

Deputy CM inaugurates 45-Metre Steel Bridge at Sadda Nallah, Mangrote

Lays foundation stone for inspection Hut at Kalakote

RAJOURI, DEC 28

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today inaugurated a 45-metre span single-lane steel motorable bridge over Sadda Nallah at Mangrote, marking a significant milestone in strengthening the road connectivity in the region.

The event was attended by MLA Budhal, Javed Iqbal Choudhary, MLA Kalakote, Thakur Randhir Singh, DDC Member Budhal Old-A, Shazia Kousar and DDC Member Moughla, Shamim Akhter besides senior officers and media persons.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Chief Minister said that the newly constructed bridge will provide all-weather connectivity to the local population, ease transportation difficulties and ensure safer movement for the commuters. He said that the UT government is committed towards bridging the infrastructural gaps in rural and remote areas and ensuring equitable development across all regions.

In another major development initiative, the Deputy Chief Minister also laid the foundation stone for construction of an inspection hut along with allied works at Sadda, Kalakote.



He said that the facility will strengthen administrative presence and improve monitoring and implementation of development works in the area. During the visit, Surinder Choudhary interacted with the public, listening to their grievances. He assured time-bound redressal of all genuine demands raised by the people. He emphasized that the government is following a people-centric and proactive approach to governance, with special focus on addressing grassroots-level issues. Speaking on the occasion, MLA Budhal Javed Iqbal Choudhary

lauded the UT administration for prioritizing infrastructure development in far-flung areas.

He said that such projects play a vital role in improving the quality of life of the people. MLA Kalakote Thakur Randhir Singh also expressed gratitude to the government for approving key developmental works for the constituency. The general public appreciated the developmental initiatives, terming them a long-pending demand that will significantly improve accessibility, enhance community safety and support effective administrative oversight in the region.

BJP OBC Morcha Organises Public Programme to Listen to the 129th Episode of 'Mann Ki Baat' in Jammu North

JAMMU, DEC 28

The Bharatiya Janata Party OBC Morcha, Jammu & Kashmir, organised a public outreach programme at Booth No. 19, Purkhu, Jammu North, to collectively listen to the 129th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat', the monthly radio address of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The programme was led by Brahman Jyoti Satti, President, BJP OBC Morcha Jammu & Kashmir, along with senior BJP leaders and prominent citizens. Local residents, party office-bearers, and representatives from various sections of society participated enthusiastically, reflecting widespread public engagement with the Prime Minister's message. Additionally, state office-bearers of the OBC Morcha and district presidents across different districts also organised similar 'Mann Ki Baat' listening programmes in their respective areas, creating an atmosphere of enthusiasm across Jammu & Kashmir.

Prominent attendees included Sunny Sangotra (State General Secretary, BJP OBC Morcha), Sham Lal Mehra (State General Secretary, BJP OBC Morcha), Shamsher Kumar Prajapati (District President, OBC Morcha), Rajni Devi (Sarpanch, Purkhu), Shakti Sharma (Shakti Kendra Incharge), Rajnish Khanna (Mandal Mahamantri), Master Vijay Sharma (Mandal Up-



Adhyaksh), Anil Salgotra (OBC Karyakarta), Mangal Singh (BJP Karyakarta), Vishal Gupta, Sundar, Chiman, Sunil Kumar Sain Dass, Champa Devi, and Nirmal Devi, besides a large number of local residents. During the 129th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat', the Prime Minister addressed the nation from the national capital, Delhi, reflecting on India's challenges and achievements throughout the year. This episode marked the final broadcast of 2025. He highlighted major accomplishments ranging from Operation Sindoor to progress in space science, women empowerment, sports, culture, and innovation, while extending his best wishes to the people for the coming year. Prime Minister Modi described

Operation Sindoor as a matter of national pride and spoke about the enthusiastic public participation in the Vande Mataram campaign. He praised the outstanding performance of girls in sports, recalled the inspiring flag-hoisting programme held in Ayodhya, and highlighted India's significant achievements in the field of science. He also announced that a Young Leader Dialogue would be organised on the occasion of Vivekananda Jayanti, along with hackathons aimed at finding solutions to various social challenges. The Prime Minister further spoke about cultural and linguistic harmony, noting that special emphasis was laid on learning Tamil

during the Kashi Tamil Sangamam held in Varanasi. He mentioned initiatives taken for the promotion of Indian languages, including the establishment of a Kannada school in Dubai and the celebration of Tamil Day in Fiji.

He also shared the inspiring example of Moirangthem Seth, a young innovator from Manipur, who addressed electricity challenges in a remote area through local solar energy solutions, supported by government assistance for solar panels. Addressing the gathering after the programme, Brahman Jyoti Satti said that the messages shared by the Prime Minister are a source of inspiration for every citizen and strengthen the spirit of nation-building.

He reaffirmed that the BJP OBC Morcha will continue to work relentlessly for public welfare and social upliftment.

He appreciated the dedicated efforts of the entire OBC Morcha team for successfully organising such programmes across Jammu & Kashmir and emphasized that the OBC community has always worked in the national interest with a strong sense of patriotism. The programme concluded with a collective resolve to adopt the ideals and vision shared by the Prime Minister for building a stronger, more confident, and culturally rich India.

BJP reaffirms commitment to grassroots empowerment and inclusive development in Samba

JAMMU, DEC 28

The Jammu & Kashmir Branch of the Northern India Regional Council (NIRC) of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) successfully organised an Industrial Visit for Chartered Accountancy students on 27th December 2025 at P Mark (PBI India Pvt. Ltd.), a renowned North Indian food manufacturing unit located at SIDCO Industrial Complex, Bari Brahmana, Jammu. The industrial visit was led by CA Amit Gupta, Vice Chairman of J&K Branch of NIRC of ICAI, along with CA Ayush Sawhney and CA Ayush Mahajan, Executive Committee Members of the Branch. The visit witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of CA students, who were keen to gain practical exposure to industrial operations and large-scale manufacturing processes.

During the visit, Mr. Archit Puri, Director of P Mark (PBI India Pvt. Ltd.), personally interacted with



the students and provided an in-depth overview of the industrial activities, manufacturing processes, quality control mechanisms, and hygiene standards followed at the unit. He also shared the vision and growth journey of the organisation since its establishment in 1933, highlighting how commitment to quality, ethical practices, and continuous innovation has helped P Mark emerge as one of the largest and most trusted food

brands in North India. Mr. Puri motivated the students to uphold ethical values, professional integrity, and quality work in their careers, emphasizing the crucial role professionals play in nation-building and sustainable industrial growth. CA Amit Gupta, Vice Chairman, stated that such industrial visits are an integral part of the Branch's initiatives to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical

exposure, enabling CA students to better understand real-world business environments. CA Ayush Sawhney and CA Ayush Mahajan also encouraged students to make the most of such learning opportunities and develop a holistic professional outlook. The J&K Branch of NIRC of ICAI reaffirmed its commitment to capacity building, professional development, and industry interaction for CA students through similar initiatives in the future.

Apni party conducts outreach programme in ward 71, sidhra; addresses residents' fears over demolitions and flood risks

JAMMU, DEC 28

Apni Party organized a public outreach programme in Ward Number 71, Sidhra, today, bringing together local residents to discuss pressing community issues. The meeting was organized by District President Jammu Urban Abhay Bakaya, was presided over by Provincial President Manjeet Singh, who was accompanied by the provincial and district teams. Residents voiced deep concerns over recurring fear of demolition drives that plague the area annually. A key worry highlighted was the lack of protective walls along both sides of the nalla (drainage channel), which exacerbates devastation during floods, putting lives and property at constant risk. In his address, Provincial President Manjeet Singh demanded that the government immediately regularise these colonies to allow residents to live without the



looming threat of demolitions. Interacting directly with locals, he assured them that Apni Party will vigorously raise these issues with the relevant authorities to seek swift resolution. Meanwhile, District President Abhay Bakaya urged the government to construct protective walls

across the nalla without delay. "Our people should not suffer due to preventable flood hazards," he emphasized. The programme underscores Apni Party's commitment to grassroots engagement, advocacy, and protecting communities in Jammu Urban.

Pre-launch of 'Ba Dekh Rahi Hai' Nutritional Awareness Movement by Kitaab aur Kalam Foundation Held at ICAI J&K Branch

NEW DELHI: Mahant Guru ji Raju Chandel, the spokesperson of the All India Maharishi Bhagwan Valmiki Sadhu Akhara Parishad, while speaking to reporters today, said that the Lord Valmiki is the foundation of Sanatan Dharma. The foundation of Sanatan Dharma was laid after Lord Valmiki composed the Ramayana. Mahant Guru ji Raju Chandel said that the truth is that Lord Valmiki is the founder of Sanatan Dharma.

A Shankaracharya should have been chosen from his akhara (monastic order), but this did not happen, nor was an akhara for the followers of Lord Valmiki established. This led to continuous protests from those who follow Lord Valmiki. But now, an akhara for Lord Valmiki and his community has been established.

This akhara has chosen its Mandaleshwars and nominated Mahamandaleshwars. The matter will not stop here. Soon, the All India Maharishi Bhagwan Valmiki Akhara Parishad will rapidly proceed with the process of selecting its own Shankaracharya from among the saints, Mandaleshwars, and Mahamandaleshwars of the Lord Valmiki community from all four directions.

The Valmiki community's akhara has been neglected since ancient times. But now, all the sadhus, saints, Mandaleshwars, and Mahamandaleshwars of the Valmiki community have risen up and established their own akhara, which is one of the strongest and most powerful akhars.

Whether anyone recognizes us or not, we will not recognize those who do not recognize us and our akhara. We will not give them recognition either. Now we too will have our own



Shankaracharya, the beginning of which will be announced very soon before the country and the Sanatan society. Here, we are not opposing any community, caste, or party. We will not respect those akhars and societies that do not respect our akhara and our community, because the Valmiki community and its sadhus and saints are independent, strong, and powerful.

359th Parkash Purab of 10th Guru Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj was celebrated at Gurdwara Digiana Ashram Jammu

JAMMU, DEC 28

359th Parkash Purab of 10th Guru Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj was celebrated at Gurdwara Digiana Ashram Jammu under the supervision of Shri Maharaj Manjeet Singh Ji of Shiromani Dera Nangali Sahib Poonch. In the Gurpurab, thousands of devotees participated along with various Sikh organization of J&K including Sikh United Front J&K, Bhai Kanhaya Nishkam Seva Society J&K, Shiromani Akali Dal J&K, Sikh Nauwjan Sabha, Local Gurdwara Committees, Members DGPC Jammu along with others participated with zeal and enthusiasm.

The Ragis including Bhai Satwant Singh Ji Hazori Raghi Shri Darbar Sahib Amritsar, Bhai Harbans Singh Ji raghi Jaitha jammu, Harbinder Singh Ji Incharge Sikh Mission J&K, Bhai Bachan Singh Ji Bhai Ranjeet Singh Ji UP Hazuri Raghi Digiana Ashram Jammu and Fateh Singh Ji three light of the life government Dashmesh Pitru Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj.

S. Sudershan Singh Wazir Chairman Sikh United Front J&K spoke at the light of the life government of Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj. He highlighted that Guru Gobind Singh Ji fought 21



battles and won all of them. Wazir added that for the sake of humankind Guru Gobind Singh Ji sacrificed his whole family including his four sons. Wazir said that Sikhs have always been on forefront whenever the country needed. He also highlighted the sacrifices made by Guru Gobind Singh Ji for the weak and downtrodden and asked everyone to follow virtuous path shown by the Guru Gobind Singh Ji so that we can transform ourselves into an egalitarian society. Former Minister Sardar Harbans Singh addressed the Sikh sangat and paid glowing tribute to Guru Gobind Singh Ji teachings. He said that Guru Sahib dedicated his entire life to protecting truth, justice, and human dignity, and

inspired generations to stand firmly against oppression. Mahant Manjeet Singh Ji honoured Sardar Harbans Singh and congratulated him on his recent appointment as an advisor to Feroze Abdullah. He praised Harbans Singh's dedicated public service and expressed hope that he would continue to work for the welfare of the people with the same sincerity and commitment. Other political leaders from various parties including Jammu Bhalla Working President J&K JKPC also greeted people on the occasion of gurpurab. Mahant Manjit Singh Ji of Shiromani Dera Nangali Sahib Poonch while addressing the Sangat asked the people to follow the preachings of Guru Gobind

Singh Ji who sacrificed all his family to save humanity and stress upon Sikh community to adopt the path shown by Guru Gobind Singh Ji in every field of life to become true and pure Sikhs for serving the poor and needy people in the society and who work for the betterment of the country and become Amritdhari and come to the field of education. All human beings are creation of God so all should be treated equally irrespective of caste, color, creed, religion and region. Mahant Ji said that all parents should keep close watch on their children to save them from drugs and other evil deeds.

The other Sikh organizations and leaders who participated in gurpurab were Sardar Bhandar Singh Shiromani Akali Dal J&K, S. Mohinder Singh Chief Organizer Bhai Kanhaya Nishkam Seva Society and Ex member DGPC, S. Rajinder Singh Gen Sect Shiromani Akali Dal J&K, S. Gagan Singh President J&K Motor Transport Company Association Jammu, S. Avtar Singh Member DGPC, Kulwant Singh Khajuria Joint Secretary Shiromani Akali Dal J&K, S. Kular Singh, S. Paramjit Singh, S. Gurnam Singh, S. Charanjit Singh, S. Surinder Singh Dutt, S. Charanveer Singh (Laad).

Kesri demands surgical strike against Bangladesh for violence against Hindus

JAMMU, DEC 28

Shiv Sena Hind Hindustan, led by Jammu Kashmir President Pandit Rajesh Kesri, strongly condemned the violence against Hindus in Bangladesh and demanded that the Indian government take immediate action

to ensure their safety and security. The organization burnt an effigy of Bangladesh at a protest rally in Purkhu village, with Kesri addressing the gathering and expressing solidarity with the affected Hindu community. "The brutal killings and atrocities committed against Hindus in Bangladesh are condemnable," Kesri said. "Hindus have equal rights as citizens of Bangladesh and it is the responsibility of the government to protect them. We demand that the Indian government take stern action against

those responsible for these heinous crimes and ensure the safety of Hindus in Bangladesh." Kesri urged the Indian government to carry out a surgical strike against Bangladesh, similar to the one conducted against Pakistan, to send a strong mes-

sage to those perpetrating violence against Hindus. "Hindus have no other country but India, and it is our duty to protect them," he added. The protest rally was attended by Rahul Kumar, Vinod Kumar, Rajesh Kumar, Nanu Kumar, Vicky,

Darshana Devi, Neeru Devi, Anu Devi, Mani Devi, and dozens of Shiv Sena workers, who vowed to continue fighting for the rights of Hindus in Bangladesh. Shiv Sena Hind Hindustan has appealed to the Indian government to take immediate action to

protect Hindus in Bangladesh and ensure their safety and security. The organization has also demanded that the international community take cognizance of the situation and put pressure on the Bangladesh government to stop the violence against Hindus.

Satish Sharma holds public outreach programme in Chowki Choura; reviews development works, public issues

JAMMU, DEC 28
Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), Information Technology, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, Science & Technology and ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma, today conducted an extensive public outreach programme in Chowki Choura block.

The Minister was accompanied by the concerned sectoral officers of various departments. The visit was aimed at assessing the development works besides reviewing implementation of welfare schemes and interacting with the people at the grassroots level.

Satish Sharma held a public meeting at Dev Sathan Padoon Panchayat Ghar, Chowki Choura, where the local residents, panchayat representatives and youth raised issues related to food supplies, transport facilities, IT-enabled services, sports infrastructure, scientific awareness and other developmental needs.

The Minister assured the people that all their concerns would be addressed on priority.

The Minister also visited Jhang and Sandur Panchayat Majap, Block Chowki Choura, where he chaired another public meeting.

He reviewed the functioning of different line departments including



FCS&CA, Transport, Information Technology, Science & Technology, Youth Services & Sports and ARI & Trainings. He assessed the status of ongoing and proposed development works in the area.

While interacting with the people, the Minister sought feedback from them about the development process undertaken by the government.

Addressing the gatherings, Satish Sharma said that the government is committed towards ensuring transparent, accountable and responsive administration and that no area,

especially rural and border regions, will be left behind in the development process. He emphasised that the benefits of government schemes must reach every eligible family without delay.

