

SRIJAN paving way for inclusive sporting ecosystem: Satish Sharma

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, Information Technology, ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma, on Sunday said that the remarkable achievements of Jammu and Kashmir's youth are a powerful testament to what can be accomplished through fair opportunities, modern infrastructure and unwavering government support.

Addressing the gathering during the SRIJAN initiative conference, the Minister stated that the success of young athletes clearly demonstrates that with the right ecosystem in place, the UT youth are capable of overcoming every challenge and competing confidently at national and international platforms.

Highlighting the core focus areas of the SRIJAN programme, Satish Sharma said "the initiative is playing a transformative role in strengthening the sports landscape of the Union Territory by expanding grassroots sports infra-



Sports Minister, Satish Sharma honouring a child.

structure across Jammu, Kashmir and other regions. This is being done by ensuring transparent, merit-based selections free from any bias; integrating sports with education and skill development; promoting greater participation of girls and enhancing inclusivity and establishing sports as a dignified and sustainable career option with viable livelihood opportunities, he asserted.

Reaffirming the government's firm commitment, the Minister informed that sustained efforts are underway to create international-standard sports

facilities, including modern cricket stadiums in Jammu and Srinagar. He also highlighted the strengthening of Khelo India Centres, promotion of traditional sports such as Dargal and enhanced collaboration with the Union Ministry to transform Jammu & Kashmir into a national sports hub.

"As Sports Minister, I assure our athletes that the government stands firmly with them. Our focus is not only on infrastructure creation but also on nurturing talent, discipline and confidence among the youth," he said.

The Minister lauded the determination, resilience and dedication of young sportspersons, describing them as the living legacy of the SRIJAN mission. He urged them to continue training with passion, remain disciplined and dream fearlessly, assuring them of full institutional support at every step of their journey.

Satish Sharma expressed hope that the conference would serve as the foundation of a new era where every talented child, from the mountains of Kashmir to the plains of Jammu, is provided an equal opportunity to shine on the global stage. He concluded by reiterating the government's resolve to make sports a powerful vehicle for youth empowerment, social inclusion and regional pride in Jammu and Kashmir.

Director General, Youth Services and Sports, Anuradha Gupta and prominent persons from different fields and states along with senior officers of the Youth Services and Sports Department, were also present on the occasion.

Winter Carnival 2026: Star performances, cultural extravaganza enthrall audience



Indian Idol winner Chirag Kotwal along with renowned Punjabi singer G. Khan performing at Winter Carnival 2026 at Baderwah.

STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: The second day of the Winter Carnival 2026 was celebrated with great enthusiasm and splendor at New Bus Stand, Baderwah, on Sunday drawing a massive gathering of locals and tourists alike. The mega event was organized by the Department of Tourism, Government of Jammu & Kashmir, in collaboration with the District Administration Doda and Baderwah Development Authority (BDA). The carnival featured a colourful blend of celebrity performances, local cultural programmes, ethnic food stalls and a street bazaar, offering visitors a complete cultural and tourism experience.

The highlight of the day was a power-packed musical performance by the renowned Punjabi pop singer G. Khan who mesmerized the audience with his soulful renditions and energetic stage presence, creating an electrifying atmosphere and leaving the crowd spellbound.

Adding rich local flavour to the celebrations, talented local artists Deepak Kumar, Vishakha Bhargava and Chirag Kotwal presented impressive cultural and musical performances, beautifully showcasing the region's artistic heritage and creative excellence. The traditional Daku Dance and other folk items further added colour and

vibrancy to the festive occasion. Stalls set up by various government departments attracted visitors by disseminating information about welfare schemes and development initiatives. The event was graced by Chairman, District Development Council Doda, Dhananter Singh Kotwal; MLA Baderwah, Daleep Singh Parihar; Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh; SSP Doda, Sandeep Kumar Mehta; Additional Deputy Commissioner Baderwah, Sunil Kumar Butyal; Additional Deputy Commissioner Doda, Anil Kumar Thakur; Deputy Director Tourism, Pankaj Sasser; Deputy Director Publicity, Savita Chothan; Chief Executive Officer, BDA, Sanjeev Sharma; ASP Baderwah, Vinod Sharma besides other senior officers, public representatives, senior citizens, civil and police officials, Media persons and a large number of visitors from within and outside the Union Territory.

The guests lauded the Department of Tourism, District Administration Doda and the Baderwah Development Authority for their seamless coordination and exemplary efforts in organizing the Winter Carnival and for effectively promoting Baderwah as a major winter tourism destination of Jammu and Kashmir. Chairman DDC Doda applauded the

efforts of the District Administration and BDA Baderwah for organizing a grand and well-coordinated event. He emphasized the vast tourism potential of the region and stressed the need for further promotion to attract a larger influx of tourists.

The Deputy Commissioner thanked the people of Baderwah for their enthusiastic participation and overwhelming support. He expressed gratitude for the immense love and appreciation shown by the public towards both local and non-local artists, especially the son of the soil and Indian Idol winner Chirag Kotwal, along with renowned Punjabi singer G. Khan.

