

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Op Sindoor ongoing...

country, working tirelessly in civil defence, hospital management, disaster relief and community services, the Army chief said.

"Recent events have shown what Indian youths are capable of. You are the most powerful and maximum population of Generation Z. Our youths are a reservoir of strength that must be channelised with discipline, purpose and national commitment," he said.

The Corps remains a sought-after pathway for youths to join the armed forces, the general asserted. The future demands "civilisational atmanirbharta", self-reliance in thought, technology, innovation and character, he said.

Initiatives such as Army cells at IITs, technology clusters and the Army internship programme 2025 and 2026 are to foster that spirit, the Army chief said. "We invite you to actively participate in national security, innovation and development initiatives."

In his address, General Dwivedi also told the gathering that the vision of Viksit Bharat at 2047 -- a developed, secure, self-reliant India -- will not be achieved by the government alone.

"It will be achieved by young leaders, NCC cadets, innovators, teachers, engineers, doctors, soldiers, and responsible citizens like you," the Army chief said.

"So, let's ride with confidence, march with discipline, innovate with integrity, and serve with India, and be the future leaders we are looking for. Together we shall build a strong, self-reliant, united and developed India," he added.

Govt schools shine...

showing an overall pass percentage of 84.02 percent, a notable improvement from last years pass percentage of 75.95 percent.

Remarkably, in Kashmir Division, out of 425 students of 12th class who shared first ten positions in various streams, 377 students belong to Government Higher Secondary Schools. In Jammu division (Winter Zone), out of 58 students who shared first ten positions, 48 belong to Government Higher Secondary Schools. This achievement of public institutions reaffirms the belief of Government in quality education delivered in Government Schools.

Moreover, in 12th class examination, out of 64486 students who appeared through Government Higher Secondary Schools, 53620 passed the 12th examination, showing a pass percentage of 83.15 percent. Notably, out of 51511 candidates of Kashmir division and 12975 candidates of Jammu division (winter zone) who appeared in the examination through Government Higher Secondary Schools, 24909 students in Kashmir division and 3918 students of Jammu division (winter zone) passed the examination with distinction, reflecting the growing competitiveness and academic rigor within the public education system.

Education Minister Sakeena Itoo, while congratulating the successful students, teachers and parents, termed the achievement as a clear testimony to the Government's unwavering commitment towards the holistic development of the education sector. She said that consistent investments in infrastructure, teacher training, curriculum strengthening and student-centric initiatives are now translating into visible academic success.

"The commendable performance of Government school students is a matter of pride and reaffirms our belief that quality education can be delivered effectively through public institutions," the Minister said. She added that the Government remains resolute in ensuring equitable access to quality education and creating an enabling learning environment for every student.

The Minister also lauded the dedication of teachers and school heads, whose relentless efforts and innovative teaching practices have played a crucial role in this achievement. She encouraged students to continue striving for excellence and assured that the Government will further intensify reforms and initiatives to nurture talent and promote academic excellence across the region.

Delhi court convicts...

are actively running a terrorist organisation named as 'Dukhtaran-E-Millat' (DeM) which is proscribed under the First Schedule to the UAPA".

"They are using various media platforms to spread insurrectionary imputations and hateful speeches that endanger the integrity, security and sovereignty of India. The DEM through Aasiya Andrabi openly advocates secession of Jammu and Kashmir from the Union of India and has also called for Jihad and use of violence against India," the FIR alleged.

The agency also said that Andrabi and her associates had spoken, written and also published "visible representations that bring into hatred and contempt apart from exciting disaffection towards the Government of India".

The organisation, it added, is promoting enmity, hatred and ill-will between different communities on the grounds of religion and is doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony.

Andrabi has solicited help from proscribed terrorist organisations and along with her associates, has entered into a criminal conspiracy to wage war against the Government of India, the FIR alleged.

Andrabi was arrested by the Jammu and Kashmir police in Anantnag in April 2018 for allegedly planning to organise a large-scale demonstration and stone-pelting in the area. She was subsequently sent to jail.

