khan family had been vacationing in the scenic Swiss Alps, making the most of their time together and creating lasting memories in the winter wonderland.

The ‘Uda Punjab’ actress also shared a series of adorable pictures from Taimur and Jeh’s skiing session. In one of the photos, Taimur looked adorable in a red and green outfit, fully geared up for skiing as he stood outdoors. Kareena captioned the post, “Mera beta (my son).” In another snapshot, little Taimur was seen looking down at the ground, and Kareena humor-

ously wrote, “Don’t ask me if I ski! I take my son’s pictures—someone needs to.”

In another photo, Jeh was seen lying on the snow, crying while dressed in a black outfit and red helmet. Kareena captioned it with, “Meanwhile...”

In a subsequent picture, Jeh was curled up with his eyes closed, still lying on the snow. The actress joked, writing, “Does this count as skiing?”

Kareena also shared heartwarming photos from her intimate Christmas celebration with her family, including husband Saif and their two sons. The couple has made it a tradition to celebrate the festive season in this special way, and this year was no exception.

In her post, Kareena mentioned that she had been so immersed in the holiday festivities with her loved ones that she hadn’t had the chance to share earlier, but she wanted to extend her warm wishes to everyone now.

The post was captioned, “Sorry was too busy enjoying my day—love and happiness. People keep searching for magic.”

Mammootty calls on family of MT Vasudevan Nair, the person who brought out the best in him

The residence of the recently departed legend M.T. Vasudevan Nair turned crowded when the news came that superstar Mammootty, who was out of the country when the former passed away last week, will be arriving to pay his homage to the legendary writer and spend time with his family.

When Mammootty’s car stopped at Vasudevan Nair’s house named ‘Sithara’ after his eldest daughter, he was greeted by the latter’s daughter and wife. He spent time with them and explained that despite his best efforts to come for the last rites, he was unable to do so.

Mammootty was in Azerbaijan when the news came to him that the person who wrote numerous scripts and stories for him, which turned out to be the biggest-ever hits in Malayalam films, had passed away.

After making a few attempts to reach Kozhikode, an air crash in Azerbaijan, made it impossible and therefore he was not able to come and bid goodbye to Vasudevan Nair.

But the veteran superstar took to his social media and wrote a passionate note, “at least some people say that I was a find of MT.”

“Ever since I met him first, our relationship started to grow, and it reached the level of brotherhood. Very recently we met and he tripped and fell to my chest and for a moment I felt I was his son. My biggest takeaway from the films is I got a place in his heart,” Mammootty wrote.

The relationship between the two giants began way back in 1980 when Mammootty’s acting break came through the film ‘Vilkanunde Swapnengel’ (1980) and after that, the superstar had no reason to look back as accolades came one after the other, each time MT wrote a new piece.

Mammootty’s first Kerala State Film Award came for ‘Adiyozhukkukal’ (1984) written by MT and in 1989 he won his first national award for the film ‘Oru Vaddaken Veeragatha’ in 1989 (‘Mathilukel’ directed by Adoor Gopalakrishnan was also considered for the national award) and in 1994 came another of MT’s masterpiece ‘Sukurthum’, which took Mammootty to a new level.

Among the other hits of the duo include ‘Aalkoottathil Thaniye’, ‘Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja’ and ‘Utharam’.

The 91-year-old Jnanpith awardee and celebrated writer passed away on December 26 and was given a state funeral on December 27.

Tiger Shroff shares a glimpse of his intense training regimen in his latest video

Apart from his acting skills, Tiger Shroff is well-known for his impeccable fitness, jaw-dropping action sequences, and stunning dance moves.

The actor shared an insight into his intense training on social media. Tiger Shroff took to his official Instagram account and posted a video doing an extremely impressive kick. He can be seen jumping in the air as he lands a powerful kick on his trainer. It would be interesting to see him try something like that on the big screens.

Along with the video, the ‘Baaghi’ actor wrote a note that read “Not usually proud of any of my skills...but this is one where I wonder how TF I did have seen this one on... yet .. bhaijaan g**e bach gaye sorry @nadeemkhaladi786.”