The Minister also highlighted the government's focus on youth empowerment through sports, technology, innovation and skill development. He said that investments in sports infrastructure, digital governance and scientific institutions are being made to provide better opportunities for the younger generation of Jammu and

Kashmir. Satish Sharma asked the officers to take immediate note of the issues raised by the public and ensure timely resolution. He also instructed them to maintain regular contact with the local representatives so that their problems can be addressed at the earliest.

The Minister said that such public outreach programmes will continue across the Union Territory to strengthen the bond between the government and the people and ensure effective implementation of development initiatives.

J&K Police organises "Run for Unity" Jammu Marathon-2025

JAMMU, DEC 28

The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Sunday organised "Run for Unity" Jammu Marathon-2025 at Gulshan Ground, Jammu, under its Civic Action Programme.

2. Sh. M. K. Sinha, IPS, Additional Director General of Police (Headquarters), PHO J&K, who was the Chief Guest on the occasion, highlighted the vital role of sports in the physical and mental development of youth. He stated that sporting activities inculcate discipline, comradeship, and a spirit of unity-qualities that are essential for the overall progress and prosperity of the nation.

3. Sh. Sinha further stated that the J&K Police has been consistently organising sports and community-oriented events in the winter capital under its Civic Action Programme, which have received an overwhelming response, particularly from the youth. The primary objective of these initiatives, is to identify and nurture sporting talent while promoting a healthy, positive, and disciplined lifestyle.

4. He appreciated the ADG Armed and his team for organising the marathon in a smooth, professional, and



befitting manner.

5. The marathon witnessed the enthusiastic participation of over 8,000 runners, including men, women, and children in the age group of 8 to 80 years. Participants included students from various educational institutions, members of sports bodies, Police and senior citizens. 6. The flagging-off ceremony commenced at 7:30 a.m. The marathon passed through various routes of the city before culminating at the starting venue. Large crowds lined the route, cheering and motivating the runners, creating a vibrant and energetic

atmosphere throughout the event.

7. At the conclusion of the marathon, winners in different categories were awarded cash prizes and certificates by the ADG Headquarters, who also presided over the prize distribution ceremony. All participants were presented with T-shirts, finishing medals, and refreshments.

8. Earlier, Shri Anand Jain, IPS, Chairman of the event, briefed the gathering on the aims and objectives of the event, emphasising unity, fitness, and community participation.

Annual General Meeting of Home for "Aged & Infirm" held



JAMMU, DEC 28

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Home for the Aged & Infirm was held today at its premises, Ambphalla, Jammu.

Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu & Kashmir, Sanjeev Verma, was the chief guest on the occasion.

All the members paid rich tributes to Late I.D. Soni, President of the Home and to the departed inmates of the Home. Dr. Dinesh Gupta acting Secretary apprised the meeting that, in the absence of the President and the Vice President, the meeting would be chaired by the senior most Member Prem Gupta, IGP (Retd.), former president and a Patron of the Home. Thereafter, the agenda items were taken up one by one for discussion and approval.

The House unanimously confirmed the minutes of the last AGM held on 29th December, 2024, followed by the presentation and

approval of the Annual Report for the financial year 2024-25. The audited accounts for the financial year 2024-25 were also presented and approved. The members further approved the budget proposals for the year 2025-26 and the appointment of Auditors on the existing terms and conditions.

The General Body unanimously confirmed the decision of the Managing Committee regarding the Life Membership and Annual Membership Fee fixed at Rs. 5,500/- and Rs. 2,000/- respectively. Approval was also accorded for establishment of a free Allopathic Dispensary and the restarting of a free Physiotherapy Centre within the Home premises in collaboration with Savitri Devi Jagriti Lal Charitable Trust, Jammu. The proposal for external and internal painting of both residential blocks of the Home preferably by some Agency under

CSR was also approved.

During the election process, all the members present unanimously elected Engineer Pankaj Gupta as President and Dr. Dinesh Gupta as Secretary of the Home for the Aged & Infirm for a period of three years.

Addressing the gathering, Sanjeev Verma appreciated the commendable humanitarian services being rendered by the Home for the welfare and dignity of senior citizens. He assured continued support for such noble initiatives. He also appreciated the donors who have contributed a lot for providing all kind of basic necessities.

Pritam Chand, who dedicated 35 years of service as a Warden, was honoured with a Citation and a cheque of Rs. 11,000, presented by the Chief Guest and members of the Managing Committee, in recognition of his commendable contribution.

Former Ministers, Sr NC leaders and prominent people visit ailing father of Dr. Vikas Sharma

JAMMU, DEC 28

A strong show of solidarity and concern was witnessed at the Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu as several senior leaders of the National Conference (NC) and other dignitaries visited the ailing father of Dr. Vikas Sharma, Coordinator and Secretary Central Zonal J&K, to enquire about his health and extend wishes for his speedy recovery. Among the prominent personalities who reached the hospital were former ministers Ajay Sachdeva, Babu Ram Patel and Abdul Gani Malik. NC Provincial President Rattan Lal Gupta, MLA Khurshid, Former MLA Dr. Chaman Lal, Provincial Joint Secretary Anshu Ahrol, Zonal Vice-President Rakesh Singh Raka, NCSU Provincial Working President Arun Pal Singh, VC IU and former Vice Chancellor of the University of Jammu were also present, along with other respected figures from political and academic spheres.

The leaders interacted with the family, assessed the patient's condition, and offered prayers for his quick recuperation. They expressed hope that he would soon overcome this health challenge and return home in good health. The visit, marked by warmth and empathy, reflected the party's commitment to standing with its members in difficult times.

Dr. Vikas Sharma acknowledged the heartfelt support and thanked all leaders and well-wishers for their prayers, guidance, and encouragement during this trying period.

Pre-launch of "Ba Dekh Rahi Hai" Nutritional Awareness

Movement by Kitaab aur Kalam Foundation Held at ICAL J&K Branch



JAMMU, DEC 28

The Kitaab aur Kalam Foundation organised the pre-launch of its nutritional awareness movement "Ba Dekh Rahi Hai" today at the premises of the Jammu & Kashmir Branch of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI).

The movement focuses on encouraging children to be more mindful of their eating habits and to make informed nutritional choices from an early age. The pre-launch event was graced by Shri Sanjeev Kumar Gupta, Joint Commissioner (Food Safety), FSSAI, as the Chief Guest, who delivered the key address. He appreciated the initiative and emphasised the importance of nutrition literacy and school-based inter-

ventions in shaping healthy food habits among children. Mr. Nanak Ram Ilm, Founder of Kitaab aur Kalam Foundation, shared the vision and on-ground learnings behind "Ba Dekh Rahi Hai", explaining how the movement aims to build awareness through observation, dialogue, and sustained engagement with schools and communities.

As part of the pre-launch, 17 participating schools were felicitated for their collaboration and support in taking the movement forward from its inception. Youth volunteers associated with the Foundation were also recognised for their contribution and field engagement. Dr. Kunal Anand addressed the gathering on the role of

schools as epicentres of change in promoting nutrition literacy and mindful eating practices.

Speaking on behalf of the host institution, CA Sourav Pragal stated that ICAI believes in contributing beyond the profession through initiatives such as financial literacy and career counselling for school students, and expressed the J&K Branch's willingness to support initiatives that promote awareness, informed decision-making, and holistic development of children.

The programme concluded with a Vote of Thanks by CA Amit Gupta, Vice Chairman, J&K Branch of ICAI, followed by informal interaction among school representatives, volunteers, and stakeholders.

Fog and Haze are bad determinants for heart health: Dr Sushil



JAMMU, DEC 28

As the winter season settles over the Jammu region the characteristic fog and the increasingly frequent haze have moved from mere visual nuisances to silent but potent triggers for cardiovascular emergencies. Recognizing the urgency of this emerging public health challenges Head Department of Cardiology GMCH Dr Sushil Sharma held a day long cardiac awareness cum health check up camp at Panchayat Baspur Parlah Block Suchetgarh, Jammu with special focus to educate people to prevent themselves to minimize the adverse impact of Fog and haze on individual health.

While interacting with the people Dr Sushil stated that Pay attention to the Air Quality Index (AQI) issued by the environmental protection

department. The air quality is excellent when the AQI value ranges between 0 and 50. Everyone can take part in the outdoor activities and enjoy a breath of fresh air. The air quality is good when the AQI value ranges from 51 to 100. Most people can take routine outdoor activities except for those allergic to some pollutants. It is mild air pollution when the AQI value ranges between 101 and 150. Susceptible people need to reduce physical activities outdoors. It is moderately air pollution when the AQI value range is between 151 and 200. Susceptible population should minimize activities outdoors while the general population should reduce ones as possible as they can. It is severe air pollution when the AQI value range is between 201 and 300. Susceptible population should stop any activities outdoors while the general population

should minimize ones. It is extremely serious air pollution when the AQI value is >300. All people should stay indoors except for those occupied in special jobs. He elaborated that Fog and Haze is not merely a climatic phenomenon but a complex environmental stressor with profound implications for cardiovascular health. By trapping pollutants, reducing oxygen availability, and compounding cold-induced physiological strain, fog significantly increases the risk of angina, arrhythmias, heart failure exacerbations, and acute coronary events—especially in already vulnerable cardiac patients. Recognizing fog and haze as a silent cardiac trigger is essential for clinicians, policymakers, and communities alike. Adopting preventive lifestyle measures, modifying exposure habits, ensuring strict control of cardiovascular risk fac-

tors, and promoting public awareness during foggy winter periods can substantially mitigate avoidable cardiac morbidity and mortality. The mist may appear serene, but its hidden burden on the heart reminds us that vigilance, preparedness, and proactive care are the true shields against its invisible dangers.

He added that Simple and effective measures seem to be sufficient to minimizing the adverse impact of the fog and haze on the individual's health on a daily basis. Thus, lifestyle changes, environmental protection, energy conservation, new and clean energy use are needed to curb the air pollution and reduce the occurrence of fog and haze which will for sure be beneficial to human health and development, he said

Prominent members of the area Chaman Kundal, Rajeev Kumar, Anshu Kundal and Anshu Kundal appreciated the efforts of Dr Sushil and his team for conducting cardiac awareness cum health check up camp in their area and expressed deep seated gratitude and delivering crucial health services to the rural community. Others who were part of this camp include Dr Venkatesh Yellapu and Dr Aditya Sharma. Paramedics and volunteers include Rajkumar, Rajinder Singh, Rahul Vaid, Shubham Sharma, Mukesh Kumar, Mohd Altaf, Vikas Kumar, Gaurav Sharma, Maneeet Kumar, Jatinder Bhasin, Gokul Sharma and Nirvair Singh Bati.

Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket Club Edge Royal Strikers CC by 5 Runs in a Nail-Biting Thriller at Darap Ground



JAMMU, DEC 28

In a match that had spectators on the edge of their seats until the very last over, Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket Club (SKCC) clinched a dramatic 5-run victory over Royal Strikers Cricket Club (RSCC) in a 20-over limited-overs encounter.

After winning the toss, SKCC captain, Ramzan Cheema, showed confidence in his batting lineup and elected to bat first—a decision that paid rich dividends. Sher-e-Kashmir posted a competitive 148/4 in 20 overs, built around a calm yet commanding innings from Anesh Khajuria.

Anesh anchored the innings with a match-defining 59 off 50 balls, showcasing excellent temperament and timing while smashing ten clear boundaries. His calm and knock provided stability and momentum at crucial stages. The innings received a late

boost from Anil (Shallu), whose explosive 29 off just 15 balls, including two massive sky-rocketing sixes, lifted the total to a challenging score.

For Royal Strikers, Vikas Kumar impressed with the ball, claiming two wickets, while Saleem and Arav chipped in with one wicket each.

Chasing 149, Royal Strikers CC fought hard but found the SKCC bowling attack relentless and disciplined. Despite a spirited 51-run fifth-wicket partnership between Sunil (21) and Talib Hussain (16), RSCC could only manage 143/8 in 20 overs, falling agonizingly short of the target.

SKCC bowlers held their nerve under pressure, especially during the powerplay and death overs. Vicky and Vinod led the attack with two wickets each, while Rahul, Akshith, Baba Barjinder, and Vivek Suri

contributed with one wicket apiece, ensuring a successful defense in a high-pressure finish.

For his composed half-century and match-winning impact with the bat, Anesh Khajuria was deservedly named Man of the Match. Speaking after the match, Aman S. Cheema, President of Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket Club, congratulated both teams for the friendly and competitive game.

He said he was proud that the match was played under the slogan "Say Yes to Future, No to Drugs," a movement started by SKCC in Jammu & Kashmir. He added that the slogan has now been adopted by many teams and several tournaments, calling it a proud moment for the club.

He also reaffirmed SKCC's commitment to using sports to promote a healthy, positive, and drug-free future for the youth.

Javid Dar chairs Kissan Mela at Udhampur; seeks feedback on farmer's welfare schemes

UDHAMPUR, DEC 28

Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today presided over a District Kissan Mela (Farmers' Fair) at Subhash Stadium, Udhampur.

The event was organised by the Department of Agriculture Production & Farmers' Welfare, Udhampur. The objective of the event was to promote farmer interaction, raise awareness about new tools and technologies in agriculture and allied sectors besides dissemination of information on various government welfare schemes for the farming community.

The mela was attended by DDC Chairman Udhampur Lal Chand; MLA Chenani Balwant Singh Mankoti; MLA Udhampur West Pawan Kumar Gupta; MLA Udhampur East Vishal Singh Pathania; DDC members Subash Chander, Pinky Devi and Ashu Sharma; Director Agriculture Anil Gupta; Director Horticulture Jammu; Directors of Sheep Husbandry and Animal Husbandry Jammu; Additional Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Prem Singh; district officers and a large number of



farmers from across the district. Various government departments including Agriculture, Horticulture, Sericulture, Animal and Sheep Husbandry, Floriculture, Employment and Self Help Groups set up awareness stalls to educate the farmers about the ongoing schemes and initiatives. The Minister, along with DDC Chairman and MLAs inspected the stalls, interacted with the officials and beneficiaries.

He reviewed on-ground implementation of the schemes and sought feedback from the farmers. Addressing the gathering, Javid Ahmad Dar said that the government is firmly focused on transforming agriculture from a subsistence activity to a sustainable, competitive and commercially viable agri-economy, ensuring higher and stable incomes for farmers, particularly youth and women.

He highlighted the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) as a flagship framework integrating agriculture, horticulture, livestock, fisheries, seeds and allied sectors under a single, farmer-centric vision.

He emphasized that HADP focuses on quality seeds and planting material, farm mechanisation and custom hiring, protected cultivation and diversification, post-harvest management, processing, technology-driven and climate-resilient farming practices.

The Minister further noted that under the JKAP, focused attention is being given to agri-enterprises related to processing, storage, grading, packing and logistics, enabling the farmers to capture a higher share of value from their produce.

MLAs from Chenani, Udhampur East and Udhampur West, along with the DDC Chairman Udhampur, also addressed the gathering.

They highlighted the key issues and challenges faced by the farmers in their respective constituencies.

They stressed the need for focused interventions to address the local agricultural concerns.

Listened to PM Shri @narendramodi Ji's 129th

#MannKiBaat at Booth No. 36, Bahu Assembly Constituency.

JAMMU, DEC 28

Jammu & Kashmir BJP Vice President Rajeev Rajput Charak today lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 129th episode of #MannKiBaat, which was listened to collectively at Booth No. 36 of Bahu Assembly Constituency, describing it as a powerful roadmap for a self-confident and Viksit Bharat. Interacting with party workers and local residents after the programme, Charak said that the Prime Minister's reflections on the year 2025 perfectly capture the spirit of a nation that is secure, resilient, and steadily advancing on the global sports history, particularly in cricket. He welcomed the mention of India's Men's Cricket Team winning the ICC Champions Trophy. The Women's Cricket Team securing its first-ever World Cup title, the inspiring victory of India's Women's Blind T20 World Cup team. Under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, India's sporting culture has undergone a remarkable transformation. From the stadiums of Jammu & Kashmir to international arenas, our youth are proving that with confidence and



motherland," Charak asserted. Rajeev Rajput Charak also expressed immense pride over the sporting milestones highlighted by the Prime Minister, noting that 2025 will be remembered as a landmark year in Indian sports history, particularly in cricket. He welcomed the mention of India's Men's Cricket Team winning the ICC Champions Trophy. The Women's Cricket Team securing its first-ever World Cup title, the inspiring victory of India's Women's Blind T20 World Cup team. Under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, India's sporting culture has undergone a remarkable transformation. From the stadiums of Jammu & Kashmir to international arenas, our youth are proving that with confidence and

opportunity, no goal is beyond reach," Charak said. Charak urged the youth of Jammu & Kashmir to actively participate in the #VandeMataram150 campaign announced by the Prime Minister to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the national song. He called upon citizens to enter 2026 with renewed resolve, aligning with the Prime Minister's vision of moving from a year of proud milestones to one of unprecedented growth. Concluding, Rajeev Rajput Charak said that Mann Ki Baat continues to act as a vital bridge between leadership and the grassroots, inspiring every Indian to actively contribute to the nation's journey towards Viksit Bharat @2047.