J&K vital pillar...

to the armed forces, he said with a population of nearly 1.5 crore, Jammu and Kashmir accounts for around 4 to 5 per cent representation in India's border security forces. "This is a significant contribution when seen in proportion to the overall strength of the armed forces," he said.

Referring to the rich military legacy of the region, Lt Gen. Sharma said Jammu and Kashmir is deeply rooted in diverse regimental traditions that reflect a unique spirit of patriotism and sacrifice.

"The exceptional performance of prestigious regiments such as the JAK Rifles, JAK Light Infantry and Dogra units in every war is a matter of pride for the soil of Jammu and Kashmir and its people," he said.

The Northern Army commander pointed out that the Union Territory is home to nearly 45,000 veterans and 975 "Veer Nari", who continue to serve the country in different capacities.

"Through their discipline and patriotism, our veterans have also made valuable contributions in disaster management and in other civic roles, strengthening military-civil fusion," he added.

Recalling the role of veterans during Operation Sindoor, Lt Gen. Sharma said their experience, local knowledge and valour played a key role in boosting the morale of the troops deployed in border areas.

"During this unique coordination effort, the morale of our forces was at its peak. Every soldier of the Northern Command displayed exemplary bravery, taught the enemy a fitting lesson and upheld the highest traditions of mutual trust and camaraderie," he said.

The Army commander said a series of commemorative programmes was organised from January 8 to January 14 across various areas under the Northern Command as part of the 10th Veterans-Day celebrations, culminating in the closing ceremony at Rajouri.

Expressing satisfaction over the public participation, he said, "The gracious presence of the lieutenant governor and the large turnout today fill me with immense pride and satisfaction."

He also lauded the Dhruv motorcycle rally and said the riders covered more than 740 kilometres across the remote and challenging terrain of the Pir Panjal range. "I wholeheartedly commend the riders for their courage, endurance and discipline," he said.

Lt Gen. Sharma said medical camps were organised ahead of the main event at Nagrota, Akhnoor, Reasi, Sunderbani, Nowshera, Poonch and Thanamandi for soldiers, veterans, Veer Naris and their families.

"These camps provided medical assistance and also facilitated the distribution of blood-pressure machines, electronic wheelchairs and e-rickshaws," he added.

The Army officer said outreach initiatives related to pensions, medical care, social welfare, goodwill, employment and procurement have ensured administrative reach in remote and border areas.

"Joint efforts by the Army and the civil administration are translating welfare schemes for veterans into timely and tangible outcomes on the ground," he said.

Promising continued support, the Army commander said, "We remain fully committed to the welfare, dignity and well-being of our veterans and their families. Their concerns and needs are our collective responsibility."

Lt Gen. Sharma said issues raised during recent interactions, including shortages of medical specialists, availability of medicines at the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) facility in Rajouri, empanelment of hospitals and the need for additional ECHS facilities in Poonch, would be addressed at the earliest.

The Northern Army commander expressed gratitude to LG Manoj Sinha and the civil administration for their support and cooperation.

Pakistan resorting to...

Security Force (BSF) were fully alert and capable of taking effective countermeasures. "There is a deliberate attempt by Pakistan to divert attention from its inter-

nal problems, particularly its poor financial situation. However, such efforts will not succeed, and India will not allow it," he said.

On the recent Chinese statement over Shaksgam, he said, "Any such misadventure is wrong. China has often made statements regarding Arunachal Pradesh, but this is not India of 1962 - this is India of 2026, and they should understand that."

On talks between the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and Ladakh representatives, the Lieutenant Governor said dialogue was the best way to address all issues.

"Such meetings were held from time to time... the MHA has called a meeting of the committee later this month and I believe the members should understand that whatever is discussed must be within the framework of the Constitution and in the interest of the country," the Lt Governor told PTI Videos here.

He said the central government has taken special care of Ladakh since 2019 when the region was carved out from Jammu and Kashmir and granted the Union Territory status.

Gupta said the central government has already addressed the issues related to reservation and domicile last year.