Netizens flooded the comment section with motivating remarks such as “I am biggest biggest biggest biggest biggest biggest biggest fan of you sir @tigerjackieshroff i love you sir”, “Flying machine”, “Amazing bhai...super move”, “Big fan sir”, and “You are blessed by Veer Hanuman Bajrang Bali”, among others.

Tiger Shroff is known to shell such motivating videos from his fitness journey on the internet from time to time.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Tiger Shroff is currently gearing up for his upcoming action entertainer, ‘Bhaaghi 4’. The fourth installment in the popular ‘Baaghi’ series will see Sanjay Dutt, Sonam Bajwa and Harnaaz Sandhu as the primary cast.

Study reveals loss of a pet can potentially trigger mental health issues in children

PET owners usually have a strong emotional bond with their pets, however, according to a new study, the death of a pet can trigger a sense of grief in children that is profound and prolonged and can potentially lead to subsequent mental health issues.

The new study by researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), published in *Euro-pean Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, found that the strong emotional attachment of youngsters to pets might result in measurable psychological distress that can serve as an indicator of depression in children and adolescents for as long as three years or more after the loss of a beloved pet. "One of the first major losses a child will encounter is likely to be the death of a pet, and the impact can be traumatic, especially when that pet feels like a member of the family. We found this experience of pet death is often associated with elevated mental health symptoms in children, and that parents and physicians need to recognize and take those symptoms seriously, not simply brush them off," said Katherine Crawford, CGC, previously with the Center for Genomic Medicine at MGH, and lead author of the study.

Roughly half of the households in developed

countries own at least one pet. And as the MGH investigators reported, the bonds that children form with pets can resemble secure human relationships in terms of providing affection, protection and reassurance. What's more, previous studies have shown that children often turn to pets for comfort and to voice their fears and emo-



tional experiences.

While the increased empathy, self-esteem and social competence that often flow from this interaction is clearly beneficial, the downside is the exposure of children to the death of a pet which, the MGH study found, occurs with 63 per cent of children with pets during their first seven years of life.

Prior research has focused on the attachment of adults to pets and the consequences of an animal's death. The MGH team is the first to examine mental health

responses in children. Their analysis is based on a sample of 6,260 children from the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC), in Bristol, England. This population-based sample is replete with data collected from mothers and children that enabled researchers to track the

experience of pet ownership and pet loss from a child's early age up to eight years. "Thanks to this cohort, we were able to analyze the mental and emotional health of children after examining their experiences with pet death over an extended period. And we observed that the association between exposure to a pet's death and psychopathology symptoms in childhood occurred regardless of the child's socioeconomic status or hardships they had already endured in their young lives," noted Erin Dunn, ScD, MPH, with

the MGH Center for Genomic Medicine and Department of Psychiatry, and senior author of the study.

Researchers also learned that the relationship between pet death and increased psychopathology was more pronounced in male than female children a finding that surprised them in light of prior research and that the strength of the association was independent of when the pet's death occurred during childhood, and how many times or how recently it occurred. According to Dunn, this latter finding speaks to "the durability of the bond with pets that is formed at a very early age, and how it can affect children across their development."

The MGH study stressed the importance of parents, caregivers, and paediatricians recognizing and taking seriously the short- and long-term psychological reactions of children to the death of a pet - reactions that can mimic a child's response to the loss of other important family members.

"Adults need to pay attention to whether those feelings are deeper and more profound and if they're lasting longer than might have been expected. They could be signs of complicated grief and having someone to talk to in a sympathetic or therapeutic way may be extremely helpful for a child who is grieving," said Crawford.

Improved early psychosis detection system may halve risk in young people

DOCTORS have developed a new data mining method to detect many young people with emerging psychosis. The new method, based on advanced data mining to pick up early risk signs from schools, hospitals, and general doctors, will be presented at the ECNP virtual congress and is in press with a peer-reviewed journal. Psychosis is a condition that causes you to lose touch with reality, causing you to suffer from hallucinations or delusions. There are a variety of possible causes, including migration and social stress, trauma, substance abuse, etc. It represents a significant care burden, affecting about 20 million people and costing Europe around EUR94 billion every year (2011 estimate). Clinical experience has shown that the best way to manage it is to stop it developing. Over the last 25 years, doctors have developed ways of detecting young people at risk of developing psychosis and predicting which young people might go on to develop the disorder, and so have been able to take steps to lower risk.