MLA Baderwah also commended the efforts of the District Administration, BDA Baderwah and the security forces, including the CRPF, for the smooth and successful conduct of the Winter Carnival. He appreciated the captivating performances by artists, which added vibrancy and cultural richness to the celebrations.

The overwhelming public response, enthusiastic participation of artists and wholehearted support of all stakeholders made the second day of the Winter Carnival 2026 a grand success, further enhancing the festive spirit and highlighting the natural beauty, cultural richness and immense tourism potential of Baderwah.

Remarks against Col Sofiya Qureshi: SC to hear plea of MP minister Vijay Shah

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court is likely to hear on January 19 a plea of Madhya Pradesh minister Kunal Vijay Shah against a high court order directing registration of an FIR against him for using "language of the gutters" against Indian Army officer Col Sofiya Qureshi.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Dipankar Datta and Joymalaya Bagchi is likely to hear the plea of the minister, who has expressed regret over his remarks. On July 28, 2025, the top court had pulled up Shah for not placing a public apology over his remarks on record against Col Qureshi, saying he was "testing the court's patience".

It had pointed out that the minister's conduct was prompting it to doubt his intentions and bonafide. Senior advocate K Parmeshwar, appearing for Shah, had argued that the minister has issued a public apolo-

Assam: 14 foreigners trying to enter India pushed back

STATE TIMES NEWS

GUWAHATI: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday said 14 foreign nationals were nabbed and pushed back after apprehending them in the state.

He, however, did not share details such as where these infiltrators came from or their ethnicity.

"This mission continues as we PUSHED BACK 14 illegal infiltrators in the wee hours today - some fresh explorers while some experienced troublemakers," Sarma said in a post on X.

"You may be hiding in plain sight but we will hunt you down and EXPEL you from India... Committed to a Secure Assam," the CM said.

Assam's Sribhumi, Cachar, Dhubri and South Salmara-Mankachar districts share 267.5 km of international border with Bangladesh.

There is an Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Sutarkandi in Sribhumi. Northeast has a total of three ICPs along the India-Bangladesh border and the other two are at Dawki in Meghalaya and Akhaura in Tripura.

There is another ICP in the region at Darranga in Assam along the India-Bhutan border.

Assam Police had earlier said that the state force and BSF would do everything possible to prevent any attempt by non-Indians to enter the country from Bangladesh as per the law after a political turmoil hit the neighbouring nation in 2024.

However, all Indian passport holders have been allowed to return from trouble-hit Bangladesh through the entry point in the state.

gy, which was shared online, and would be placed on court's record. "What is an online apology? We are starting to have doubts about his intentions and bonafide. You place the apology on record. We will have to see it," the top court had said. It had asked the special investigation team (SIT) constituted to probe the statements made by the minister to submit its report by August 13, 2025. An SIT officer had appeared in court with a sealed cover report, stating statements of 27 people examined by the probe team were currently under scrutiny. The bench had said statements of

those whose sentiments were hurt should have been recorded by the SIT instead of Shah's statements.

On May 28, last year, the top court ordered closure of proceedings before the Madhya Pradesh High Court against Shah for his controversial remarks against Col Qureshi and asked for a status report from the SIT.

Earlier, the top court chided Shah and constituted the SIT to probe the FIR lodged against him.

Shah came under fire after a video, which was circulated widely, showed him allegedly making objectionable remarks

against Col Qureshi, who gained nationwide prominence along with another woman officer, Wing Commander Vyomika Singh, during the media briefings on Operation Sindoor.

The high court rebuked Shah for passing "scurrilous" remarks and using "language of the gutters" against Col Qureshi, and ordered police to file an FIR against him on the charge of promoting enmity and hatred.

After drawing severe condemnation, Shah expressed regret and said he respects Col Qureshi more than his sister.

NCC cadets living bridge between India's glorious past and promising future: MoS Def

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth on Sunday urged youth to stay grounded in duty, be patriotic and uphold the constitutional values while facing challenges towards building a Viksit Bharat. He was addressing a gathering at the ongoing National Cadet Corps' (NCC) Republic Day Camp at Delhi Cantonment. Highlighting the role of NCC cadets, he called them a "living bridge" between India's glorious past and its promising future, and described the camp as a reflection of the discipline, commitment and leadership potential of India's youth.

He encouraged the cadets to "go indigenous with a Swadeshi mindset," citing the significant increase in Indian startups from about 800 to over two lakh during the past decade, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's initiatives such as Start-up India. He urged the

youths to stay grounded in duty, work with a sense of patriotism and uphold constitutional values while facing future challenges, and carry forward the determination and hard work to build a Viksit Bharat by 2047. Seth, on his arrival, was presented with a guard of honour by NCC cadets, followed by an impressive band performance by the cadets of The Scindia School, Gwalior; the defence ministry said in a statement. Addressing officers and cadets, he emphasised that the Republic Day is more than a national festival; it's a tribute to the Constitution and India's freedom fighters. Seth lauded the 15 cadets who participated in the Veer Birsa Munda Cyclothon from Ranchi to Delhi, covering 1,300 km to spread the message of national integration and the values of the tribal hero. He also appreciated the 10 cadets who summited Mount Everest in 2025.