GH Sheikh takes...

and administrative processes of the Board.

"I believe in student centric policies involving hassle free delivery of services including timely conduct of examinations, declaration of results and distribution of books," he emphasized.

Earlier, the officers and officials of the J&K BOSE gave him a rousing welcome, expressing hope about further streamlining of the organization under his meticulous stewardship.



Security Forces intensify...

According to the officials, Jammu and Kashmir Police's Special Operations Group (SOG) also launched a cordon and search operation in Jakhole Baira and adjoining villages in the Rajbagh area after a local reported suspicious movement of two persons near his cattle shed.

However, no trace of the suspicious persons has been found so far, the officials said. Ahead of Republic Day, security has been tightened across the Jammu region, particularly in border villages and high-altitude areas, to curb terrorist activities.

Frequent drone intrusions from across the border over the past few days have also emerged as a major security concern, prompting the deployment of additional forces at vulnerable locations. Intensified patrolling, area domination exercises and night surveillance are being carried out to prevent any infiltration attempt or airdropping of arms and narcotics, the officials said.

J&K secures 'Leader'...

yet another feather in the cap of the Industries & Commerce Department, Jammu & Kashmir. It is a testament to the visionary guidance and leadership of Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, under whose direction sustained and focused efforts have been undertaken to strengthen the export ecosystem of the Union Territory. The milestone reflects the Department's commitment to export-led growth, achieved through coordinated action, institutional strengthening and the active participation of all stakeholders, including line departments, field functionaries and the exporter community.

Jammu and Kashmir remains committed to further enhancing its export competitiveness and leveraging its unique strengths to expand its footprint in national and global markets.

Jammu logs 4th...

Kashmir along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, remained significantly warmer at 17.8 degrees Celsius.

Katra, the base camp for pilgrims visiting the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Reasi district, also recorded a maximum temperature of 18.2 degrees Celsius, the official said. Similar to last week, residents of Jammu once again woke up to dense fog on Wednesday, which disrupted air and rail traffic to and from the city.

Out of the 26 flights scheduled to operate from Jammu airport, three flights, Srinagar-Jammu-Mumbai, Srinagar-Jammu-Srinagar and Delhi-Jammu-Delhi, were cancelled, while nine others were delayed, officials said.

Similarly, several trains were also delayed due to poor visibility, they said.

Parts of Dal...

was the coldest place in the Valley, where the mercury settled at minus 7.5 degrees Celsius. Parts of several water bodies, including the interiors of the Dal Lake, froze due to severe cold. Pahalgam, a popular tourist spot in south Kashmir, which also serves as one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath yatra, recorded a low of minus 6 degrees Celsius. The night temperature in Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district settled at a low of minus 3.8 degrees Celsius, and in central Kashmir's Sonamarg it was minus 2.2 degrees Celsius.

The minimum temperature in Qazigund, the gateway town to the valley, settled at minus 5.3 degrees Celsius. Kokernag recorded a low of minus 2.3 degrees Celsius, and Kupwara minus 6.2 degrees Celsius. The India Meteorological Department has said a western disturbance is approaching Kashmir and is likely to affect the Valley's weather from January 16.

Winter Vacations extended...

Classes 6th onwards."

It is further ordered that the preparation for Republic Day-2026 shall be conducted strictly as per the schedule notified by the competent authorities.

Red Fort blast: NIA custody of 5 accused extended till Jan 16

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court on Wednesday extended till January 16 the NIA custody of five accused in the Red Fort blast case including three doctors and a maulvi. Principal District and Sessions Judge Anju Bajaj Chandna allowed the agency's plea to extend the custodial interrogation of Dr Adeel Rather, Dr Shaheen Saeed, Dr Muzammil Ganaie, Maulvi Irfan Ahmad Wagay and Jasir Bilal Wani.

The agency, in its remand paper, said that the accused persons are required to be confronted with other co-accused, suspects and witnesses on certain contradictory points. It underlined that the accused persons possessed exclusive knowledge of certain facts and circumstances at various locations, including Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR).