Promotional cricket Tournament organised under 'No to Drugs, Yes to Life' campaign at Baderwah



BHADERWAH, DEC 28

A one-day cricket tournament was organised by the local administration here under the nationwide campaign "No to Drugs, Yes to Life". The event was inaugurated by ADC, Sunil Kumar Bhatnagar who used the moment to spread awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse and the importance of collective

responsibility in safeguarding society, especially the youth. Teams representing different government departments, including Revenue, Health, Rural Development Department (RDD), Roads & Buildings (R&B), Education, along with local teams, participated enthusiastically, symbolising unity and shared commitment against drugs.

The event served as a platform to spread the message of leading a healthy lifestyle and making informed choices for a brighter future. The programme concluded with a collective anti-drug pledge led by the ADC. The players and officials vowed to actively contribute towards a clean, healthy and drug-free Jammu and Kashmir.

JKAACL Organizes Classical & Folk Dance Evening 'Desh Ke Rang, Nritya Ke Sang'

JAMMU, DEC 28

To celebrate India's rich cultural heritage and the spirit of unity in diversity, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Department of Culture, through the J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL), organized a colourful Classical and Folk Dance Evening titled "Desh Ke Rang, Nritya Ke Sang" at Abhinav Theatre, Jammu. Speaking on the occasion, Principal Secretary, Culture, B. M. Sharma, said that the programme was conceptualized to present a vibrant mosaic of India's diverse dance traditions by bringing together renowned and emerging artists representing various classical and folk dance forms from different regions of the country.

The cultural evening featured a captivating series of performances, including Vande Mataram (Aanya Sumit Verma), Kavi Varshini, S. Bharatanatyam, J. Surmalia, Manjuri, Khajoor Singh & Party, Goetru (Jammu Folk), Mudasi Maqbool & Party, Bachnagma (Kashmir Folk), Priyanka Maurya Kathak and Raminder Khurana, Odissi.

The performances enthralled the audience with their grace, rhythm and expressive



artistry, leaving a lasting impression on the spectators. The performance of Raminder Khurana was highly applauded by the audience. Through this event, JKAACL reaffirmed its commitment to preserving and promoting traditional art forms, strengthening cultural harmony, and providing a vibrant platform for artists to showcase their talent.

The event was graced by Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor, Dr. Mandeep K. Bhandari; Commissioner Secretary, Science and Technology, Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhury; IGP Bham Sen Tuti, besides senior officers from the IPS and other services. A large gathering of art lovers, cultural enthusiasts, members of the general public and inmates of Old-age Home, Amphalla, were the special invitees, who witnessed the program with enthusiasm and appreciated the cultural extravaganza.

Spiritual Nagar Kirtan marks observance of 359th Parkash Parv of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji in Poonch

POONCH, DEC 28

A vibrant and spiritually uplifting Nagar Kirtan was organized in Poonch to commemorate the 359th Parkash Parv of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the 10th Guru of Sikhism.

The grand procession commenced from Singh Sabha Gurdwara amid enthusiastic participation of a large number of devotees belonging to different sections of the society.

The Nagar Kirtan was marked by the sacred presence of the Saroop of Sahib Ji, Granth Sahib Ji, beautifully adorned and accompanied by the five beloved ones (Panj Pyaras). Youth showcased traditional Gatra and martial arts performances, adding fervor and spiritual energy to the procession.

President District Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (DGPC) Poonch, S. Narinder Singh addressed the sangat and highlighted the life, teachings and sacrifices of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

General Secretary DGPC Poonch, S. Harcharan Singh in his address reiterated the importance of Sikh history and the timeless teachings of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The congregation not only commemorated the Guru's Parkash Parv but also strengthened communal harmony, unity and the spirit of seva among the people of Poonch. Joint Secretary DGPC Poonch, S. Gurcharan Singh and President AISSEF, S. Parmarjit Singh also addressed the devotees,



emphasizing the Guru's message of courage, equality and righteousness.

DIG Rajouri-Poonch Range Tajinder Singh; Deputy Commissioner Ashok Kumar Sharma; SSP Shafaqat Hussain Bhat besides other civil and police functionaries were also present.

The District Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (DGPC) expressed sincere gratitude to the Deputy Commissioner and Senior Superintendent of Police for their participation and full support.

The Committee also hailed the support extend-

ed by individual departments including Motor Vehicle Department, Health Department, JPDC, PHE, Fire & Emergency Services, Municipality and others for ensuring smooth and well-coordinated arrangements.

Preacher Amarjeet Singh from SGPC Amritsar delivered an enlightening discourse on the life history of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji and the rich legacy of Sikhism inspiring the sangat. Ragi Jathas led by Bhai Parvinder Singh, Bhai Sartaj Singh and other Ragi groups recited soulful Gurbani Kirtan throughout the procession.

Kishtwar police organises powerlifting championship under civic action programme

KISHTWAR, DEC 28

On the directions of SSP Kishtwar Sh. Naresh Singh-JKPS, District Police Kishtwar organized a Powerlifting Championship at District Police Lines (DPL) Kishtwar under the Civic Action Programme (CAP). Powerlifters from different parts of Kishtwar district enthusiastically participated in the championship, showcasing their strength, discipline, and sporting spirit. Addressing the participants on the occasion, Addl. SP Kishtwar said that Kishtwar Police is committed to providing a positive platform to the talented youth of the district so that they can showcase their abilities, channel their energy in a constructive direction, and stay away from drugs, social evils, criminal activities, and anti-national tendencies. He emphasized that sports play a vital role in character building, discipline, and overall personality development of youth. The prizes were distributed by Addl. SP



PC Kishtwar, accompanied by Dy. SP PC Kishtwar in the championship, outstanding performers were felicitated with cash prizes, gold medals, trophies, and certificates. Mr. Momin Dar secured top positions in the Junior and Senior categories and was awarded a cash prize of Rs. 30,000/- in the Sub-Junior category. Mr. Dawar Javed emerged victorious and was awarded a cash prize of Rs. 5,000/-, along with a trophy, medal, and certificate. Other participants were also awarded medals and certificates for their commendable performances. In his message, SSP Kishtwar Sh. Naresh Singh-JKPS lauded

ed the enthusiastic participation of the youth and reiterated the commitment of Kishtwar Police towards promoting sports and healthy activities.

He encouraged the youth to actively participate in sports and join hands in the fight against drug abuse for building a healthy, peaceful, and progressive society. The event was witnessed by Addl. SP Kishtwar Sh. Pardeep Singh Gora-JKPS, Addl. SP PC Kishtwar Sh. Nisar Khoja-JKPS, Dy. SP Headquarters Dr. Ishan Gupta-JKP, Dy. SP PC Kishtwar Sh. Sharvan Singh-JKPS, besides other officers of the Police Department.

"Ek Shaam Atal Ji ke Naam" Kavi Sammelan held at Gangyal, Jammu

JAMMU, DEC 28

A soulful and inspiring Kavi Sammelan on the theme "Ek Shaam Atal Ji ke Naam" was organized at Atal Ji Park, Gangyal, Jammu, paying rich literary tributes to Bharat Rana and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji.

J&K BJP President & Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) Sat Sharma, accompanied by J&K BJP General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul, BJP National Secretary Dr. Narinder Singh, and J&K BJP General Secretary Baldev Singh Billawara, (organizer of the event), General Secretary Sanjita Dogra, chiefly addressed the gathering after the Kavi

Sammelan.

Addressing the gathering, Sat Sharma said that Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji was not only a great statesman but also a poet with a sensitive soul, whose words reflected nationalism, humanity, and deep concern for society. He said that such literary programmes keep Atal Ji's ideals alive among the masses, especially the younger generation.

Sat Sharma announced that keeping in view the strong and affectionate demand of the people, a statue of Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji would be erected in Atal Ji Park itself, making it a permanent centre of inspiration and remembrance. In his address, Ashok Koul said



that Atal Ji believed in people-centric governance and cultural nationalism, and his life remains a guiding force for the BJP. He added that through events like "Ek Shaam Atal Ji ke Naam," the party is committed

to taking Atal Ji's thoughts and values to the grassroots. Dr. Narinder Singh highlighted Atal Ji's contribution to strengthening India's democracy, national unity, and India's global stature. He said that Atal

Ji's poetry and political vision reflected harmony, courage, and optimism, which continue to inspire millions. Baldev Singh Billawara, while speaking, said that the objective of organizing the Kavi

Sammelan was to connect society with Atal Ji's literary and ideological legacy. Billawara said that Atal Ji gave the nation a new way of thinking, renewed self-confidence, and a clear direction toward self-reliance. He added that the present Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, is carrying forward the same ideology, nationalism, and development-centric vision, and is working tirelessly to realize the dreams envisioned by Atal Ji. He thanked all poets, participants, and organizers for making the programme a grand success. Renowned poets Saravasi Kour Asis, Jagjit Singh Jashtan, Ram Krishan, Randhir Raurpura, Dr. Baljeet Raina, Suraj Rattan, Star

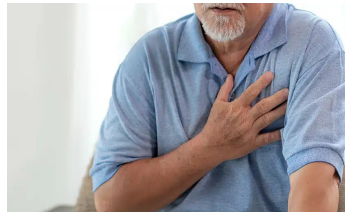
Singh, Ashok Paras, and others enthralled the audience with their powerful poetic recitations, creating a vivid and emotional portrayal of Atal Ji through words. Later, the BJP senior leaders felicitated the poets for their outstanding contributions. Other senior BJP leaders present on the occasion included BJP District Prabharti Ayodhya Gupta, District President Nareish Singh Jashtan, Dogra Sewa Sambhal Trust President Rajiv Sharma, Mandal Presidents Ajay Pratap Singh, Sohan Singh Katal (Sonu) and a large number of party workers, literary enthusiasts, and local residents.

Heart attack signs and symptoms people should not ignore

NEW DELHI: Heart ailments are becoming common in people of all ages due to a range of reasons. Actor Nitesh Pandey who's known for his role in Om Shanti Om and more recently TV serial Anupama, succumbed to a heart attack in Nashik. He was 50. In the recent past, many personalities from the world of entertainment - young and old - lost their lives due to heart attack from Satish Kaushik, Sidharth Shukla, Puneeth Rajkumar, Singer KK, to Raju Srivastava. Heart attack also known as myocardial infarction occurs when the flow of blood to the heart is severely reduced or blocked. The blockage is may be due to buildup of fat, cholesterol and other substances in the arteries. A heart attack can have mild, major or no symptoms. Causes of heart ailments in India

The growing incidences of cardiac arrest in India are a cause of concern and the recent death of actor Nitesh Pandey is

unfortunate. There are various causes and reasons behind the increasing incidences of cardiac arrest in younger people in India. These include unhealthy lifestyle choices such as a lack of exercise, poor diet, smoking and alcohol consumption, stress and anxiety, and genetic predisposition to heart diseases. Men are more prone to cardiac arrest than women, particularly those over the age of 45. However, there has been a significant increase in the number of younger women suffering from heart diseases such as coronary artery disease and heart attack in recent years," says Dr Devendra Shrinani, Director Cardiology, Narayana Multispecialty Hospital, Jaipur. "When a heart attack occurs, usually the patient will have chest pain in the central part but it could be only in the left side or only in the right side. The chest pain may or may not radiate to the left arm. If the pain or discomfort continues for more



than 15-20 minutes, one should suspect a heart attack, and should go to emergency of a nearby hospital or go for ECG because it will tell you exact diagnosis of heart attack. Many times people don't have pain. It may only be abnormal chest discomfort. They can't even describe properly. Sometimes it's just breathing difficulty which they never had before but particular people with diabetes - they may not have chest pain, they may just have breathing difficulty. There are lot of patients who may have symptoms in the upper part of tummy, some discomfort. It's a pity that many of the patients think that it is a gas problem. So, if you don't have these symptoms before and they are new symptoms and they continue even after taking an antacid and they continue more than 20 minutes, please consider

it could be a heart attack," says Dr TS Kler, Chairman, Fortis Heart and Vascular Institute, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram in a telephonic conversation with HT Digital.

"The warning signs that people should watch out for are chest pain or discomfort such as feeling of pressure, squeezing, fullness or burning in the chest, shortness of breath, unexplained sweating, nausea or vomiting, and fatigue. It is crucial to raise awareness about the importance of heart health and encourage people to adopt a healthy lifestyle to avoid or minimize the risk of cardiac arrest," adds Dr Shrinani.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF HEART ATTACK
Dr V. Vinodh, Sr. Consultant Interventional Cardiologist CARE Hospitals Hitech City, Hyderabad shares signs and symptoms of heart attack that people should not ignore as established intervention can improve chances of survival.

1. Chest discomfort

The most common and recognizable symptom of a heart attack is chest pain or discomfort. This sensation is often described as a tightness, pressure, or squeezing feeling in the centre or left side of the chest. It can be persistent or intermittent, lasting for a few minutes or coming and going. Most importantly that discomfort or pain will increase while patient is walking or climbing upstairs. It is essential to pay attention to any unusual or unexplained discomfort in the chest region.

2. Upper body pain

Heart attack symptoms may extend beyond the chest to other areas of the upper body. Pain or discomfort can radiate to the arms (usually the left arm), back, neck, jaw, or even the stomach. Sometimes they can have only throat pain which will increase during exercise or walking and decrease with rest. This pain may occur alongside or independent of chest discomfort. Any unexplained pain or discomfort in these regions should not be disregarded.

3. Shortness of breath

Difficulty in breathing or a feeling of shortness of breath can be indicative of a heart attack. This symptom can manifest even without chest pain and may occur at rest or during physical activity. Breathing difficulty during walking or during sleep is very important symptom which may be related to heart. If you find yourself struggling to catch your breath, it is important to consider the possibility of a heart attack.

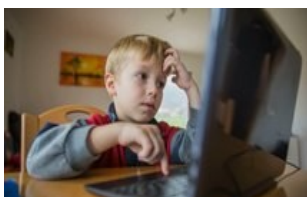
4. Nausea and indigestion

Some individuals experiencing a heart attack may feel nauseous, or experience symptoms resembling indigestion. These symptoms are more common in women. If you have unexplained nausea or indigestion-like discomfort, particularly when accompanied by other potential signs of a heart attack, it is crucial to seek medical attention promptly. Don't self-medicate. This is the most common reason for delay in seeking medical attention.

Experts on harmful effects of social media overuse in teens, suggest ideal screen time

NEW DELHI: Social media use in teenagers can have profound risk of harm to the mental health and well-being of children and adolescents, said US Surgeon General Dr Vivek Murthy in a new advisory urging parents, policymakers and technology companies to address the growing mental health crisis. Use of social media for over three hours a day can raise risk of depression and anxiety. Excess social media use is also related to poor sleep quality in teenagers which can further impact their mental health. Health experts in an interview with HT Digital talk about harmful effects of social media and also suggest ideal screen time for teenagers.

GIRLS CAN SUFFER FROM BODY IMAGE ISSUES
"Kids who tend to have a lot of screen time and use social media without any regulation can encounter mental health issues. These



kids watch violent or disturbing content that can take a toll on their mental well-being. This can be a matter of concern as the kids can get stressed, anxious, depressed, violent, frustrated, and feel lonely as well. Apart from that, some girls will also have issues such as poor self-esteem, body image issues and can suffer from eating disorders when they try to look like or imitate a certain celebrity they like. There are many kids who are

glued to smartphones 24/7. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that the child doesn't exceed the given screen time to them. Screen time for around 1 hour per day is ideal for children under parental guidance. It is a good idea to ensure that the child watches educational content instead of gore or sexual content," says Dr Jagdish Kathwate, Consultant Neonatologist & Pediatrician, Motherhood Hospital, Pune.