However, the way clinicians were detecting young people was not systematic and may have missed many at-risk people. Now doctors in the UK have developed new data mining methods that can potentially detect most people who are at risk of developing psychosis. This, in turn, would allow them to offer them preventive psychological interventions that can halve their risk of developing full-blown psychosis.

"Prevention is the most promising way of improving the mental health of young people. This generation's mental health is

particularly under stress, especially facing the ongoing COVID-19 worry, and we need to intervene urgently. The future for those at risk of psychosis is to intervene before the disorders strike," Research leader Professor Paolo Fusar-Poli, of the Institute of Psychiatry at King's College, London, said.

"We have developed a data mining method to search medical



records for those at risk of progressing to psychosis. Many medical records are fairly unstructured, with information of mental health being hidden in sections that do not allow systematic research. Our data-mining system does a more complete search of the records people who have been referred to hospital (secondary care), looking for keywords such as weight loss, insomnia, cocaine, guilt, etc. We can look for 14 different terms which we then evaluate for the risk of psychosis. At that point, patients might be invited for a one-to-one interview. We have found that prevention can halve the risk of psychosis developing," added Fusar-Poli. The systems have evaluated 92,151 patients over a long follow up period.

They were able to confirm that their method worked well to detect young people at risk, although Professor Fusar-Poli cautioned that "these results need further replication in other countries before they can enter clinical routine but they look very promising. Replication will be facilitated by international research consortia such as the ECNP-funded Prevention of Mental Disorders and Mental Health Promotion Network"

Prof. Fusar-Poli suggested that the detection of these young people is the first step towards prevention. Preventive interventions in these people can translate into several benefits.

"This translates into real benefits. Although the initial cost for establishing specialised services detecting young people at risk of psychosis is greater, intervening before the onset of psychosis is associated with fewer treatments, fewer days in the hospital, in addition to the tangible and social health benefits, meaning that the NHS saved around £1000 per patient diagnosed. Our detection systems can extend these benefits to many other young people who might be at risk of psychosis," said Fusar-Poli. Professor Fusar-Poli will present the work while chairing a session on the prevention of mental disorders (see below) at the ECNP Congress.

"We have been working with the ECNP special group on Prevention of Mental Disorders and Mental Health Promotion, and with the EU-Funded European Brain Research Area to set up a Europe-wide system of advance warning for young people at risk of psychosis. <

Potential COVID-19 drug azithromycin may increase risk for cardiac events

AZITHROMYCIN a commonly-prescribed antibiotic is being investigated as a potential treatment for COVID-19. Azithromycin's association with cardiac events also has been debated. In 2012, the FDA issued a warning for azithromycin stating that it had been linked to cardiac events, but subsequent studies have yielded mixed results. Now, researchers from the University of Illinois Chicago have found that azithromycin by itself is not associated with an increase in cardiac events; however, if the drug is taken with certain other drugs that affect the electrical functioning of the heart, then cardiac events increased. "Our findings should give researchers and clinicians looking at azithromycin as a potential treatment for COVID-19 pause," said Haridarshan Patel, a researcher in the department of pharmacy systems, outcomes and policy at the UIC College of Pharmacy and corresponding author on the paper.

"We found that if taken together with drugs that affect the electrical impulses of the heart, the combination is linked with a 40 per cent increase in cardiac events, including fainting, heart palpitations and even cardiac arrest," added Patel. Their findings are published in *JAMA Network Open*. Drugs that affect the electrical impulses of the heart, specifically the interval in the electrical rhythm called the QT interval, are called QT-prolonging drugs. These drugs include blood pressure medications such as ACE inhibitors and beta-blockers, some antidepressants, anti-malaria drugs such as hydroxy-chloroquine and chloroquine, opioid med-



ications and even muscle relaxers.