The remand paper said that such facts were revealed by some witnesses and by the technical analysis of the extracted data retrieved from the seized digital devices.

It said "certain code words" and "other incriminating material" which surfaced after the earlier custody of the accused persons required to be explained.

It further said that the accused's extension of custody was also needed to unearth the larger conspiracy and identify additional people connected to it.

NIA's plea also underlined the need to trace the flow of communications and movements linked to the present case, besides carrying out "crime simulation".

Administrative restructuring in RDD: 21 DPOs re-designated as BDOs (HQ)

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a significant administrative reform aimed at strengthening grassroots governance and improving rural service delivery, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has approved the re-designation of 21 posts of District Panchayat Officers (DPOs) as Block Development Officers (BDOs) in the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj. The decision has been formalised through Government Order No. 18-JK(RD&PR) of 2026 dated January 14, 2026, issued by the Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad. As per the order, 19 posts of District Panchayat Officers have been re-designated as Block Development Officers (Headquarters) in the offices of the Assistant Commissioners, Panchayat, while two posts of District Panchayat Officers (Publicity) in the Department of Rural Development, Jammu and Kashmir.

The re-designated posts will continue to carry Pay Level-8 (₹47,600-₹1,51,100) under the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Development (Gazetted) Services Recruitment Rules. Explaining the rationale, Secretary RDD, Mohammad Aijaz Asad said that following the creation of the posts of Assistant Commissioners, Panchayat, the district-level role of DPOs had become largely redundant. The re-designation, he said, would enable optimal utilisation of experienced officers while addressing the acute shortage of BDOs at the block level. He added that the creation of BDOs level posts in ACP offices will help in effective implementation, monitoring and coordination of flagship rural development programmes including Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), Revamped Gram Swaraj Yojana, PRI/BDC/DDC works and other panchayat-driven initiatives. The re-designation is expected to significantly strengthen service delivery and administrative support in the offices of the Assistant Commissioners, Panchayat, bringing decision-making and implementation closer to the people.

DC Poonch reviews arrangements for Republic Day 2026 celebrations



■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Ashok Kumar Sharma, today convened a comprehensive review meeting at the Conference Hall of Dak Banglow to review the preparations for the Republic Day 2026 celebrations.

At the outset, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Tahir Mustafa Malik, presented a detailed briefing on the arrangements made so far.

The Deputy Commissioner conducted a meticulous review of all components of the upcoming national event, including flag unfurling, cultural programs, security and traffic arrangements, venue decoration, public address system, Shanai Vadan, seating arrangements, first aid and fire safety, parade preparations, refreshments, illumination of government buildings, media coverage, temporary toilet facilities, and other essential services.

The Deputy commissioner stressed the importance of maintaining cleanliness in and around the venue and directed officers to ensure uninterrupted power and water supply on the day of the celebration. He instructed the concerned Executive Engineers to put in place proper barricading, seating arrangements, and drinking water facilities, along with ensuring continuous electricity supply during the event.

The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed provisions for ambulance services, deployment of security personnel, and adequate manpower, emphasizing timely coordination among all departments to ensure the event is conducted smoothly and successfully.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Tahir Mustafa Malik, CPO, Shamaun Ahmed, ACR Mohd. Sayeed, GM DIC/ POICDS Naheem Un Nissa Bhatti, ACP Rakesh Kumar, ACD, Shakeel Ahmed Malik, DSEO Javid Mohd. CMO Dr. Parvaiz Ahmed Khan, CEO Education Mukhtar Manhas, CAHO, CHO, DSHO, Executive Engineers, Tehsildar Haveli, ARTO, Cultural Officer, DSWO/CEO Municipality, AD FCS & CA, LDM, DYSSO, Cultural Officer JKA-CL, Range Officer, AGMO, Wardens, Principals of various government institutions, and officers from BSF, CRPF and Pardeep Khanna.

DC urged all stakeholders to complete pending tasks promptly, ensuring a well-organized and dignified Republic Day celebration in the district.