Date, history, significance, facts, symptoms, how to observe the dayWorld Thyroid Day 2025

NEW DELHI: The butterfly-shaped thyroid gland is situated at the front of the neck, under the voice box. Diseases of the thyroid gland are among the most abundant endocrine disorders worldwide, second only to diabetes. 1 in 10 people around the world will suffer from some form of thyroid disorder. Thyroid diseases can affect more women than men. When thyroid gland makes too many hormones, it is called an overactive thyroid or hyperthyroidism. On the other an underactive thyroid where the gland doesn't make enough hormones is referred to as hypothyroidism. Both of these imbalances can lead to a range of symptoms. On World Thyroid Day, here's all you want to know about the date, history, significance of the day apart from facts, types of thyroid disorders and symptoms of the disease.

Date of World Thyroid Day
World Thyroid Day will be observed on May 25 (Thursday) this year. History and significance of World Thyroid Day



World Thyroid Day was first observed in 2007 by the members of the Thyroid Federation International. This global healthcare day was created to honour European Thyroid Association (ETA) which was formed in the year 1965. The day is dedicated to people suffering from thyroid disorders and the researchers who are com-

mitted to the study and treatment of thyroid diseases worldwide. Thyroid diseases can be life threatening if not managed early. However, early management and treatment can make them curable. Types of thyroid diseases
The two most common types of thyroid disorders are hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid) and

hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid).

Hypothyroidism occurs when the thyroid gland does not produce enough thyroid hormones. Symptoms include weight gain, fatigue, dry skin, hair loss, among others. An overactive thyroid gland could lead to hyperthyroidism. This happens when thyroid gland produces an excess of thyroid hormones. Common symptoms of the condition are weight loss, increase in appetite, increased heartbeat, anxiety, irritability, and heat intolerance.

In Hashimoto's thyroiditis, the immune system attacks and damages the thyroid gland, leading to hypothyroidism. In case of Graves' disease, thyroid gland produces excessive amounts of hormones, resulting in hyperthyroidism.

Facts about thyroid diseases
Women are more likely to develop thyroid disorders than men. Hypothyroidism is more common in elderly while hyperthyroidism affects younger people more.

Ways to respond if someone starts debating the validity of your feelings

NEW DELHI: The way we feel is very personal. Sometimes people around us may not understand the intensity and the relevance of those emotions - however, that does not change the fact that we can feel those emotions. Sometimes we may feel challenged when we are faced with people who do not understand the meaning of those emotions. "When faced with someone who challenges how you feel, it's not just about the words you use in response. It's also about how you maintain your self-respect and emotional balance," wrote Therapist Klara Kernig. She further added that strength of emotions resides in the way we share them with others - "Your feelings are inherently valid because you feel them. Remember, you're not alone in this. We've all been there, and there's strength in that shared experience."

Be honest: One of the ways to combat people who do not validate our emotions is by being honest with them. Telling them the way we feel and the reason why we feel like that can help them to understand us better.

Stay grounded: Even when things start to get heated up, we should stay calm and try to understand the perspective of the other person. However, while we stay calm, we should also stay regulated and firm and stand by ourselves.

Practice self-compassion: Such situations can make us question our own emotions. It is important to be self-compassionate and be firm and know that what we feel is real.

Ask for clarification: Instead of feeling hurt, we should ask for clarification for the way they are feeling about our emotions.



Set boundaries: We should set healthy boundaries with the person who does not validate the emotions we are feeling. Instead of being reactive, we should let them know what we want and do not want from our relationship with them. Seek supportive spaces: We should seek spaces and people who understand the way we feel, give us the independence to feel the way we want and support us through this emotional journey.

Sometimes emotions can be very difficult to understand. We frequently are unable to explain our feelings. Emotions have a significant impact on our thoughts and actions. The feelings we experience every day can motivate you to act and have an impact on the big and minor decisions you make about your life. Emotional feelings can occur if you are not conscious of your feelings. That is why it is important to develop an emotional awareness. Speaking to HT lifestyle, Kirti Verma, Chief Psychologist at Kripa social welfare society, shared, "The more awareness you have of what's happening

inside of you, the better you can differentiate between emotional experiences. The more complex emotions get the more important it becomes to be able to describe them, so building your awareness and emotional vocabulary is the key". She also shared few ways which you can follow to better understand your emotions. Take a little time and space in our busy lifestyle some times it is very important to take a pause and slow down. Acknowledge that a big emotion is coming up for you. Know that to figure out them pass eventually. Suspend judgement and think of your emotions as messengers, signals, data. Take some time to figure out what it is trying to tell you. Approach the emotion with curiosity, rather than avoiding it. Mix with a pinch of awareness.

Try to recognise the thoughts that are triggering the emotions and what you can be triggered by the emotions you are experiencing. What it reflects in your body and where do you feel it? Can be tension, increased heart rate, sweaty palms etc. As

emotions are often associated with certain action urges it is important to recognise that how emotions are influencing your actions. For instance it can be fear-urge to avoid or joy-urge to connect.

Add a sprinkle of specificity Specify the feeling and name it. Google "emotions wheel" if you have trouble naming it and see which lands the most. Build your emotional vocabulary. For example sad could really mean ashamed, guilty, lonely, remorseful etc. You can also create your emotions journal where you can write the emotions experienced by you in a whole day and you can also rate the intensity of emotions from 1 to 5. This will have a positive impact on your overall mental wellbeing.

Top off with acceptance & self-compassion Remember you are not the emotion, you are the one experiencing the emotion. Offer yourself warmth & understanding (the way you would do to a good friend) don't be harsh on yourself. Decide what to learn from it and let it go when you feel you are ready.

The spike in child mortality won't go away on its own

new delhi: For Americans under 20, an epidemic much less deadly than Covid-19 has raged over the last three years. Deaths among those aged 1 to 19 surged 20% — driven by an increase in car crashes, suicide, homicide and drug overdoses. The combined toll of behavior-related deaths on children and teens hit home after a March report by the Center on Society and Health at Virginia Commonwealth University. Last week, a Wall Street Journal story fleshed out that data with stories — a mother finding her teenage son dead from fentanyl poisoning, an honor student taking a bike ride with friends and being fatally gunned down.

How much of this is a result of the pandemic — or the government's disruptive reaction to it? Teen suicides and drug overdoses had been on the rise over the last decade, but that rise accelerated during the pandemic. Deaths on the road had been decreasing and since 2020 they rose more sharply than any other time on record. And gun deaths overall — not only of minors — rose an astonishing 50% during the pandemic years.

Many of us have witnessed more recklessness and speeding on the roads. This casual disregard for life feels at odds with the early "all in this together" pandemic phase. But it fits a pattern seen in other kinds of disasters, said Seattle University psychologist Kira Mauseth, who specializes in helping people in disaster-torn areas.

She's gained expertise in disasters by working in war zones and studying Haiti after the 2010 earthquake reduced much of Port-au-Prince to rubble. She said that about six months after a disaster, a disillusionment phase sets in, during which mental health deteriorates and dangerous behavior increases.

In the first few weeks after a disaster, she said, people go through what are called a heroic phase and a honeymoon phase, when people come together and celebrate those who make sacrifices. The disillusionment phase comes when people realize all their efforts can't fix the problem. It's during this phase that some people start to rely more on the brain's limbic system — a center of emotion and instinct — leading to more impulsive, unthinking behavior.

This is something that can affect both children and adults — and since the



pandemic, impulsive adult behavior has led to some of the deaths of minors for car crashes and gun violence.

With Covid-19, the disillusionment phase was especially acute. Families and groups of friends were torn apart over disagreements on holiday gatherings and weddings or travel plans. Social media drove people apart more often than it acted as a substitute for real social interaction. Bitter political polarization intensified. And we didn't get the one disillusionment phase. Mauseth calls the pandemic a disaster cascade. The first disillusionment period came around Thanksgiving of 2020, she said — compounded by lonely holidays, darker days and a new winter surge in the virus. Hope that the vaccine would finally end the crisis was followed in the summer of 2021 by a devastating letdown as the delta wave surged, and thousands of vaccinated people caught the virus. Another wave of disillusionment hit in early 2022 with the omicron wave.

Mauseth said this was all harder for young people — staying isolated for six months might feel like an eternity to a 14-year-old. And in many parts of the US, it wasn't just six months. The isolation period was instead open-ended. Public health officials often said we could go back to normal once the virus was "under control" — a vague goal. That made it hard to move from disillusionment to the final phase, recovery. One of the key ingredients needed for recovery: Connecting to others.

Stanford University psychologist Keith Humphries, an expert on addiction, worries that some people ever now are remaining isolated out of habit. And isolation is a big risk factor for mental health problems and drug abuse.

Other factors are fueling the rise in teen overdose deaths, he said, including an ever-growing supply of illegal drugs and pills that are spiked with fentanyl. He said we need more mental health services, more control over supply, and more community activities where people can connect in person. Attendance at public meetings, civic organizations, and houses of worship have long been in decline, leaving a need for other ways to bring people together.

Many of us have witnessed more recklessness and speeding on the roads. This casual disregard for life feels at odds with the early "all in this together" pandemic phase. But it fits a pattern seen in other kinds of disasters, said Seattle University psychologist Kira Mauseth, who specializes in helping people in disaster-torn areas.

The good news is that for many people, the recovery phase has finally arrived. People have resumed the activities needed for connection. But that's not enough to turn around the pandemic's impact on child mortality. Instead, we'll need a concerted effort to curtail the proliferation of guns, illicit drugs and reckless driving. Kids are counting on it.

EDITORIAL

Punish The Goons

Christmas was marred by the shocking and shameful conduct, from mobs declaring allegiance to Bajrang Dal, VHP and fringe outfits. They ransacked Christmas decorations, disrupted and harassed carol singers and Christmas gatherings, stormed schools and churches, heckled even poor vendors selling Santa caps – incidents captured on video in Delhi, Haryana, Odisha, Kerala, Assam, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Have police taken cognisance? Have FIRs been filed under BNS Sections 196(2) and 299 for promoting enmity between groups and outraging religious sentiments? Are any of the hooligans, easily identifiable from public footage, arrested? Or do they roam free and confident, assured of protection? BJP has sought an 'explanation' from its Jabalpur party senior for her shocking behaviour towards a visually impaired Christian woman inside a church. But that's not nearly enough. All are guilty of disrupting communal harmony during a festival joyously celebrated across India's cities.

It is for BJP, which has a new party chief, and RSS to put a stop to the militancy against minority faiths by some parivaar outfits, who seem increasingly emboldened. They harm the party, and are anti-Hindu. No Hindu will endorse such brutality in the name of their faith. The United Christian Forum has alleged over 600 incidents against Christians this year. Christmas Day attacks hardly came out of the blue. Therefore, the goons must face the full force of law. All but one state where this happened is BJP-governed. This reflects on BJP's global standing as the party governing India. That should incentivise party leadership to act.

Make-in-India via foreign tech

BY KS CHALAPATI RAO AND KVK RANGANATHAN

India's defence industrial policy is undergoing a profound transformation. In 2025, designated as the 'Year of Reforms', the Ministry of Defence announced updates to the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) through a three-pillared strategy. This includes: (a) less ownership constraints to allow foreign-led firms to act as primary contractors, (b) priority to delivery speed and export capacity over traditional domestic preferences, and (c) new sovereign oversight through mandatory tech transfer disclosures, and indigenous content verification. We examine the policy in the light of India's experience, and that of other latecomers. Little FDI despite liberal norms: India opened the defence manufacturing to foreign ownership in 2001, and progressively liberalised the regime. In 2020, foreign ownership up to 74 per cent was permitted under the automatic route, with provision for 100 per cent where access to modern technology was anticipated. The underlying expectation was that the higher ownership caps would attract global defence majors, enable technology transfer, and strengthen the indigenous manufacturing capability. According to the official figures, between 2001 and September 2025, cumulative FDI inflows into defence manufacturing amounted to \$26.5 million, of which \$16.4 million came after the 2020 liberalisation. This is striking given that the foreign investors generally show a strong preference for unambiguous control. Thus, the liberal ownership norms, by themselves, do not work, at least in defence manufacturing sector. Defence is different: This is because investment decisions are strategic rather than market-driven, and are embedded in the national security frameworks of investors' home nations. Tech transfer is circumscribed by export controls, licensing regimes, and geopolitical considerations. This divergence has sharpened in recent years as advanced economies expanded national security screening to cover dual-use technologies, electronics, data, artificial intelligence, and advanced manufacturing. They began to monitor outward investments. One of the recent cases is that of the UK which under its National Security and Investment Act,

2021, screens outward investment in 17 areas which include defence, and dual-use technologies. In this global context, expectations that advanced defence technologies will flow freely into India through the FDI route are increasingly unrealistic, irrespective of ownership thresholds. Reliance on control measures: India has focused largely on formal parameters such as equity caps, board composition, and the nationality of directors. Effective control resides not in equity shares but in control over technology, software, upgrades, maintenance systems, and export permissions. These are governed through shareholder agreements, licensing contracts, and internal compliance regimes that lie largely outside routine regulatory scrutiny. The governance structures of defence and aerospace joint ventures (past and present) illustrate this reality. Even where the Indian partners hold majority equity, key strategic decisions often require unanimity, effectively conferring veto power on the foreign collaborator. Compliance systems and export-import controls are frequently required to be acceptable to the foreign partner, thus entrenching technological and operational dependence. The result is foreign control over critical technologies, and future developments, irrespective of the extent of Indian ownership. This is a standard governance design in most of the sensitive sectors. The proposed safeguards in the 2025 framework face a dual-track failure. If enforced strictly, they will deter foreign participation by scaring away risk-averse OEMs. If applied leniently, they will remain 'paper tigers', delivering assembly lines without the underlying design authority. In a crisis, a foreign OEM's first loyalty is invariably to its home government's export controls. Tight-fisted tech control: India's experience in civilian manufacturing offers a parallel. In the auto sector, which has received substantial FDI, leading Indian subsidiaries invest little in in-house R&D while making sizable royalty and technical fee payments to the parent firms. Advanced design capabilities, and core technologies remain concentrated abroad, with Indian operations functioning largely as long-term technology users. Many leading firms in other industries follow a similar pattern. In sectors such as machinery, and electrical equipment, technology agreements rou-



inely impose restrictions on exports, modifications, and third-country sales. Similar but more stringent conditions apply in defence collaborations, further constraining learning, reverse engineering, and the development of independent export capability. Global experience: South Korea combined procurement, R&D, offsets, and exports under strong state coordination, with tech transfer explicitly staged and enforceable, and lifecycle autonomy treated as non-negotiable. Turkey treated joint ventures as transitional arrangements, enforced offsets aggressively to localise electronics and systems integration, and nurtured national champions through assured demand and patient capital. In both the cases, foreign participation was instrumental but time-bound, and not permanent. In the cases of Brazil, Israel, and Singapore, the state-owned sector played important roles. Risks in FDI-dependence: The argument is not against foreign participation per se but that FDI can play a supporting or transitional role. Genuine capability building requires a decisive shift in policy focus: from ownership to effective control, value addition to design and lifecycle autonomy, and capital accommodation to tech mastery. The question is about who controls technology, upgrades, and exports. Unless the policy is anchored around this, further liberalisation in policy and procedures risks deepening strategic dependence rather than advancing Atma-Nirbharta. A foreign OEM does not share its core IP because it owns 74 per cent or even 100 per cent. It is shared if its home government allows it, and because the host nation makes it a non-negotiable

condition. Indigenous content norms must insist on design ownership, source-code access, and upgrade rights, not merely value addition. Strengthening domestic players should be the topmost priority. The views expressed by the prime minister's group (2008), which was set up under the National Manufacturing Competitiveness Council, are still relevant. It stated that "many of the technologies in the fields of Defence, Aero Space, IT, Atomic Energy and other high technology areas are not available either through the liberalised FDI route or for buying them outright. Clearly for a major country like India, in the long term, it is necessary to have the state-of-the-art technologies, and also a programme to develop the next generation technologies internally through vigorous R&D effort. Many developing countries including China have worked towards this by putting in place appropriate FDI and industrial policies." India needs to follow a strategy, which may include: Preference to joint ventures with sunset clauses on foreign technological control rather than to foreign-owned subsidiaries. No policy or procedure to undermine the development of indigenous capabilities; far from providing a level-playing ground, domestic manufacturers should always be preferred. State to retain special rights or golden shares in critical platforms. ITAs to be used strategically to negotiate technology access even without equity participation. Priority to patient, long-term capital rather than short-horizon financial investors. Shift progressive liberalisation of FDI policy and procedures, on one pretext or the other.