"Because QT-prolonging drugs are used so commonly, our findings suggest that doctors prescribing azithromycin should be sure that patients are not also taking a QT-prolonging drug," Patel said. In a previous study, Patel and colleagues found that one in five people prescribed azithromycin also were taking a QT-prolonging drug. Previous studies looking at azithromycin and cardiac events examined specific populations that tend to be older and have more health issues, including Medicaid patients and veterans. But in this study, Patel and colleagues used a large database containing medical data on millions of patients in the United States with a mean age of 36 years old. The risk of cardiac events with azithromycin was evaluated against amoxicillin, another antibiotic that has never been linked to cardiac events and which has no impact on the QT interval.

The researchers looked at data from more than 4 million patients enrolled in private health insurance plans who were hospitalised or visited an emergency department for a cardiac event between 2009 and 2015 who started taking either amoxicillin or azithromycin within five days of their hospital visit. There were approximately 2 million episodes in each group. Cardiac events included ventricular arrhythmias, fainting, palpitations and cardiac arrest, and death. "Drugs often prolong QT interval but may not necessarily result in cardiac events that self-resolve over time. We looked at events that led to emergency department visits or hospitalizations in this study," Patel said.

Scientists discover bacterium linked to deadly childhood disorder

SCIENTISTS at the Center for Infection and Immunity (CII) at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health have discovered bacteria linked to post-infectious hydrocephalus (PIH), the most common cause of pediatric hydrocephalus worldwide.

Results of the study led by Pennsylvania State University with CII scientists and clinical colleagues in Uganda are published in the journal *Science Translational Medicine*. Hydrocephalus is the most common indication for neurosurgery in children. Of the estimated 400,000 new cases each year, about half are estimated to be post-infectious, with the largest number of cases in low- and middle-income countries, especially sub-Saharan Africa.

Neonatal sepsis often precedes PIH, although the manifestations of hydrocephalus typically emerge in the months following the neonatal period as cerebrospinal fluid accumulates so that cranial expansion garners medical attention. These infants typically die in early childhood without advanced surgical management. Study co-first author Brent L. Williams, PhD, assistant professor of epidemiology at CII, examined cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) taken from 100 consecutive

cases of PIH and control cases of non-post-infectious hydrocephalus (NPIH) in infants in Uganda, testing the samples for evidence of bacterial and fungal microorganisms. He found *Paenibacillus* species (bacteria) in CSF linked to cases of PIH, not controls.

Williams further quantitated *Paenibacillus* species in infant CSF samples, finding a high burden of these bacteria in infected patients. The findings were subsequently independently confirmed, and a strain of *Paenibacillus* was isolated and characterized through further testing by Steven Schiff, MD, the study's senior author, and colleagues at Pennsylvania State University. The researchers also found that *Paenibacillus* quantity was associated with clinical measures of hydrocephalus based on brain imaging scores, as well as potential signs of infection based on immune cell counts in patients.

"This discovery has the potential to reduce morbidity and mortality of this central nervous system disease in millions of children in sub-Saharan Africa by shifting treatment from surgery to antibiotics and vaccines," said Co-senior author W. Ian Lipkin, MD, John Snow Professor, and CII Director.

Enhancing blood sugar control boosts brain health for people with type 2 diabetes

CONTROLLING blood sugar levels improved the ability to clearly think, learn and remember among people with type 2 diabetes who were overweight, a new study shows. But losing weight, especially for people who were obese, and increasing physical activity produced mixed results. "It's important to properly control your blood sugar to avoid the bad brain effects of your diabetes," said Owen Carmichael, Ph.D., Professor & Director, Biomedical Imaging at Pennington Biomedical Research Center.

"Don't think you can simply let yourself get all the way to the obese range, lose some of the weight, and everything in the brain is fine. The brain might have already turned a corner that it can't turn back from," added Carmichael.