DC Jammu reviews arrangements for Basant Panchami Mela at Mathwar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Dr Rakesh Minhas on Wednesday conducted an on-

the-spot inspection of the holy shrine of Baba Ballo Ji Maharaj at Mathwar to review the arrangements for the forthcoming Basant Panchami Mela.



He was accompanied by Additional District Development Commissioner, Sher Singh; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Anusya Janwal; besides other senior district officers during the visit.

During the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner held a detailed meeting with officers of the concerned departments and representatives of the shrine management committee to assess preparedness for the annual religious event, which attracts a large number of devotees from different parts of the district and adjoining areas.

While reviewing the arrangements, the Deputy Commissioner laid particular emphasis on ensuring smooth road connectivity to the shrine. He directed the Public Works Department to expedite all necessary repair and patchwork works and ensure that the approach roads are maintained in proper condition so that pilgrims can reach the shrine without any inconvenience.

The Deputy Commissioner also reviewed traffic management arrangements and directed to prepare a comprehensive traffic plan for the Mela days. He stressed the need for identifying designated parking areas and deploying adequate personnel at key locations to ensure smooth traffic flow.

Reviewing the security scenario, the Deputy Commissioner asked the police authorities to put in place adequate security arrangements with proper deployment of manpower around the shrine and adjoining areas to maintain peace and law and order during the religious congregation. Power Development and Jal Shakti departments were directed to ensure uninterrupted electricity and water supply at the shrine and surrounding areas throughout the festival period.

Regarding sanitation, he instructed the Rural Development Department and concerned agencies to maintain cleanliness in and around the Mela premises with proper waste disposal.

He also directed the Health Department to deploy a medical team on site along with an ambulance and essential medicines to handle any medical emergency during the Mela. The Deputy Commissioner assured the shrine management of full administrative support and directed all departments to work in close coordination to ensure smooth and safe celebrations of the Basant Panchami Mela.

Narco smuggler nabbed with heroin, cash

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Under the overall supervision of the SSP Jammu, and the direct guidance of the SP City South, along with the close supervision of SDPO City East, Jammu, Jammu Police achieved a breakthrough under Operation Sanjeevani with the arrest of a drug peddler and recovery of a heroin-like substance, cash and an electronic weighing scale by Police Station Bahu Fort.

During routine patrolling, a police team from Police Post Narwal, led by the Incharge Police Post Narwal and assisted by other officials, apprehended a drug peddler near Railway Pulli, Narwal. The arrested person was identified as Yasir Sheikh, S/o Mohd Ameen, R/o Basarkund, Kishitwar; at present residing near Makka Masjid, Bathindi.

Upon conducting a thorough search, the police recovered 14 grams of heroin-like substance, cash amounting to Rs. 54,500/-, and one electronic weighing scale from his possession. Accordingly, a case FIR No. 22/2026 under Sections 8/21/22/27A of the NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Bahu Fort, Jammu. The accused has been taken into custody and further investigation is underway to ascertain backward and forward linkages.

India asks its nationals in Iran to leave by available means

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: India on Wednesday asked all its nationals residing in Iran to leave by available means and avoid any travel to the country as tensions mounted over possible military intervention by the US over Tehran's crackdown on nationwide protests that killed over 2,500 people.

In a fresh advisory, the Indian embassy in Tehran urged all Indians, including students, pilgrims, business persons and tourists, to leave Iran by available means of transport, including commercial flights.

According to estimates, a little over 10,000 Indians, including students, are currently living in Iran.

The mission also urged all Indian citizens and PIOs (Persons of Indian Origin) to exercise due caution, avoid areas of protests or demonstrations and stay in contact with the embassy.

It also urged the Indian nationals to have their travel and immigration documents, including passports, readily available. Indians living in Iran on resident visas were also advised to register with the embassy.

In case any Indian national is unable to register due to internet disruptions in Iran, their families in India are requested to do so, the mission said.

"In view of the evolving situation in Iran, Indian nationals who are currently in Iran (students, pilgrims, business persons and tourists) are advised to leave Iran by available means of transport, including commercial flights," the embassy said.