He desires, and you better agree

United States President Donald Trump is standing with a club and spade to build his private-public boulevard. He has decided that playing merely with the king of hearts would not land aces up his sleeve, which has two tattoos, "America First" and "Make America Great Again." While Trump jauntily walks the path, the rest of the world, including powerful allies, is left to wonder what and when they will be told (or ordered) to work on the proposed building, or even plant trees to construct a "beautiful" MAGA drive.

After the trade deal between the US and European Union (EU), which many of the latter's members showed disgust for, a 32-page American security document, "National Security Strategy (NSS) of the United States of America", reflected the diplomatic design of Trump's realpolitik architecture. Whatever the rest of the world may say about him, he cannot be called coy or innocuous. Much of the content of the security document derives from the US Vice-President JD Vance's speech on February 14 at the Munich Security Conference. There, he talked about the erosion of democratic norms in Europe. He argued that the danger to that continent came from internal factors, and not the external ones like Russia or China. The NSS adopts a paternalistic attitude towards the EU. "Our goal should be to help Europe correct its current trajectory. We will need a strong Europe to help us successfully compete, and to work in concert with us to prevent any adversary from dominating Europe," it states. One of its pillars is to rediscover the more than 200-year-old foreign policy statement known as the Monroe Doctrine, with a "Trump Corollary", that the "The Economist" magazine termed the "Donor doctrine". The aim: politics and commerce on White House terms.

"After years of neglect, the United States will reassert and enforce the Monroe Doctrine to restore American preeminence in the Western Hemisphere, and to protect our homeland and our access to key geographies throughout the region. We will deny non-Hemispheric competitors the ability to position forces or other threatening capabilities, or to own or control strategically vital assets, in our Hemisphere. This 'Trump Corollary' to the Monroe Doctrine is a common-sense and potent restoration of American power and priorities, consistent with American security interests," explains



the NSS. According to "The Economist", this perception is "a further reason for America's friends to plan for the worst." Like Vance's speech, the NSS was met with strong protests from the European leaders. They accused the vice-president of interfering in internal matters, and supporting the populist-right parties. The NSS "provoked yet more outrage in Europe. European Council president Antonio Costa and Germany's chancellor Friedrich Merz have both described parts of the document as 'unacceptable', with much criticism geared towards the blatant political interference the strategy suggests the US plans to conduct in Europe," observes the global think tank, European Council on Foreign Relations.

"The NSS has also delivered a harsh diagnosis about the continent's economic decline, although these issues (for example, Europe's lack of competitiveness, its declining share of global tech revenue, and dependence on China for green-tech supply chains) are also being acknowledged and documented by Europeans," it adds. The doctrine of President James Monroe was foreign policy created in 1823 against European colonialism in the Western Hemisphere. It viewed any intervention by foreign powers in the political affairs of the Americas as a hostile act against the US. Much of the NSS reads like a minder's list of do's-and-don'ts to the class, where White House clearly spells out, "We want to support our allies in preserving the freedom and security of Europe, while restoring Europe's civilisational self-confidence and Western

identity..." It adds, "We will oppose elite-driven, anti-democratic restrictions on core liberties in Europe, the Anglosphere, and the rest of the democratic world, especially among our allies." Of course, "mass" migration is the greatest threat to the West, and the NSS pledges to secure the US borders, as well as support Europe's populist-right parties in their similar pursuits.

Europe comes for criticism over climate change concerns, and policies aimed at developing alternative energies. In no uncertain terms had Trump decried these issues in his controversial speech at the United Nations General Assembly in end-September. "This 'climate change' is the greatest con job ever perpetrated on the world, in my opinion," he said. He maintained that such statements about climate change were made by "stupid people that have cost their countries fortunes, and given those same countries no chance for success." The NSS has also delivered a harsh diagnosis about the continent's economic decline, although these issues (for example, Europe's lack of competitiveness, its declining share of global tech revenue, and dependence on China for green-tech supply chains) are also being acknowledged and documented by Europeans," it adds. The doctrine of President James Monroe was foreign policy created in 1823 against European colonialism in the Western Hemisphere. It viewed any intervention by foreign powers in the political affairs of the Americas as a hostile act against the US. Much of the NSS reads like a minder's list of do's-and-don'ts to the class, where White House clearly spells out, "We want to support our allies in preserving the freedom and security of Europe, while restoring Europe's civilisational self-confidence and Western

sovereignty, migration policies that are transforming the continent and creating strife, censorship of free speech and suppression of political opposition, cratering birthrates, and loss of national identities and self-confidence."

The NSS states that Europe's lack of self-confidence is evident in its relationship with Russia, where due to the war in Ukraine, its relations are deeply attenuated, and many Europeans regard Russia as an existential threat. Thus, "Managing European relations with Russia will require significant US diplomatic engagement, both to reestablish conditions of strategic stability across the Eurasian landmass, and to mitigate the risk of conflict between Russia and European states." It is ironic that Trump stands accused of similar charges: Press censorship, undermining political liberty, and playing a love-hate game with Russia's Vladimir Putin. Trump's "America First" diplomacy seeks to "rebalance global trade relationships," as the NSS claims. "We have made clear to our allies that America's current account deficit is unsustainable. We must encourage Europe, Japan, Korea, Australia, Canada, Mexico, and other prominent nations in adopting trade policies that help rebalance China's economy toward household consumption, because Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East cannot alone absorb China's enormous excess capacity." Hence, America must sell more to the rest of the world, which needs to buy less from China, and other competitors. In effect, Monroe is now Donroe.

When the PM went to Church

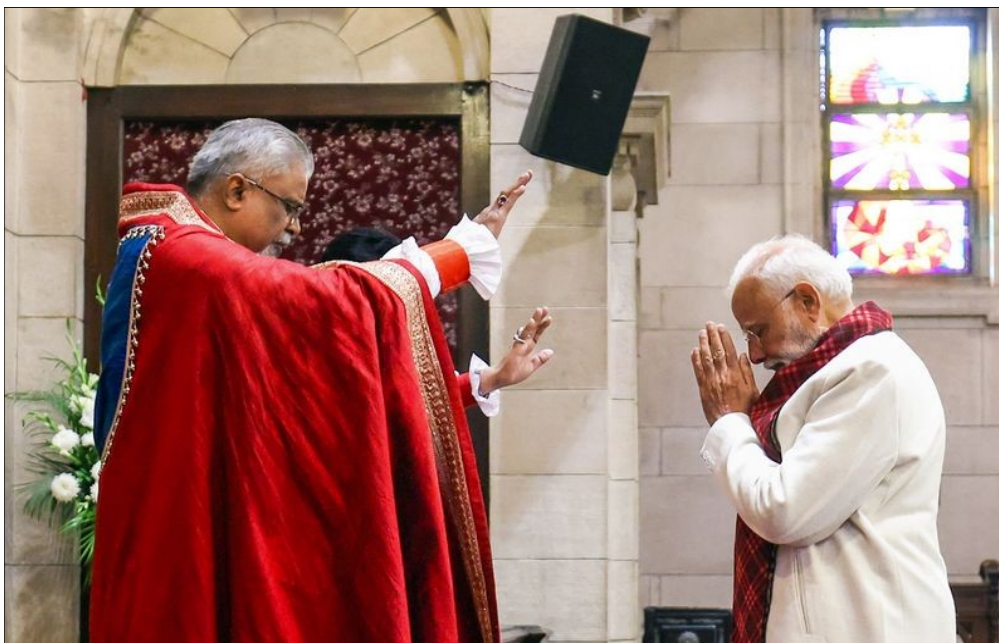
PRIME Minister Narendra Modi went to church on Christmas, the imposing circa 1931 Cathedral Church of the Redemption located behind Parliament House and Rashtrapati Bhavan — with its fluted arches and delicate domes that “won the heart of Lord Irwin,” its period organ still intact. This is only the second time he has been to church as PM, the first time two years ago, to the Sacred Heart Cathedral at Gole Market in the heart of Delhi. To hear Rt Rev Paul Swarup entreat the Lord, Jesus Christ, sent in the goose-bumps.

“Father we know that those who you call, you also equip. And we know Lord that you have called him for this important task of leading our great nation. And so, Father, I pray for a double portion of your discernment, your understanding, that he would lead this nation on the path of truth, of justice, of righteousness...” the high priest said.

Let’s take a moment to understand what the Bishop may be referring to. The year began with the United Christian Forum releasing a statement saying it had recorded 834 acts of violence and intimidation against Christians in India in 2024, up from 127 incidents in 2014. When the press asked the Bishop whether he would raise this issue with the PM, the Bishop said this was not the right time to do it. Certainly, India’s Christians are hoping the PM’s presence in church will send the message down the line that the time to stop violence against innocent people is now.

From Delhi, the PM went to Lucknow, to inaugurate ‘Prerna Sthal,’ a park with several statues, among them that of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. On his birthday in 2014, the Modi government had announced that December 25th would henceforth be called “Good Governance Day,” and that Christmas would no longer be a national holiday. With Modi in church, hopefully that means that both are possible. That you can now celebrate both Christmas and Good Governance.

December 25 was also this week celebrated as Tulsi Pujan Diwas by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad in front of the 160-year-old church in Hisar, in Haryana, and the administration ensured that 300 or so cops were standing watch, just in case. At the VIP ‘havan,’ one man wore a jacket on which was emblazoned the Italian designer’s name BALENCIAGA, but maybe that didn’t matter because right-wing target practice is



aimed at the English who subjugated India, not Italians.

Never mind that irony missed a beat in Hisar. It’s fascinating to note that its St Thomas Church is much older than Delhi’s Cathedral which the PM visited on Christmas — built in 1864 in the name of one of the 12 apostles of Jesus Christ who arrived on his dhow to spread the word back in 52 AD in Kerala. Why, then, was far-away Hisar picked to memorialise St Thomas 1800 years later? It’s not clear, except that by 1864, we know the Mutiny has been won by the British Raj, their hold over northern India is far more tight and the tiny Christian community needs a church.

Of course, Hisar has over the cen-

turies already grown in importance as a waystation for all those seeking their fortunes in India. Babur awarded his son, Humayun, the town of Hisar when he defeated Hamid Khan, en route to the decisive battle of Panipat in 1556. With Ibrahim Lodi out of the way, Babur was now the newest King of Hindustan. This last week of the year is a good time to learn from history. Muslims fought Muslims, while Hindus fought both independently as well as key generals in the armies of men with other religious beliefs. Power flowed from the barrel of the gun and proximity to the ruler, not so much the religious practice you avowed.

Fast forward now to the “what’s in a

name argument” this week, playing out in the tension between the Akal Takht, the highest temporal seat in Sikhism, and the Centre over the naming of December 26 as “Veer Bal Diwas” —

the two youngest sons of Guru Gobind Singh were bricked alive by the cruel Aurangzeb’s cruelest satrap Wazir Khan in Sirhind on this day in 1704.

The Akal Takht believes the day should be called “Sahibzade Shahadat Diwas,” as the martyrdom of the two boys makes them heroes across time — they are not just “bal,” children, or young boys. Sikh MPs have been told to raise the matter with the Centre, and a meeting of the Sikh clergy is being called.

Now the PM first called for the observance of “Veer Bal Diwas” on January 9, 2022, which is the “prakash purb” or birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh — a mere six weeks after the Centre was forced to withdraw Punjab’s farm laws on November 21, 2021. This “never say die” pattern continues even today. Weeks after the Punjab University fiasco and the attempt to institute greater control over the Union Territory of Chandigarh — both by the BJP, both of which had to be withdrawn within days — an unfazed party continues to woo Punjabi voters. The institutionalisation of the PM’s “Veer Bal Diwas” is one example; Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh

Saini’s repeated raids into Punjab and speaking on Punjabi issues, while wearing a turban, is another. Clearly, the signalling is in top gear, aimed at the Assembly elections scheduled 14 months from now. Certainly, the coming year will be long, hard and new, as the fight for the “idea of India” continues apace. Certainly, too, the fight is not confined to politics and political parties who strive to enhance influence. In the age of AI, how does the anti-Westernisation argument manifest in your homes — is it relevant at all? More to the point, is anyone listening? Perhaps, that’s why Matru Pitru Poojan Diwas, which strove to be an indigenous alternative to Valentine’s Day, bombed so miserably.

Will G-Ram-G serve the poor better than MGNREGA

Farmers dying by suicide, migration from rural to urban areas, jobless growth in the 1990s and stagnation and decline in agricultural productivity were the distress signals which led to enactment of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in 2005. The Rajasthan chapter of People’s Union for Civil Liberties, India’s largest human rights organisation, filed a Public Interest litigation on similar issues in mid-2001. The petition put forward that the right to life, a fundamental right under the Indian Constitution, has been recognised inclusive of the right to live with dignity, including the right to food.

MGNREGA is based on the experiences of many previously designed and implemented rural development employment-oriented schemes and wage employment programmes in the past five years plans.

The draft of the legislation was largely based on the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act, 1977, undoubtedly, one of the most progressive and purposive legislations to guarantee work and wages to the rural work force, in particular, the poor farmers and landless labourers. Poverty is a state of deprivation. In absolute terms, it reflects the inability of an individual to satisfy certain basic minimum needs for a sustained, healthy and reasonably productive living. This inability has a social, cultural, political and a physiological dimension. This scheme helped in achieving three SDG goals — poverty eradication, environment protection and woman empowerment.

The government always has machinery; it only needs the will and vision to identify the problem and act accordingly. Does the repealing of MGNREGA to V-B-G-RAM-G and joining it wrongly with the Livelihood Mission, give us a better tool to serve the deprived lot? G-RAM-G is not a better scheme as it further imposes cuts on taking up work during 60 days of harvesting



period. Are the persons employed in MGNREG scheme land owners?

Section 4(5) of V-B-G-RAM G makes the scheme fund allocation-based, making it dependent on Delhi. Section 4(6) states that any rural employment scheme designed, must follow the norms laid by G-RAM-G, otherwise no funds will be sanctioned by the Centre.

Section 5(1) bars universal applicability of the G-RAM-G scheme in the country. The area of operation shall be notified by the Central government. Section 22(2) authors fiscal strangulation of states by introducing 60-40 funding ratio. V-B-G-RAM-G kills the spirit and structure of a beautiful piece of legislation commended worldwide. It is an example of strong centralisation of the process masquerading in the shape of a Bill like all propaganda and fake narratives of the government.

Does it imply labour control disguised as labour employment? All India rural female Labour Force Participation Rate increased from 24.6% in 2017-18 to 47.6% in year 2023-24, thanks to MGNREGA scheme. MGNREGA’s death has killed the hope to survive in difficult days.

THE Modi government has pushed through Parliament the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill, 2025 (the G-RAM-G Bill) to replace the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA). One thing that the G-RAM-G Bill clearly achieves is the dismantling of the MGNREGA job guarantee. The primary rationale for the G-RAM-G Bill is the cocktail of a name, using completely unrelated notions of Viksit Bharat and Aajeevika Mission to give it a religious colour. The G-RAM-G Bill disturbs India’s fiscal federalism

and constitutional scheme of things by trading job guarantee for a vote-catching name.

The Bill raises several questions. What does the G-RAM-G Bill have to do with Viksit Bharat and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin)? Is it diluting the employment guarantee or effectively dismantling it? What are the implications of the Central government reducing its obligations in funding guarantee expenditure and shifting it to the states? Does the centralisation of authority in the Central government and the shifting of responsibility to states sound the death knell for federal polity? The G-RAM-G Bill mandates states to compulsorily notify “Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin): V-B-G-RAM-G Scheme” and use the same nomenclature in all documents. The full name is unwieldy and may not be understood in non-Hindi

speaking states. No one understands what Viksit Bharat is; its roadmap has been languishing at NITI Aayog for years. The G-RAM-G Bill only offers poverty-line wage income for only 3-4 months to unskilled workers. Such a low wage safety-valve job programme cannot be equated with the vision of Viksit Bharat. The G-RAM-G Bill has nothing to do with Aajeevika Mission, a separate Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS), either. The Modi government has only displayed unimaginativeness by including Viksit Bharat and Aajeevika Mission in the name of the G-RAM-G Bill. The standout feature of the MGNREGA Act was the demand-based guarantee of 100 days’ work to every rural household throughout the year. The G-RAM-G Bill dilutes it massively, while nominally raising it to 125 days. The G-RAM-G guarantee will not be available dur-

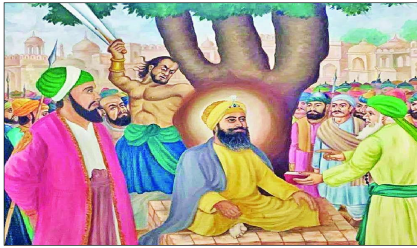
ing at least a 60-day period every year, which all states will have to notify as “peak agricultural seasons of sowing and harvesting” in advance.