The new paper examined close to 1,100 participants in the Look AHEAD (Action for Health In Diabetes) study. One group of participants was invited to three sessions each that focused on diet, physical activity, and social support. The other group changed their diet and physical activity through a program designed to help them lose more than 7 per cent of their body weight in a year and maintain that weight loss. Cognitive tests - tests of thinking, learning, and remembering - were given to participants between 8 to 13 years after they started the study. The

research team theorized that people with greater improvements in blood sugar levels, physical activity and weight loss would have better cognitive test scores. This hypothesis proved partially true. Reducing your blood sugar levels did improve test scores. But losing more weight and exercising more did not always raise cognitive test scores. "Every little improvement in blood sugar control was associated with a little better cognition," Dr. Carmichael said. "Lowering your blood sugar from the diabetes range to prediabetes helped as much as dropping from prediabetes levels to the healthy range."

More weight loss was either better or worse depending on the mental skill involved. Dr. Carmichael said. People who lost more weight improved their executive function skills: short-term memory, planning, impulse control, attention, and the ability to switch between tasks. But their verbal learning and overall memory declined.

"The results were worse for people who had obesity at the beginning of the study. That's a 'too little, too late' type of message," he said. "People with diabetes who let their obesity go too far, for too long may be past the point of no return, cognitively." Increasing physical activity also generated more benefits for people who had overweight compared to those with obesity.

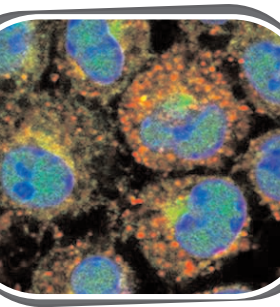
Study connects hormones to lifetime risk for immunological diseases

DIFFERENCES in biological sex can dictate lifelong disease patterns, says a new study by Michigan State University researchers that links connections between specific hormones present before & after birth with immune response & life-long immunological disease development. Published in the most recent edition of the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the study answers questions about why females are at increased risk for common diseases that involve or target the immune system like asthma, allergies, migraines and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). The findings by Adam Moeser, Emily Mackey and Cynthia Jordan also open the door for new therapies and preventative.

"This research shows that it's our perinatal hormones, not our adult sex hormones, that have a greater influence on our risk of developing mast cell-associated disorders throughout the lifespan," said Moeser, Matilda R. Wilson Endowed Chair, a professor in the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences and the study's principle investigator. "A better understanding of how perinatal sex hormones shape life-long mast cell activity could lead to sex-specific preventatives and therapies for mast cell-associated diseases," added Moeser. Mast cells are white blood cells that play beneficial roles in the body. They orchestrate the first line of defence against infections and toxin exposure and play an important role in wound healing, according to the study, 'Perinatal Androgens Organize Sex Differences in Mast Cells and Attenuate Anaphylaxis Severity into Adulthood.'

However, when mast cells become overreactive, they can initiate chronic inflammatory diseases and in certain cases, death. Moeser's prior research linked psychological stress to a specific mast cell receptor and overreactive immune responses. Moeser also previously discovered sex

differences in mast cells. Female mast cells store and release more inflammatory substances like proteases, histamine and serotonin, compared with males.



female mast cells are more likely than male mast cells to kick-start aggressive immune responses. While this may offer females the upper hand in surviving infections, it also can put females at higher risk for inflammatory and autoimmune diseases.

"IBS is an example of this. While approximately 25 per cent of the US population is affected by IBS, women are up to four times more likely to develop this disease than men," said Mackey, whose doctoral research

is part of this new publication.

Moeser, Mackey and Jordan's latest research explains why these sex-biased disease patterns are observed in both adults and prepubertal children. They found that lower levels of serum histamine and less-severe anaphylactic responses occur in males because of their naturally higher levels of perinatal androgens, which are specific sex hormones present shortly before and after birth. "Mast cells are created from stem cells in our bone marrow. High levels of perinatal androgens program the mast cell stem cells to house and release lower levels of inflammatory substances, resulting in a significantly reduced severity of anaphylactic responses in male newborns & adults," Moeser said. "We then confirmed that the androgens played a role by studying males who lack functional androgen receptors," said Jordan, professor of Neuroscience & an expert in the biology of sex differences. While high perinatal androgen

levels are specific to males, the researchers found that while in utero, females exposed to male levels of perinatal androgens develop mast cells that behave more like those of males.