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J&K Bank

AUCTION NOTICE
 Owing to non-payment of outstanding Vehicle loan at J&K Bank Branch Office Rakiban by the below named borrower, the Bank has seized the Hypothecated Vehicle in terms of Agreement, which is parked at Branch Office Rakiban Rajouri. The description and details of the vehicle are given hereunder:

Name of the borrower	Registration No. of vehicle	Maker Name	Model	Minimum Reserve Price (Excluding GST)	Earnest money 10% of the Reserve Price.
Mr. Mehboob Rabani S/O Sh. Mohd. Sadiq R/O H.NO 52 Malhut Near Govt. Middle School Darhal, District Rajouri, J&K(UT) 185135.	JK11F-1192	Ashok Leyland Ltd	Dost RLS Engine No. EMH037746P CHASSIS NO. MB1AA22E6MREPO245	Rs.148500/-	Rs.14850/-

The Bank has decided to put the said vehicle to auction on "as is what is", "as is where is" and "whatever there is" basis. The Vehicle is available for inspection on any working day between 19.01.2026 to 27.01.2026 at Branch Office Rakiban Rajouri. Interested parties desirous to inspect the vehicle can contact IAPM Department Zonal Office Rajouri, Mobile no-9419100408& Branch Manager Rakiban Contact No 7780954608. Sealed quotations affixed with two rupees stamp are invited from the interested parties for the purchase of said vehicle to be accompanied by Call Deposit Receipt of Rs. 14850/- (Earnest money @ 10% of Reserve Price) Pledged to "The Jammu & Kashmir Bank Ltd" which can be deposited on any working day with the undersigned on or before 27.01.2026 before 2.00 PM at IAPM Department Zonal Office Rajouri. The sealed quotations will be opened on 27.01.2026 at 3.00 P.M. at the office of the undersigned in presence of the bidders who to remain present on the given day & time and they will be given an opportunity of inter-se bidding to improve the offer & highest bidder shall be declared as successful bid subject to his bid accepted by undersigned. The highest bidder should pay an amount equal to 25% (including the EMD amount) of sale price on the same day but not later than next day of auction, as the case may be. The successful bidder shall have to deposit the entire qualified auction amount plus Applicable GST within 07 days. The auctioned vehicle referred here in above have to be lifted latest by 04.02.2026. The Call Deposit Receipts deposited shall be refunded to unsuccessful bidders without any interest. In the event of any default in payment of any of these amounts, or if the sale is not completed by reason of any default on the part of the successful bidder, the Bank shall be at liberty to forfeit all the moneys paid till then by the successful bidder and vehicle shall again be put for resale in absolute discretion of the undersigned. The Bank reserves the right to Withdraw/Cancel/Postpone the Bid/Auction of the vehicle at any time/stage without assigning any reason thereof and shall not entertain any claim/liability of any other person of whatsoever nature. All attendant charges/dues/taxes including transfer of ownership/permits etc. shall have to be borne by the successful bidder and will be the exclusive responsibility of the buyer.

Place: Rajouri
 Dated: 17.01.2026

DIP/J-3418-P/25
 Dated:- 18/01/2026

Sd/-
 In Charge
 IAPMD Zonal Office Rajouri

Indians lead Sri Lanka tourists' arrival in 2025

AGENCY

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka received a total of 2.3 million tourists in 2025, with Indian travellers accounting for the largest share, according to figures released by the tourism authority. "India remains the undisputed leading source market, contributing 531,511 arrivals, more than double the next highest country. This reflects a remarkable year-on-year increase of over 114,000 visitors," an official statement

issued by the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) said on Saturday. It was a year-on-year growth of over 15 per cent, it added. The UK solidifies its position as the second-highest market with 21,277 arrivals. The Indian arrivals averaged over 23 per cent per month, with December being the highest number of 56,715 arrivals. February was the lowest with 35,000 Indians travelling. The cumulative arrivals in

December, 2,58,928, were the highest for the year. "This confirms the country's established appeal as a vacation destination," it said. Europe and the Asia Pacific account for the dominant 92.7 per cent of all arrivals, with Europe alone contributing 51.3 per cent, which the tourism authority said establishes Sri Lanka's appeal as a winter sun destination. A total of 1,31,898 tourists have already visited the country during the first 15

days of 2026, according to the SLTDA.

The highest number of arrivals in a single day was recorded on January 15, with 10,483 tourists arriving in the country that day, Ada Derana reported. During this period, India accounted for the largest number of arrivals, with 23,786 visitors, followed by Russia with 14,785 tourists, the United Kingdom with 12,166 travellers, and Germany with 9,260 visitors.

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 Timings: 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.