During periods of natural calamities, unemployment stress deepens even during agricultural seasons. Even in such distressing times, the state governments would have to seek “specific relaxations”, which the Centre may or may not grant or make it subject to conditions. The states/ panchayats will no longer be able to provide work by creating local labour-intensive works, as all G-RAM-G works will have to be aligned to the “national vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.” Further, as the G-RAM-G guarantee will have to operate within the normative budget allocated to states by the Central government, the guarantee may have to be suspended even during non-peak periods. The MGNREGA guarantee is substantially gone. The MGNREGA guarantee was a credible national guarantee only because it was backed by the Centre’s commitment to bear 100% wage expenditure.

The Central government would now foot only 60% of the wages bill, that too, if it is within the state-specific normative allocation. The Central share for the material component has been reduced from 75% to 60%. All expenditures over what the Centre chooses to bear are a state government’s responsibility. 100% liability of unemployment allowance, in any case, remains that of the state governments.

The Central government will also have the right “to order stoppage of release of funds” and “institute appropriate remedial measures” in case it receives complaints. This can be easily weaponised to penalise the opposition states, as seen in the suspension of MGNREGA funds to West Bengal over the last three years. There is certainly a major misalignment of the Central government’s offer of a political guarantee of 125 days’ job and its financial obligation to fund it.

The harbinger of freedom of conscience in India



Long before constitutional guarantees or modern rights charters, India witnessed a defining assertion of freedom of conscience. It came not from a monarch, parliament or court, but from the scaffold at Delhi's Chandni Chowk on 24 November 1675, when Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, chose martyrdom to defend the right of Hindus to practice their faith. Born in 1621 in Amritsar, Guru Tegh Bahadur was a saint, poet, warrior and thinker whose 115 hymns in the Guru Granth Sahib emphasise detachment, fearlessness, compassion and the sovereignty of the human soul. His life and writings prepared a society to confront intolerance with moral courage.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom, often remembered for its religious greatness, also deserves recognition as a foundational chapter in India's political evolution. It was the earliest and clearest assertion in Indian history that the conscience of an individual is sovereign, that even the mightiest empire cannot command belief, and that the defence of faith includes the defence of another's freedom to worship differently. It was a rebellion not of armies but of spirit, not for territory but for moral principle, and in many ways it marked the moral beginning of India's long journey towards freedom of faith, pluralism and civic dignity.

To appreciate the magnitude of the Guru's stand, one must recall the climate of Aurangzeb's reign, which began in 1658 and grew increasingly dogmatic. In the 1670s, when his campaign of forced conversions spread terror across parts of the Mughal Empire, the blow fell most brutally on the Kashmiri Pandits.

Their temples were desecrated, their religious practices prohibited, and their leaders threatened with death unless they embraced Islam. Desperate and distraught, a delegation of Kashmiri Pandits travelled to Anandpur Sahib to seek Guru Tegh Bahadur's intervention. They approached him not as the chief of a sect but as a moral guardian of the vulnerable. They saw in him someone who could protect dharma in the highest sense - the right to faith, to worship and to live with dignity. That they turned to a Sikh Guru rather than to a Hindu king or a rival army is itself telling. It reflected the moral authority the Guru commanded across communities.

By this time, Sikhism had a distinct and firmly rooted identity, built on equality, service and the rejection of dogma and caste barriers. Yet Guru Tegh Bahadur's vision transcended the boundaries of his own tradition. He responded to the Pandits not as the representative of a community defending its own, but as the custodian of a universal principle. He affirmed that faith cannot be coerced and conscience cannot be subjugated, and that the protection of another's belief is as sacred a duty as the protection of one's own.

When the Guru observed that religious persecution unleashed by Aurangzeb could be confronted only through sacrifice by an exalted soul, his nine-year-old son Gobind Rai, later Guru Gobind Singh, answered with clarity that there was no spiritually exalted soul greater than his father. Guru Tegh Bahadur understood instantly that the sacrifice had to be his. He did not negotiate, raise an army or propose retaliation. Instead, he offered himself as the solitary challenger to imperial coercion. This willingness to embrace martyrdom for the religious freedom of others is unique in world history. It was an act of absolute moral courage, for it sought no victory except the triumph of a principle.

The Guru was arrested at Agra, imprisoned at Delhi's Red Fort, tortured and repeatedly asked to embrace Islam. He refused every inducement and threat. When persuasion failed, the Mughal court killed his Sikh companions, one by one, to break his resolve. Inspired by the Guru's leadership and true to his teachings, his Sikhs cast away fear and embraced death with unshakable faith. Bhai Mati Das was sawn alive; Bhai Das was wrapped in cotton, smeared with oil and burned; and Bhai Dayal Das was boiled to death in a cauldron. None renounced their faith or abandoned their Guru.

Their courage elevated martyrdom from religious testimony to moral protest, asserting the dignity of human conscience against the weight of imperial power. The Guru was beheaded on 24 November 1675 in full public view where the Shishganj is located in Delhi today. What followed after the beheading was no less heroic. Bhai Jaita, later known as Bhai

Jivan Singh, carried the Guru's severed head from Delhi to Anandpur Sahib, evading capture with remarkable ingenuity.

Lakhi Shah Banjar, a cart driver, placed the Guru's body in his cart, took it home and set his own house on fire to perform the cremation, since open cremation was forbidden. These men came from different castes and backgrounds - Arora, Brahmin, Khatri, Lubana - yet in that moment of crisis they stood united in devotion and purpose. They demonstrated that in the Guru's path caste dissolves, and the humblest individual can rise to unforgettable greatness. The Guru's martyrdom did not end with his death. It sowed the seeds of spiritual resistance that later flowed into the Khalsa under Guru Gobind Singh. The Khalsa was not merely a religious brotherhood but a disciplined community committed to justice, equality, fearlessness and service. Over the following centuries, this spirit shaped Sikh history and the history of India. Banda Singh Bahadur dismantled the Mughal regime in Sirhind and asserted the dignity of peasants. The Sikh misls challenged Mughal and Afghan dominance. Maharaja Ranjit Singh built a plural, inclusive kingdom admired even by his adversaries. The Singh Sabha reformers revived the Panth's intellectual and social foundations. Kartar Singh Sarabha, Bhagat Singh and Udhham Singh carried the torch of freedom into the modern age. Sikh soldiers serving India after independence inherited the same legacy of courage, discipline and sacrifice.

The moral stamina that sustained India's freedom, integrity and civic courage can trace its origin to the moment when Guru Tegh Bahadur offered his life at Chandni Chowk. The principles for which he died were so universal that they resonate beyond the borders of India.

The United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirm that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion - a right Guru Tegh Bahadur defended with his life nearly three centuries before the world formally recognised it. His stand anticipates, and in many ways prefigures, the modern global consensus on the sanctity of conscience. That a seventeenth-century Indian spiritual leader articulated this principle at the cost of his life is a tribute both to him and to the civilisational ethos he embodied.

As India marks 350 years of this martyrdom, the question is not only how we remember Guru Tegh Bahadur, but how we inherit him. His legacy urges us to uphold truth without fear, protect the vulnerable without hesitation and guard the sovereignty of conscience without compromise.

It challenges us to build a society where freedom of belief is not merely tolerated but cherished as a civilisational value. His martyrdom remains an expression of India's pluralistic ethos - that the true measure of a nation lies in how it protects the moral freedom of its people.

The author is a retired IAS officer; views are personal

Why dairy is India's most inclusive economic revolution

The modern chapter of India's dairy journey begins not with a single scheme but with a quiet shift in rural imagination, when millions of small farmers started organising themselves in pursuit of dignity, voice and fairer economic terms. What followed through the 1970s was a national mobilisation that transformed milk from a household activity into a pathway for rural renewal. It is fitting that National Milk Day honours Dr Verghese Kurien, whose conviction placed farmers at the heart of this transformation and whose legacy continues to shape the sector even as its challenges grow more complex. From producing barely 23 million tonnes of milk in 1970, India today produces more than 239 million tonnes (2023-24). Per capita availability has risen from 130 grams per person per day in 1950-51 to 471 grams today. These achievements reflect patient institution-building and the everyday labour of farmers who turned dairying into a stabilising force in rural life. For many households, milk income is not just a livelihood; it is liquidity, security and a steady anchor in uncertain agricultural environments.

Despite its scale, the sector is constrained by a cluster of structural weaknesses that threaten its long-term viability. Per-animal productivity remains low, making dairying economically unviable for many small farmers already burdened by rising feed costs and shrinking fodder land. Cooperative penetration is uneven, leaving millions of producers dependent on informal buyers and vulnerable to opaque pricing. India still lacks a national-level support system for small dairy farmers, strengthening the case for an MSP for milk to ensure predictable incomes in a perishable commodity economy. Quality concerns-including antibiotic residues, inconsistent veterinary oversight and the persistent challenge of Foot and Mouth Disease-undermine both domestic safety and export potential. These pressures have already pushed many young farmers to reconsider dairying, revealing a sector in urgent need of reform if it is to retain its social and economic centrality.

At the same time, the social depth of dairy remains striking. The sector supports more than eight crore farmers and contributes close to five per cent of the national economy. Its value exceeds '11.6 lakh crore-greater than the combined output of paddy and wheat. More than 48,000 women-led cooperatives attest to the



steady expansion of women's economic participation. Milk income sustains households when crops fail, credit is scarce and employment is seasonal. Few sectors distribute opportunity as widely or as intimately as dairying.

To secure the future, India must move from volume to value, from fragmented transactions to integrated supply chains, and from dependence on raw milk sales to a diversified basket of high-value products. Investments in chilling infrastructure, scientific processing, robust cold chains and innovation in cheese, whey, nutrition products and long-shelf-life items can convert India's milk wealth into real economic strength. Policy vision must now focus on institutional structures that protect farmers, encourage value addition and create clear pathways for small producers to climb up the value chain.

Environmental pressures sharpen the need for reform. As climate variability reshapes fodder availability and disease patterns, India will have to invest in climate-resilient breeds, sustainable feed systems and integrated biogas models. Productivity gains, ecological prudence and animal health must advance together if the sector is to remain viable.

National Milk Day is therefore not only a tribute to past achievements; it is an invitation to reimagine the future with clarity and courage. The dairy sector has grown in scale. It must now grow in fairness, sustainability and institutional depth. India carries the moral legacy of Dr Kurien and the entrepreneurial energy of millions of farmers. The foundations are strong. What remains is the collective resolve to ensure that the world's largest milk producer becomes the world's most inclusive and future-ready dairy powerhouse.

The writer is a public policy professional with years of experience working across key ministries of the Government of India; views are personal

AYUSH in Uttarakhand: A transformative journey towards global wellness leadership

Uttarakhand, the land of ancient sages and timeless spiritual traditions, has always been synonymous with Ayurveda, Yoga, and natural healing. Over the past two decades, the State has worked consistently to revitalise this heritage and translate it into a modern, people-centric, and growth-oriented wellness ecosystem.

Today, AYUSH has emerged as one of the most rapidly advancing sectors in Uttarakhand, with measurable progress in public health outreach, institutional expansion, quality assurance, wellness tourism, and global engagement. As the State steps into a new era with India's first Yoga Policy 2025, Uttarakhand is poised to establish itself as the Global Capital of Yoga and Wellness. A Statewide Transformation

Over the last 25 years, the AYUSH Department of Uttarakhand has expanded its presence across the length and breadth of the State. Today, 546 Government Ayurvedic hospitals, 111 Government Homoeopathy hospitals, and five Unani hospitals are functioning, supported by 190 AYUSH wings in CHCs/PHCs, 26 AYUSH wings in District Hospitals, and 90 wings in Additional PHCs. These facilities serve as the backbone of preventive and promotive healthcare, especially in rural and mountainous areas.

A remarkable achievement is the establishment of 300 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAM), of which 149 have already secured NABH accreditation-reflecting Uttarakhand's commitment



to quality and transparency in healthcare delivery. Simultaneously, the State is rapidly diversifying specialised care. Thirty-eight Panchakarma units are already functional, with 112 new units under development. The construction of 50 bed Integrated AYUSH Hospitals in Tanakpur, Koidwar, and Jakhnihar along with the operational hospital in Tehriwan-marks a major step towards integrative healthcare.

Uttarakhand has developed a strong cadre of AYUSH professionals. Under the Panchakarma Bhartiya Chikitsa Parishad, 5,491 Ayurvedic physicians, 201 Unani physicians, 10 Siddha physicians, 18 Naturopathy and Yoga physicians, 3,890 Ayurvedic pharmacists, and more than 1,700 Panchakarma assistants/technicians are registered in the State.

The Uttarakhand Ayurved University, with its 23 affiliated colleges, continues to advance education and research in Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Unani, and Yoga. More than 25 paramedical colleges support AYUSH paramedical education.

Community Outreach. Public awareness and community participation form the foundation of Uttarakhand's AYUSH initiatives. Programmes such as Poshan Abhiyaan, TB Mukh Abhiyaan, Swasthya Nari Shashakta Parivar, women-centric outreach campaigns like Sadhna, and school-based health interventions such as Ayurveda have significantly increased public engagement with Yoga, Ayurveda, and preventive healthcare. More than 8,900 schools have been covered under the Ayurveda programme in the last two years, reaching over five lakh students. Maternal

wellness initiatives have also shown strong results, with more than 3,000 pregnant women benefiting from Supraja programmes run at Ayurveda University campuses. Harnessing Technology The State has begun integrating AI-based digital tools, modern diagnostic equipment, and telemedicine into AYUSH systems. RADAR software in 71 Homoeopathic hospitals, upgraded Panchakarma units, AI-based ECG machines, improved laboratory services, and tele-consultations like Sadhna have significantly modernised traditional care delivery.

The upcoming Uttarakhand Wellness Portal will integrate registration, standardisation, rating systems, and service access for all wellness centres, Yoga institutions, and AYUSH service providers-positioning the State as a digitally empowered wellness hub. In 2025,

Uttarakhand became the first Indian State to launch a comprehensive Yoga Policy to emerge as the world's foremost Yoga destination.

Key Highlights of the Policy n Creation of Yoga Hubs: Rishikesh, Jageshwar, Mukteshwar, Tehri Lake, the Milam-Johar Valley, and other serene regions are being developed as specialised Yoga Hubs.

Financial Incentives for Yoga Centres: Up to 20 lakh subsidy in hill regions and '10 lakh in plains for establishing new Yoga or meditation centres. Grants up to '10 lakh per project for research in Yoga, meditation and natural therapies. Preference for Yoga Certification Board (YCB)-certified trainers. Expanding Yoga Tourism: International summits, global partnerships, outreach campaigns, and tourism collaborations will promote

Uttarakhand as the Yoga Tourism Capital of the World. Directorate of Yoga & Naturopathy: A dedicated Directorate will regulate institutions, monitor standards, and lead national and international collaborations. Towards a Global Wellness Destination: Uttarakhand's long-term roadmap presents a bold, structured vision: 100 per cent Infrastructure Strengthening: Every Government AYUSH hospital will be upgraded over the next decade, with complete NABH certification. Panchakarma and IPD Yoga Facilities: Each district will have 10-50 bed IPD-based AYUSH hospitals blending Yoga therapy.