"For these females, exposure to the perinatal androgens reduced their histamine levels and they also exhibited less-severe anaphylactic responses as adults," said Mackey, who is currently a veterinary medical student at North Carolina State University.

In addition to paving the way for improved and potentially novel therapies for sex-biased immunological and other diseases, future research based will help researchers understand how physiological and environmental factors that occur early in life can shape lifetime disease risk, particularly mast cell-mediated disease patterns.

"While biological sex and adult sex hormones are known to have a major influence on immunological diseases between the sexes,

CS reviews implementation of PM Gati Shakti in J&K

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 06

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, while chairing a meeting of all the Administrative Secretaries and Deputy Commissioners about the implementation of PM Gati Shakti (PMGS) Master Plan, remarked that departments should take lead in adding as many layers as possible by mapping all their projects besides those among the social sector.

He called upon the Administrative heads to onboard themselves on the local portal of this national plan to add specific layers pertaining to their departments. He advised them to be innovative in adding these layers as they can take cue from other States/UTs as well.

Dulloo enjoined upon them to go through the portal developed by Jal Shakti Department to have idea about the procedure to map their assets. He encouraged them to add every new project to it besides those existing already.

The Chief Secretary maintained that there is a great scope to add hundreds of new layers for the Departments like social sector layers in addition to the infrastructural assets owned by them. He stressed on adding polygon data instead of simple points while creating geo-referenced maps of the same.

He maintained that such mapping on the PMGS portal would make our planning process quite effective and result-oriented for these maps in addition to physical infrastructure would give us clear idea about other social indicators prevalent in the specific area.

The Chief Secretary also advised the Department of Industries & Commerce, which is the nodal department for its implementation, to work out modalities for designating a threshold



limit of Rs 20 Cr for PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan Portal for planning of projects here.

The Commissioner Secretary, I&C, Vikramjit Singh gave an overall view of the performance made by the UT in the implementation of PMGS in J&K. He made out that all the 38 departments of the UT had been onboarded that in turn had added more than 600 data layers to it till date.

He further apprised the meeting that J&K is among the top 3 States/UTs at national level. It has also been categorised as 'Fast Mover' in LEADS (Logistics Ease across Different States)2024 report launched by DPIIT while it was ranked as 'Aspirer' consecutively for last 3 editions.

Regarding adoption of PMGS at district level the meeting was informed that a session was conducted with all DCs and CPOs there. A handbook of PMGS area development planning was also shared with them to enhance their capacity for making the process easy for all the districts.

In a first, Kupwara was selected from J&K in a pilot phase of PMGS District Master Plan to adopt it at district level. The same model in future is going to be adopted by other districts as well.

As far as the performance of different

departments is concerned H&UDD and Jal Shakti Department were said to stand as major achievers in the UT with all of their assets mapped. It was further given out that all the departments had almost mapped their offices and other major assets over the UT Master Plan portal.

It was further revealed that 50 projects across 10 departments had been discussed in TSU/NPG meetings till date. Orientation session and portal demonstration on project planning was also held earlier in 2024 for the understanding of nodal officers.

As far as the future prospects of the PMGS is concerned it was given out that the integration for issuance of intra department NOCs and clearances would be done through the PM Gati Shakti portal.

In addition, development of district level portals would be accomplished with focus on usage of existing data to identify infrastructure gaps in the district.

Moreover, geo-referencing of all 6500 revenue maps would also be achieved in the year ahead. The PMGS under Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP) would enhance coordination between various government departments for seamless execution of projects here in J&K.

On the Direction of District Child Protection Officer Poonch

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 06

On the Direction of District Child Protection Officer Poonch ,PO NIC District Child Protection Unit Poonch Jahangir Sheikh Conducts Field Visit in Surankote for Sponsorship Cases Verification under Mission Vatsalya Scheme* Poonch,Under the guidance of District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) Poonch, Wakeel Bhat (KAS), Protection Officer (NIC) Jahangir Sheikh conducted a field visit to Mohra Bachai and Lathong area of Surankote tehsil to verify cases of beneficiaries availing sponsorship under the Mission Vatsalya scheme. The scheme provides financial assistance of 24,000 per month to eligible children in need. During his visit, Jahangir Sheikh PO NIC engaged with local residents and educated them about the Mission Vatsalya scheme, emphasizing its benefits. He also explained other welfare programs under the mission and assured the people that the child protection team remains committed to serving the community 24x7. "The well-being of children is our top priority, and our team is always available to assist and guide families in need," said Jahangir Sheikh during his interaction with the locals. This initiative highlights the ongoing efforts of the District Child



Protection Office, Poonch, in safeguarding the rights and welfare of children, ensuring that they receive the support and care they deserve.

Traffic Violations Rampant in Poonch: Administration Fails to Act

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 6

The district is grappling with an alarming rise in traffic violations, exposing a glaring failure of administrative enforcement. From overloaded vehicles to unregistered autos, violations have become a daily nuisance, endangering lives and disrupting the flow of traffic. Key routes, including Madana to Surankote, Mandi to Loran, and Poonch to Nattu Base, witness widespread flouting of traffic norms. Overloaded Tata Sumos, Eeco vans, private vehicles, and school vans operating without permits are a common sight. Many vehicles, including tractors, are seen using black mirrors in violation of road safety norms. The persistent use of pressure horns adds to the chaos, causing discomfort to commuters and residents alike. In Mendhar, numerous vehicles operate without proper documentation, with no apparent checks from the authorities. Despite these glaring violations, the administration seems to have turned a blind



eye, leaving the violators unchecked. Residents express growing concerns over the safety hazards posed by these issues and call for immediate action. The lack of enforcement not only compromises public safety but

also raises questions about administrative accountability. Citizens urge the authorities to implement strict measures, conduct regular inspections, and ensure adherence to traffic laws to restore order on Poonch's roads.

DLSA Ganderbal concludes 04-day orientation/ training program

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 06

A four days long orientation cum training program for members of the Legal Services Unit for Children and the Persons with Mental Illness Intellectual Disabilities, organised by the District Legal Services Authority Ganderbal concluded today, here.

The event was held under the supervision of Abdul Nasir, Chairman, DLSA Ganderbal, and under the guidance Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary, DLSA Ganderbal.

The training, held at Conference Hall, District Court Complex, Ganderbal, aimed for the implementation of NALSA Schemes, 2024 for children's and persons with mental illness and intellectual disability.

The program sensitised participants with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide effective legal services to children's and persons with mental illness and intellectual disability.

The training program for LSUC members was held on January 01& 02, 2025 while the training program for LSUM members was held on January 03 & 04, 2025, at the Conference Hall, District Court Complex, Ganderbal.

During the 4-days long orientation training program, Rafia Hassan, Additional District and Sessions Judge (AD&SJ), Ganderbal, delivered a comprehensive presentation on Actions and Interventions under the NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024.

She emphasized the importance of providing legal services to persons with mental illness and intellectual disabilities at various stages, institutions and locations, including, Beggar's Homes, Women's Protection Homes, Child Care

Institutions, Prisons, through home visits.

She also highlighted the significance of providing legal assistance in availing benefits of social welfare schemes especially to the children's and persons with mental illness.

During the inaugural session, Sheikh Babar Hussain outlined the objectives behind conducting of the training program and emphasised the importance of providing effective legal services to vulnerable members of society especially children's and mentally sick persons.

The program aimed to sensitise the participants with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement "NALSA (Child-Friendly Legal Services for Children) Scheme, 2024" and "NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024".

Principal Magistrate JJB Ganderbal, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the legal and policy frameworks in the context of children in conflict with law. She highlighted the actions and interventions under the scheme, with a focus on legal services to children in conflict with the law.

She elaborated on the various stages where legal services are provided to children, including, at Police Station, Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), Children's Homes (CCIs), Children's Courts, Prisons etc.