Holistic Wellness Destinations (HWDs): Model destinations are planned in Jageshwar, Rairath, Mukteshwar, Dunagiri, and Tehri, offering: Eco-stays and traditional cuisine Yoga and meditation caves Nature therapies (forest bathing etc) Panchakarma and Marma healing Cultural experiences, including Jagars and folk storytelling Arogya/Wellness Stays Satvik kitchens, personalised wellness itineraries, Dinacharya kits, Yoga Nidra sessions, and tele-Prakti screening for tourists. Wellness in Adventure & Sports Tourism Integration of Marma therapy, Tail Dhara, recovery protocols, and Satvik nutrition for marathons, treks, and other events. State-Level Training and Excellence Centres. Plans

include A State-level Modern AYUSH Training Institute A proposed All India Institute of AYUSH in Uttarakhand Two Centres of Excellence in every district Wellness Education in Schools structured Yoga curriculum, regular wellness events, and mindfulness modules for students and teachers. Investment Momentum The private wellness ecosystem is thriving, with 58 registered private wellness centres and 27 new projects in the pipeline. Policies such as the Recent roadshows, including those in Japan and ASEAN countries, have generated strong interest in wellness tourism, the herbal industry, and training institutes. Towards Global Leadership Uttarakhand's AYUSH momentum is not merely a sectoral achievement-it is a civilisational revival aligned with modern aspirations. The integration of Yoga, Ayurveda, Naturopathy, wellness tourism, research, and digital reforms reflects a holistic model that unites heritage with innovation. With India's first Yoga Policy, world-class AYUSH infrastructure, rapidly expanding wellness hubs, and a new generation of skilled professionals, Uttarakhand is on course to become the Global Hub of Yoga, Wellness, and Holistic Health.

The author is Secretary, AYUSH and AYUSH Education, Secretariat Administration, Government of Uttarakhand; views are personal

'Can't be brushed aside': India on Bangladesh attacks

NEW DELHI: India on Friday expressed grave concern at the "unrelenting hostility" against minority communities in Bangladesh and reiterated its call for those responsible for the lynching of a Hindu man named Dipu Chandra Das to be brought to justice, reflecting fresh tensions created by anti-India rhetoric from the neighbouring country.

India-Bangladesh relations have cratered since the creation of the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus in August 2024, and tensions have flared up in recent days after protests in Bangladesh over the killing of radical student leader Sharif Osman Hadi took on an anti-India hue. Both sides have called in each other's envoys to the foreign ministry to lodge formal protests over developments that have impacted bilateral ties.

"The unremitting hostility against minorities in Bangladesh, including Hindus, Christians and Buddhists, at the hands of extremists is a matter of grave concern. We condemn the recent gruesome killing of a Hindu youth in Mymensingh and expect that the perpetrators of the crime would be brought to justice," external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told a weekly media briefing. He was referring to the December 18 lynching of Das, who was beaten to death by a mob after being accused of blasphemy. The body of the 25-year-old Hindu garment factory worker was tied to a tree and burnt.

The spiralling tensions came ahead of planned national elections in Bangladesh scheduled in February. Jaiswal replied to another question about the killing of a Hindu member of a criminal gang by a mob in Rajbari on Wednesday by saying that India's position on the security of minorities in Bangladesh was well known. Jaiswal noted that more than 2,900 incidents of violence against minorities, including cases of killings, arson and land grab, were documented by independent sources during the tenure of the interim government in Dhaka. "These incidents cannot be brushed aside as mere media exaggerations or dismissed as political violence," he said.

Bangladesh's interim government has often rejected India's criticism of attacks on minorities by describing them as exaggerated media reports or cases of political violence directed against members of the Awami



League, the party of former premier Sheikh Hasina, who is currently in self-exile in India. Jaiswal referred to instances of anti-India rhetoric witnessed in recent days during protests across Bangladesh over the murder of Hadi, whose killers are yet to be traced by law enforcement, and said: "We have rejected the false narrative that has been projected in Bangladesh."

Several Bangladeshi student leaders and politicians had claimed, without furnishing evidence, that Hadi's killers had sneaked into India before police officials said they didn't know the whereabouts of the assassins.

The law and order and security situation in Bangladesh is "the responsibility of the government of Bangladesh and to portray a narrative where things go in some other direction is completely false and we reject that", Jaiswal said.

Jaiswal responded to another question on the return to Dhaka of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leader Tarique Rahman after 17 years in self-exile in the UK by saying that this development should be seen in the context of India's call for free, fair and inclusive elections in the neighbouring country. "India stands for strengthening our ties with the people of Bangladesh. We want peace and stability in Bangladesh and we stand for free, fair, inclusive and participatory elections in Bangladesh, which [has] to be held in a peaceful atmosphere," he said.

Asked about the interim government's ban on the activities of the Awami

League, which has barred the party from taking part in the general election to be held on February 12, Jaiswal said: "India stands for free, fair and inclusive elections in Bangladesh. Obviously, that means all the elements, all the persuasions who are there, should participate in that."

Over the past week, protests have rocked both countries as India and Bangladesh brought in each other's envoys to lodge protests. On Wednesday, Indian high commissioner Pranay Verma was summoned to the foreign ministry in Dhaka by foreign secretary Asad Alam Siam to protest against "regrettable incidents" outside the Bangladesh high commission in New Delhi and vandalism at a visa centre in Siliguri. Hours later, Bangladesh high commissioner Riaz Hamidullah was called in by B Shyam, the joint secretary heading the external affairs ministry's Bangladesh-Myanmar division, and informed of the need for a proper investigation into the recent killing of Hadi.

This was the second time in 10 days Verma was summoned in Dhaka, while Hamidullah was summoned to the external affairs ministry last week over the deteriorating security situation in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has suspended visa services at its missions in New Delhi and Agartala and at the centre in Siliguri, while India has suspended services only at the mission in Chittagong. Yunus has expressed "profound sorrow" over the killing of Das and extended condolences to his family.

S Ramadoss warns son against using party name; Anbumani expels GK Mani

NEW DELHI: Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) founder S Ramadoss on Friday issued a legal notice to his son Anbumani Ramadoss warning him from using PMK's name, flag, and symbol. With months to go for the 2026 assembly elections in Tamil Nadu, he also urged political parties, and individuals not to agree to any political arrangements or alliances with Anbumani.

Anbumani had "no legal authority" to act on behalf of the PMK and he cannot claim to be the party president or represent the party in any capacity, the notice published in newspapers said. Any such attempt to project control over the PMK by using its name would amount to "an illegal political act" aimed at misleading the public, the senior Ramadoss warned. Meanwhile, Anbumani on Friday expelled GK Mani, an MLA and Anbumani party leader who is a lieutenant to his father S Ramadoss, escalating the family feud in the PMK, an ally of the NDA. Since 1998, Mani has held a position as party president for 25 years. "Since Mani did not respond nor explain why he indulged in anti-party activities to a letter sent on



December 18 and the deadline for ending his clarification expired yesterday the disciplinary committee is removing him from the primary membership of the party," said a statement from the PMK. Accepting the recommendation, Anbumani announced Mani's expulsion too. Amid the internal fight, the Election Commission of India in November rejected senior Ramadoss' claims of being the party president of the party and stated that Anbumani is the president of PMK until August 1, 2026, as per their records.

Over the decades, PMK has swung between the ruling DMK and opposition AIADMK. When the AIADMK left the BJP in 2023 before patching up this April, those in the NDA including PMK stayed with the BJP with the DMK (Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam) taking the AIADMK's side. During the flare up with his son, Ramadoss earlier in May said he wanted to align with the AIADMK but Anbumani insisted that they remain with the BJP.

KTR slams Telangana CM Revanth Reddy over 'abusive language', questions 'unfulfilled' Congress promises

HYDERABAD: Bharat Bhaskar Samadhi Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) on Friday came down heavily on Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy for what he termed as his "repeated use of abusive, uncivilised and irresponsible language" and for making derogatory remarks against BRS President and former Chief Minister K Chandrababhu Naidu (KCR).

According to a BRS release, speaking at Telangana Bhavan during a meeting organised to welcome leaders from the Serlingampally Assembly constituency, KTR said that Revanth Reddy's conduct has diminished the dignity of the Chief Minister's constitutional office and exposed his inability to answer serious public questions.



KTR said the Chief Minister has resorted to foul language only because he has no answers to the direct pointed questions raised by KCR. "KCR asked simple and straightforward questions. Why has the Palamuru Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Project been stalled? Even after the Central Government returned the DPR months ago, why has it

not been resubmitted? When nearly 90 per cent of the work is already complete, why the government unwilling to spend a little more and ensure water to Palamuru farmers?" he asked. Unable to respond to these questions with facts, KTR alleged, Revanth Reddy is indulging in abusive rhetoric and personal attacks. "This is not leadership. This

is frustration," he remarked.

KTR further said that when KCR questioned the silence of Congress and BJP MPs in Delhi over the injustice being done to Telangana in Krishna river water allocations, the Chief Minister panicked. "Instead of fighting for Telangana's rights, he chose to divert public attention by abusing the opposition," he said.

Raising the issue of unfulfilled Congress promises, KTR asked, "What happened to the six guarantee? Where is the 74,000 monthly pension, the tola of gold, the 72,500 promised to women, and the assurances that were supposed to be implemented within 100 days? Two years have passed. Why has nothing been delivered?" he questioned.

CBI approaches SC against Delhi HC's Unnao rape case ruling amid criticism

NEW DELHI: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Friday filed a special leave petition in the Supreme Court, challenging the Delhi high court order to suspend the sentence of expelled Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Kuldeep Singh Sengar in the Unnao rape case. The agency officials said they have a strong case against the accused. "CBI vs Kuldeep Singh Sengar, special leave petition filed on Friday before the Supreme Court against the orders of Delhi high court which suspended the sentence and granted bail to accused KS Sengar in Unnao rape case," the CBI spokesperson said. "It may be recalled that KS Sengar was sentenced to life imprisonment with a fine of ₹25 lakh in December 2019. He filed an appeal against the conviction before the Delhi HC in



January 2020 and a petition for suspension of sentence in March 2022. This petition was vehemently opposed by CBI and the victim," the spokesperson said. The Delhi HC on December 23 ordered suspension of Sengar's sentence pending disposal of the appeal and granted him bail with certain conditions. However, Sengar remains in jail as he had also been sentenced for 10 years in a murder case. Without going into the specifics, an officer who

didn't want to be named said the Supreme Court has been apprised that the high court erred in suspending the sentence as the rape survivor's testimony and evidence collected by the agency had conclusively established Sengar's role based on which the trial court had convicted him in December 2019. "In a rape case, survivor's testimony is considered most important. It cannot be ignored. The survivor in this case 'stood by' her statement throughout," this officer said.

Woman's husband and son stalked, firing at home: 5 revelations in Gurugram nightclub shooting

NEW DELHI: New details have emerged in the case of a woman who was allegedly shot inside a Gurugram club by a man following the rejection of his marriage proposal. The man accused of firing at the woman dancer inside the MG Road nightclub had allegedly tried to kill her husband weeks earlier. The main accused, Tushar Choudhary alias Jonny continued to stalk and threaten the victim's family despite repeated pleas. Police on Friday said the accused's actions show a pattern of harassment that escalated into violence.

Fired shots at victim's home The 25-year-old accused had opened fire at the victim's house late on the night of November 19, around 12:30-1 am, police said. One of the bullets struck the main entrance of the house. Although the dancer Kalpana (25) and her husband Rocky (30) were inside, neither was injured, investigators added. Rocky said his wife had told him about Tushar earlier but was scared to completely cut off contact



because of repeated threats.

"After the firing at our house and me Kalpana even approached Tushar's parents and pleaded with them to make him understand that she was married and had a family. They assured her they would intervene, but nothing changed," he said. Husband narrowly escaped murder attempt The threat did not end there. The following morning, police said

Tushar and his associate Shubham alias Jonny (24) allegedly followed Rocky as he rode his motorcycle to drop his six-year-old son at school. Rocky reportedly ducked when shots were fired and managed to escape unhurt. He alerted the police immediately, but no arrest was made at that time. Rejected marriage proposal Kalpana worked as a dancer at Club 18 inside Vipul Agora Mall in Sector 28 on MG Road. According to

police, Tushar, a regular at the club, befriended her around eight months ago.

Trouble began after she rejected his marriage proposal, following which he allegedly started harassing and threatening her and her family. Shot inside nightclub

As reported by HT earlier, on the night of December 19, Tushar and Shubham allegedly travelled from Sangam Vihar in Delhi to meet Kalpana at the club. Police said Tushar spoke to her for over an hour and again proposed marriage. When she refused, he allegedly pulled out a pistol and shot her in the abdomen. The firing took place between 12:30 am and 1 am on December 20, police said.

Kalpana was rushed to a Gurugram hospital where doctors removed the bullet lodged in her body. She is now undergoing treatment at a private hospital near her Delhi residence.

"Doctors told me that a few of her organs were damaged. Her condition is still critical and she is under continuous observation," Rocky said.

Caste groups issue warning to Congress amid Karnataka power tussle

BENGALURU: The Congress leadership is facing intensifying pressure from two major community organisations in Karnataka as the debate over whether Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar should succeed Chief Minister Siddaramaiah enters a more public phase. Leaders from the Vokkaliga community, to which Shivakumar belongs, warned that any attempt to overlook him for the top post would trigger strong opposition, while a prominent backward class federation cautioned that efforts to remove Siddaramaiah would have consequences for the party.

The Karnataka Rajya Vokkaliga Sangha said it would challenge any move by the Congress high command that sidelines Shivakumar. At a press conference, its president L. Srinivas argued that Shivakumar had worked "tirelessly" during

the previous Assembly campaign, travelling across Karnataka and strengthening the organisation, resulting in the party securing 140 seats. Srinivas also claimed there had been an understanding between the leadership and Shivakumar that he would become chief minister after Siddaramaiah's two and a half years in office.

"Siddaramaiah had been the CM for five years during his previous tenure. Now, after completing two and a half years this time, there are doubts about whether he will transfer power to Shivakumar," he said. He added that several ministers and legislators were already making trips to Delhi for clarity.

Support for Shivakumar was also voiced by Nirmalanandanatha Swamiji of the Narmada Mission, a significant spiritual institution for the Vokkaliga. He told reporters that both his personal



view and the larger sentiment within the community favoured Shivakumar becoming chief minister. The seer said he believed the Congress high command would act appropriately, pointing to the deputy chief minister's long service and loyalty to the party. "I am watching

and reading in the media about the developments in the government. The Math is a centre of faith for the Vokkaliga community and has been a voice for other communities as well. On the CM issue, Shivakumar has not spoken to me yet," he said. The seer noted that the

Vokkaliga community has historically produced leaders who have headed governments across multiple parties and played major roles in the state's development. He said that in the 2023 Assembly election, community members had voted with the hope that "one among us would become CM." He added, "There was hope it would happen after 2.5 years, but that too now seems unlikely. If it doesn't happen, it will saddle thousands of devotees of the Math. Calling the uncertainty 'unhealthy for the state,' he said, "Shivakumar should become the CM after 2.5 years -- this is both my opinion and that of the devotees." He urged the Congress leadership to allow Shivakumar, whom he described as having worked "like a disciplined soldier," to serve for the development of the state as previous Vokkaliga chief ministers had done.

As these statements circulated, Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan responded to questions about the community's demand by saying it was expected that Vokkaligas would support Shivakumar "because they are his community," while adding that "the Chief Minister's chair is not empty." Another organisation, the Karnataka State Federation of Backward Class Communities (KSFBCC), issued its own warning -- this time against replacing Siddaramaiah. Its president K M Ramachandrappa said the AHINDA coalition of minorities, backward classes and Dalits was troubled by recent political developments. The Karnataka Rajya Vokkaliga Sangha said it would challenge any move by the Congress high command that sidelines Shivakumar. At a press conference, its president L. Srinivas argued that Shivakumar had worked "tirelessly" during

the previous Assembly campaign, travelling across Karnataka and strengthening the organisation, resulting in the party securing 140 seats. Srinivas also claimed there had been an understanding between the leadership and Shivakumar that he would become chief minister after Siddaramaiah's two and a half years in office.

Ramachandrappa criticised the involvement of religious leaders in the debate and said threats to remove a chief minister were not new. "These threats are not new ones but have been happening for a very long time. Since independence it has been happening. We the downtrodden community will not bow down to these threats," he said. Expressing concern, he added, "Those against the caste census used to say Shivakumar was not a caste minister, we can only assume how they will behave with our communities."

CONTINUATION

Mann Ki Baat: PM Modi recalls India's moments of pride in 2025, hails Operation Sindoor

Initiatives related to environmental protection and wildlife conservation also marked 2025. The number of cheetahs in Bharat has now crossed 30," he said. Mahakumbh left world in surprise, says PM Modi. PM Modi also highlighted the cultural significance of 2025 for India, including the organisation of the Mahakumbh and the hoisting of the flag at the Ram Temple.

"Faith, culture, and Bharat's unique heritage were all seen together in 2025. The organisation of Prayagraj Mahakumbh at the beginning of the year astonished the entire world. At the end of the year, the flag hoisting ceremony at the Ram temple in Ayodhya filled every Indian with pride," he said.