Besides, Chairperson, Tehsil Legal Services Committee (TLSC), Ganderbal, provided an in-depth analysis of the Legal and Policy Frameworks in the Context of Persons with Mental Illness and Intellectual Disabilities under NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024.

Ajaz Ahmad Mir, Retired District Judge, Advisor/Mentor of the both units

virtually conducted an interactive session with the participants. The session included introductions, ice-breaking activities, and a discussion to understand the importance of training with respect to the provision of legal services to children, persons with mental illness and intellectual disabilities.

He also provided a comprehensive overview of the NALSA (Child-Friendly Legal Services for Children) Scheme, 2024, and NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024, highlighting its objective, key features, actions and interventions.

Subsequently, Khurshad Ahmad, Public Prosecutor, CJM Court, Ganderbal; Afshana, Counselor from District Hospital Ganderbal; Advocate Shaguta Nabi, Center Administrator, One Stop Center (OSC) Ganderbal; Ghulam Rasool Rather, Advocate; Tanveer Ashraf, Assistant Legal Aid Defense Counsel (LADC), Ganderbal and Sajad Ahmad Rather, Member, Child Welfare Committee (CWC), Anantnag also elaborated on the subject.

The training program was called off with featured expert sessions, interactive discussions, and case studies, providing participants with a holistic understanding of the legal framework and best practices to execute "NALSA (Child-Friendly Legal Services for Children) Scheme, 2024" and "NALSA (Legal Services to Persons with Mental Illness and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities) Scheme, 2024 in District Ganderbal.

All the members of both units took a pledge that they will burn the midnight oil for the effective implementation of these schemes on the ground so that the deserving persons will be benefitted.

DC Poonch Visits Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Greets Sikh Sangat on the Occasion of Guru Purab

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 06

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Poonch, Vikas Kundal, visited Gurdwara Singh Sabha in Main Bazar, Poonch, on Monday to extend heartfelt greetings to the Sikh community on the auspicious occasion of Guru Purab, celebrating the Prakash Purab of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. During his visit, the Deputy Commissioner engaged with members of the local Sikh community, offering prayers and sharing warm wishes with the devotees. His presence was met with enthusiasm, and the community expressed their appreciation for the support and recognition. The authorities of the Gurudwara expressed satisfaction with the arrangements made for the occasion and conveyed their gratitude to the Deputy Commissioner for his visit and support. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the significance



of the event, stating, "This occasion serves as a reminder of our shared values and beliefs. I hope it contributes to strengthening brotherhood, unity, harmony, peace,

progress, and prosperity in our society." The celebration was marked by a spirit of togetherness, reflecting the core values of the Sikh faith and reinforcing community bonds.

SMC intensifies Snow clearance, dewatering operations in Srinagar

JAMMU RISING
JAMMU, JAN 06

The Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) has launched extensive operations to address the pressing issues of snow clearance and waterlogging throughout the city following recent snowfall and rain.

With a dedicated workforce and advanced machinery, SMC teams have been actively clearing snow and excess water from lanes and bylanes since early morning.

To enhance efficiency, dewatering operations are being monitored through the SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) system. Currently, 67 out of 100 dewatering stations are under real-time surveillance, allowing for



effective management of water levels.

The SCADA Main Control Centre at Darish Kadal oversees pump operations, DG set performance, and sump water levels to ensure optimal water management.

In parallel, snow clearance activities are being managed through the SMC's 24x7 Control

Room, augmented by a Vehicle Tracking System (VTS). This technology enables better deployment and coordination of machinery across the city.

Dewatering pumps have been strategically deployed at key locations to mitigate water accumulation, and all pump stations remain fully operational. The sanitation

workforce is diligently clearing roads of snow and water, providing essential relief to residents affected by the inclement weather.

The SMC Commissioner has been closely monitoring all operations to ensure timely and effective implementation. "Our teams are doing outstanding work under challenging conditions," stated the Commissioner, reaffirming the SMC's commitment to alleviating the hardships faced by residents due to snow and waterlogging.

For assistance, residents are encouraged to reach out to the SMC's 24x7 Control Room helpline at 0194-2470465, 0194-2474499, or the Toll-Free Number 1800-180-7038.