PM Modi to participate in 'Young Leaders' Dialogue' PM Modi said January 12 will be celebrated as National Youth Day to mark the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. He said the 'Young Leaders' Dialogue' will also be organised on that day and he will participate in it, where people can send their ideas.

"Many young people ask me how they can give a presentation of their ideas to me? The solution to this curiosity of young minds is the 'Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue'... On the 12th of next month, 'National Youth Day' will be celebrated on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary. The 'Young Leaders' Dialogue' will also be organised on that day, and I will definitely participate in it as well... I am looking forward to this event," he said.

PM Modi said initiatives to learn Tamil language were launched in several schools in Varanasi during 'Kashi Tamil Sanagamam'. He said youths and children were attracted towards the language.

"This year, during the 'Kashi Tamil Sanagamam' in Varanasi, special emphasis was placed on learning Tamil. Under the theme, 'Learn Tamil-Tamil Karakalam', special campaigns were launched in more than 50 schools in Varanasi... The Tamil language is the oldest language in the world... I am happy that today, in other parts of the country as well, a new attraction toward the Tamil language is visible among the youth and the children. This is the power of language. This is Bharat's unity," he said.

Lieutenant Governor chairs 3rd University Council Meeting of Cluster University of Jammu

of additional credits for sports and cultural activities, revised credit norms for MOOCs and inclusive examination and admission policies were also confirmed. The Lieutenant Governor appreciated the University's reform initiatives and emphasized the need to strengthen academic quality, student welfare and institutional governance. He instructed the University to ensure implementation of the e-office system before the end of June, 2026 and to conduct the University Council meetings after every six months.

The Lieutenant Governor called for increased students' participation in the Viksit Bharat Yuv Connect programme. He also issued directions for encouraging active engagement of students in Nasha Mukta Bharat and Nasha Mukta J&K campaigns.

Prof. K. S. Chandrasekar, Vice-Chancellor, Cluster University of Jammu, made a detailed presentation on the University's administrative, academic, financial, examination and evaluation reforms, student enrolment status and various academic collaborations in research and education.

The meeting was attended by Vice Chancellor University of Kashmir, Prof. Nilofer Khan; Vice-Chancellor, Cluster University Srinagar, Prof. Mohammad Mobin; Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education Department, Shri Shantamnu; Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor, Dr. Mandey K. Bhandari; Provost, SGT University, Prof. Madan Mohan Chaturvedi; Registrar, Cluster University of Jammu, Ms. Ankur Mahajan, other Council members and senior officials...

Two suspected Kashmiri men found begging in UP's Bareilly, detained

staying in a local mosque and had arrived in the city on December 10 and had been staying in the Dhimi village since then, police said.

The detainees also claimed that they were poor and survived by begging, police said, adding that no significant information has emerged so far. Intelligence agencies are also interrogating them, police said, adding that, prima facie, their activities appeared suspicious.

Soon after their detention, the Local Intelligence Unit (LIU) also joined the probe, the SHO said. The photographs and Aadhaar details of the two men have been sent to Jammu and Kashmir Police for verification; the SHO said. Further questioning is underway, officials said.

Need to be more vigilant about threats arising from radicalisation: Union Home Secretary

has discussed very important issues like digital device data, and big data analytics, but most importantly, unmasking digital anonymity," he said.

The home secretary lauded the high 90+ per cent conviction rate delivered by the NIA, and said the Centre's aim was to scale conviction rates across all police forces in the country to the same level. The conference focused on the lessons learnt during investigations, pre-emptive disruptions of terror modules, learnings in various theatres such as left-wing extremism, northeast and various hybrid threats to national security, said the statement issued by the NIA.

The event served as a platform to explore and evaluate the new security threats such as deepfakes and hybrid warfare, and also emphasised the need for digital forensics and data analysis in counter-terrorism investigations, it said.

"Other significant discussions were focused on coun-

tering financing of terrorism, maritime terrorism and illicit trafficking and evolving counter-terrorism jurisprudence," the statement said.

The conference was inaugurated on Friday by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who directed the states to expeditiously implement a uniform Anti-Terror Squad structure to strengthen India's counter-terrorism capabilities.

He emphasised that without the availability of robust, uniform and consistent operational capacity across the country, "we cannot ensure proper use of intelligence and effective coordinated counter-actions". The minister lauded the operational and investigative success of various agencies and state police forces in the two recent terror attack cases of Pahalgalam and the Red Fort blast in Delhi.

"This is the first terrorist incident in which we punished the people who planned the act of terrorism through Operation Sindoor, and the terrorists who carried out the attack were neutralised through Operation Mahadev," Shah said, referring to the April 22 Pahalgalam attack.

He termed the twin action "a strong and decisive response from the government of India, India's security forces, and the people of India to the terrorist masterminds in Pakistan".

Shah stressed the need for all central and state agencies to address international dimensions, such as cyber warfare, hybrid warfare alertness, multi-security layering and free flow of intelligence, the NIA statement said.

On the occasion, the minister paid heartfelt tributes to over 36,000 central armed forces and police personnel across the country who made the supreme sacrifice while performing their duties.

The inaugural day of the conference was attended by the heads of state police, central police organisations and central armed police forces. Over 150 delegates from police forces of several states and Union territories, and central organisations attended the two-day conference.

Comprehensive New Year security plan in place at Vaishno Devi Shrine for successful yatras: IGP Jammu

and response systems.

He said the police are focusing on the convergence of technology for effective crowd and security management. "Whether it is CCTV feeds, RFID systems or wireless connectivity, all inputs are integrated at one place for better management of the yatra," Tuti said. Referring to New Year arrangements, he said enhanced measures have been put in place compared to routine days, with several new initiatives introduced this year.

The IGP said technology-based crowd management, including advanced CCTV data analytics to detect overcrowding and enable timely intervention, which was introduced last year, has been further strengthened.

Chairing the security review meeting, a police spokesman said the IGP Jammu underscored the importance of continuous capacity building and directed the officers to organise regular and structured training programmes for ICCC staff.

He emphasised that optimal utilisation of technology and skilled manpower is essential to enhance operational effectiveness, improve response time and ensure seamless monitoring and coordination. During the visit, the IGP also interacted with probationer Sub-Inspectors, guiding them on contemporary and technology-enabled policing practices.

He laid strong emphasis on the effective use of modern technological tools in investigation to ensure timely, transparent and professional handling of cases, in line with evolving policing requirements, the spokesman said.

Farooq Abdullah justifies, Sadiq criticises: NC split as admin foils reservation protest

should be questioned on demands rather than pushed toward unrest. "Tell those leaders what are they asking for? Our government is doing its best," he said.

He urged youth to remain united and move forward peacefully, highlighting harmony, brotherhood, and friendship.

In contrast, Tanvir Sadiq condemned the detention of student leaders and Rubulalh Mehdi's house arrest, calling the move "deeply troubling" and "unjustified."

He questioned why earlier protests directed at the elected government were allowed while today's peaceful demonstration, related to a pending Cabinet decision at Raj Bhavan, was suppressed. "Let's be clear, we did not stop students from exercising their legitimate democratic right to protest when the anger was directed towards the elected government. And we will not abandon them now simply because their peaceful protest is directed at Lok Bhavan," Sadiq said.

Sadiq added that the NC government had delivered a report on rationalizing reservation quotas promptly, transparently, and in good faith, and stressed that students' democratic rights must be safeguarded.

"Fake Jobs, Real Fraud": Crime Branch Kashmir Files Chargesheet In Multi-Lakh Employment Scam

The case stems from a written complaint wherein nearly many residents of Tangmarg area alleged that they were duped by Reyaz, Ahmad Taploo, S/o Mohammad Sidiq Taploo, R/o Anchaar Dagapora, Soura, Srinagar, it reads.

The accused allegedly lured innocent job seekers by falsely promising employment as security guards in reputed hospitals and banks. Under this false pretext, he reportedly collected huge sums of money amounting to several lakhs of rupees from the victims. To further legitimize the fraud, the accused allegedly issued fake appointment orders and uniform items, thereby misleading the victims into believing that the employment offers were genuine, it reads.

Statement further reads, Upon receipt of the complaint, the Crime Branch Kashmir (now Economic

Offences Wing) initiated a thorough and meticulous investigation. During which, it was prima facie established that the accused was operating a fake NGO under the name and style of "SAI NGO Consultancy." Using this fictitious entity as a front, the accused systematically cheated unemployed youth by issuing forged appointment letters and false assurances of employment.

The investigation conclusively revealed that the accused indulged in deliberate acts of cheating, forgery, and use of forged documents as genuine, thereby committing serious economic offences and exploiting vulnerable job seekers. After completing all legal formalities and gathering sufficient evidence, the Economic Offences Wing has formally submitted the chargesheet before the competent court for judicial scrutiny and trial, it reads. The Economic Offences Wing reiterates its commitment to curbing employment-related frauds and urges the public to remain vigilant against fraudulent job offers and to verify the authenticity of recruiting agencies before making any financial commitments, reads the statement.

SHANTI Bill one of Modi Govt's biggest science reforms: Dr Jitendra Singh

ment to peaceful nuclear use, Dr Jitendra Singh recalled that from the time of Dr Homi Bhabha, India's nuclear programme was envisioned for development, healthcare, and energy security. The SHANTI Bill, he said, strengthens this foundational philosophy by enabling expansion for civilian purposes such as clean power generation, medical applications, and advanced research, while firmly excluding any deviation from peaceful intent.

Highlighting the demands of the emerging AI, quantum and data-driven economy, the Minister said nuclear energy is indispensable for providing reliable, round-the-clock power, unlike intermittent renewable sources. He noted that as India transitions away from fossil fuels and coal, nuclear energy will play a critical qualitative role in sustaining advanced technologies, digital infrastructure, and strategic sectors. Dr Jitendra Singh also informed that India's nuclear power capacity has doubled from about 4.4 GW in 2014 to nearly 8.7 GW today, with a clear roadmap to scale up substantially in the coming years. He said the government aims to reach around 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047, enabling nuclear energy to meet nearly 10 percent of India's electricity requirements and support the national Net Zero commitment.

The Minister also drew attention to the expanding role of nuclear science in healthcare, particularly in cancer diagnosis and treatment through nuclear medicine and isotopes. He said nuclear technology is increasingly contributing to life-saving medical interventions, reinforcing that atomic science today is a force for human welfare and societal well-being. Referring to future readiness, Dr Jitendra Singh said India is also broadening towards Small Modular Reactors, which are suited for dense urban clusters, industrial corridors, and emerging economic zones. He said these reactors will further strengthen energy security while ensuring environmental responsibility.

The Minister noted that the SHANTI Bill has received wide acceptance across the scientific community, industry, startups, and the innovation ecosystem, reflecting a broad national consensus on the need to reform and modernise India's nuclear sector. He said the Bill exemplifies Modi 3.0's reform-first approach, where science-led policy decisions are shaping India's path towards a developed nation by 2047.

Ladakh moving towards Global Sustainable Tourism Destination: LG Kavinder

a major priority area. He stated that the UT Administration is giving special emphasis to the holistic development of all prominent and potential tourist destinations across the Union Territory, ensuring improved infrastructure, better connectivity, and enhanced visitor facilities.

The Lieutenant Governor further said that the Zoji La Tunnel, expected to be completed in the next two years, will also be a game changer by providing year round all-weather road connectivity between Ladakh and the rest of the country. The tunnel will play a vital role in boosting tourism by ensuring uninterrupted access, reducing travel time, and making Ladakh more accessible during winter months.

Emphasising the importance of winter tourism, Shri Kavinder Gupta said that focused efforts are being made to promote winter sports, cultural events, and experiential tourism so that tourists visit Ladakh throughout the year, thereby strengthening the local economy and generating sustained employment opportunities.

Emphasising the broader vision for Ladakh tourism, Shri Kavinder Gupta stated that the UT Administration is committed to developing world-class tourism infrastructure while ensuring ecological balance. He stressed the need for coordinated efforts to promote Ladakh as a sustainable, safe, and year-round tourism destination, showcasing its unique natural landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and adventure potential.

The Lieutenant Governor also interacted with officials and stakeholders, urging them to focus on responsible tourism initiatives that empower local communities, encourage eco-friendly practices, and preserve Ladakh's pristine environment for future generations.

Later, he also interacted with tourists who had come from different parts of the country and received first-hand feedback on their travel experiences. He welcomed them to Ladakh and highlighted the UT Administration's commitment to providing safe, comfortable, and memorable experiences for visitors, while promoting Ladakh as a hospitable and world-class tourism destination. The Lieutenant Governor also appealed to the people of the country to come and explore the breathtaking natural beauty of Ladakh, while reaffirming that the Union Territory is steadily moving towards becoming a globally recognised sustainable tourism destination that offers unique experiences rooted in nature, culture, and responsible travel.

HELPLINE

POLICE STATIONS	
Bagh-e-Bahu	2459777
Bakshi Nagar	2580102
Bus Stand	2575151
City	2543688
Gandhi Nagar	2430528
Gangyal	2482019
Nowbad	2571332
Pacca Danga	2548610
Railway Station	2472870
Sainik Colony	2462212
Satwari	2430364
Channi Himmat	2465164
Transport Nagar	2475444
Trikutla Nagar	2475133
Gandhi Nagar	2459660
SSP City	2561578
SP City North	2547038
SP South	2433778
Public Utility Services	
INDIAN AIR LINES	
City Office	2542735
Air Port	2430449
Jet Air Ways	2453999
City Office	2573399
RAILWAYS	
Railway Enquiry	131, 132, 2476407
Booking	2470318
Reservation	2470315
Public Health Engineering Stations	
Bakshi Nagar	2543557
Gandhi Nagar	2430786
Company Bagh	2542582
New Plot	2573429
Panjitri	2547537
Telecommunication Department	
Directory Enquiry	197
Fault Repair	198
Trunk Booking	180
Billing Complaint	2543896
JAMMU MUNICIPALITY	
Jn. Lines	2578503
Administration Officer	2542192
Health Officer	2547440
POSTAL SERVICES	
Head Post Office City	2543606
Gandhi Nagar	2435863
FIRE SERVICES	
Control Room	101, 132, 2476407
City	2544263
Gandhi Nagar	2547705
Canal	2554064
Gangyal	2480026
COOKING GAS DEALERS	
Chenab Gas	2547633
Gulmour Gas	2430835
JAKFED	2548297
HP Gas	2578456
Shivangi Gas	2577020
Tawi Gas	2548455
POWER HOUSES	
Gandhi Nagar	2430180
Canal Road	2554147
Janipur	2533828
Nanak Nagar	2430776
Parade	2542289
Satwari Cantt.	2452813
HOSPITALS	
GMC Hospital	2584290
S.M.G.S. Hospital	2547635
C.D. Hospital	2577064
Dental Hospital	2544670
Gandhi Nagar Hospital	2430041
Sarwal Hospital	2579402
G.B. Pant Cantt. Hospital	2433500
Ayurvedic College	2543661
C.R.P. Hospital	2591105
Acharya Shri Chander	2862536
Mental Hospital	2577444
Swami Vivekanand	2547418
Blood Bank	2547637
Ambulances	2584225, 2575364
Ambulances (Red Cross)	2543739
NURSING HOMES	
Maddan Hospital	2456727
Medicare	2435070
Triveni Nursing Home	2452664
Suvidha Nursing Home	2555965
Al. Firdous Nursing Home	2545050
Astha Nursing Home	2576707
Bee Enn Charitable Trust	2505310
Chopra Nursing Home	2573580
Harbans Singh Mem Hsp.	2541952
Jeevan Jyoti	2576985
Yudhvir Nursing Home	2547821
Mediad Nursing Home	2466744
Sita Nursing Home	2435007
Vibhuti Nursing Home	2547969

to have scored 1000 runs and taken 150 wickets in T20s.

Owing to her three wickets, she also rose to the joint-highest wicket-taker in women's T20s, drawing level with Australia's Megan Schutt with 151 wickets.

Speaking of the third T20, Sri Lanka once again failed to put up any sort of challenge in front of India as the latter chased down the total of 113 in just 13.2 overs. Shafali was the only Indian batsman who did not have to touch a man in an easy chase.

Earlier, Renuka Singh Thakur returned with four wickets as India restricted Sri Lanka to 112/7 in the allotted twenty overs. With this victory, the hosts gained an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match series.

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