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# STATE TIMES

THE BOLD VOICE OF J&K

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The School with a Difference

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SHAPING INDIA

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Air surcharge 50 paise for Leh

**03 Phase-II of seed dispersal begins in Trikuta hills housing Vishno Devi Shrine**

**03 JU conferred category-I status by UGC**

**03 GM Northern Railway inspects Srinagar-Katra section amidst heavy snowfall; prioritizes staff safety**

Website : www.statetimes.in, Email: statetimes1@gmail.com

## SC puts new UGC regulations on hold, says can have 'very sweeping consequences'

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW DELHI: In a significant development, the Supreme Court on Thursday stayed the recent UGC equity regulations on preventing caste-based discrimination on campuses, saying the framework is "prima facie vague", can have "very sweeping consequences" and may end up dividing society with a "dangerous impact".

The top court also sought responses by March 19 of the Centre and the UGC on three pleas against the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026 on the grounds that caste-based discrimination is defined strictly as discrimination against members of the SCs, STs and OBCs.

"If we do not intervene it will lead to dangerous impact, will divide the society and will have grave impact... Prima facie we say that the



language of the regulation is vague and experts need to look into for the language to be modulated so that it is not exploited," a bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi said.

While keeping at abeyance, the "non-inclusionary" definition of caste-based discrimination that excluded general categories from institutional protection under rule 3(1)(c), the bench revived the UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Educational

Institutions) Regulations, 2012.

"In exercise of our powers under Article 142, we direct that the 2012 Regulations shall continue in force till further orders," the bench ordered, noting that the repeal of the earlier framework would otherwise leave students without any remedy.

"Issue notice returnable on March 19. The Solicitor General accepts notice. Since issues raised in 2019 plea shall also have bearing while examining constitutionality.

let these petitions be tagged with the same. Meanwhile let the UGC Regulations 2026 shall remain in abeyance," it said.

The 2026 regulations triggered protests at various places, with student groups and organisations demanding its immediate rollback.

The CJ suggested that the matter be revisited by a committee comprising eminent jurists and experts familiar with social realities.

"Some committee should be there with two or three eminent persons who understand social values and the ailments society is facing. How society should grow, and how people are going to behave outside the campus if we create such a framework, they must apply their mind," the CJ said.

At the outset, the bench flagged concerns with the 2026 regulations and questioned the need for a

## Govt announces 15 pc syllabus relaxation for class 10, 11, 12 for summer zone exams

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: The J&K Government on Thursday announced 15 per cent syllabus relaxation for class 10th, 11th, and 12th students of summer zone in annual regular exams of Jammu Division, keeping in view the disruptions caused due to long spells of inclement weather and war-like situation last year.

Announcing the decision, the Minister for Education, Sakeena Itoo said that the department was well aware of all these factors and the feedback from students and parents was also taken into consideration before arriving at the decision. She added that the feedback from other stakeholders was also received and necessary measures were taken to address the concerns of the students.

The Education Minister said that the floods of August hugely disrupted the normal functioning of



## Beating the Retreat: LG felicitates Republic Day contingents

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: The Customary 'Beating the Retreat' ceremony on Thursday marked the culmination of the four-day-long Republic Day celebrations, at the MA Stadium.

The Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

The atmosphere was filled with national pride as the Brass and Pipe Drum bands of the Armed Forces and J&K Police performed a series of enchanting patriotic compositions.

The audience was enthralled by soulful musical renditions of "Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon" and other classic melodies.

In recognition of their outstanding display and artistry, the Lieutenant Governor felicitated the contingents of Jammu Kashmir Police and Security Forces; Parade Commander, Ex-Servicemen; Pipe and Brass bands, marching contingents (Boys & Girls), daredevils, commentators, cultural performers and best

## ACB registers FIR against SICOP DGM, former MD over illegal appointment

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Thursday registered a case against former Managing Director of the Jammu and Kashmir Small Scale Industrial Development Corporation (SICOP), R K Razdan, for allegedly making illegal appointment of Kunal Choudhary, who is currently serving as the DGM of the corporation, an official said.

Choudhary, who was initially appointed as a technical assistant in 2006, was also named in the FIR registered

under relevant sections of the law, including J&K Prevention of Corruption Act, the ACB said in a statement.

During the course of verification, he said, it surfaced that Razdan, the then MD of SICOP, by abusing his official position and in criminal conspiracy with others, allegedly engaged Choudhary as a technical assistant on a temporary basis for six months without any advertisement in the newspapers or inviting applications from the eligible

## Govt committed to strengthening entrepreneurship ecosystem in J&K: CM

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SAMBHA: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said that the issue of unemployment can be tackled by establishing a vibrant start-up culture and a strong entrepreneurship ecosystem across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister made these remarks while delivering the keynote address at the Annual Start-up Mela of the Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Institute (JKEDI) at Bari Brahmana on Thursday.

Addressing a large gathering of start-up entrepreneurs



and industrialists, the Chief Minister said that unemployment is a very challenging issue in J&K and that government jobs are no substitute for addressing unemployment. "A vibrant private sector, hand-holding of existing industrial units, and encouraging start-up entrepreneurs will tackle this

## J&K expects central package in Union Budget: Omar

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Asserting that unemployment cannot be addressed through government jobs alone, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said Jammu and Kashmir is expecting a substantial industrial package in the Union Budget to boost industrial growth in the Union Territory.

"Our expectation from the Union Budget is that we receive a good industrial package. Jammu and Kashmir has not received any central package providing incentives for industry since 1990.

"We are working closely with the Centre to ensure that J&K receives a substantial and effective industrial incentives package for the development of the industrial sector," Abdullah told reporters after inaugurating the Startup Mela at J&K Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) in Samba district. The programme included the disbursement of seed funds to startups, release of capital grants to incubators and felicitation of winners of the idea challenge.

## Four long-distance trains to resume from April, cancellation of 20 extended

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Four long-distance trains, including two Vande Bharat Express services operating between New Delhi and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi (SMVD) Katra, will resume operations in April, officials said on Thursday.

According to an official statement from the Jammu division of the Northern Railway, the cancellation of 20 trains has been extended for another two to three months. Besides, 14 trains in the Jammu division will continue to operate

## Eight Police Inspectors transferred

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
KATHUA: In the interest of administration, District Police Headquarters Kathua has ordered the transfer and posting of eight Inspectors with immediate effect.

As per Order No. 57 of 2026, issued on January 29, Inspector Ashish Sharma has been transferred from Police Station Hiranagar and posted as SHO Police Station Kathua. Inspector Sushil Sharma, earlier posted at DPL Kathua, has been appointed as SHO Police Station Rajbagh, while Inspector Amit Kumar from DPL Kathua has been posted as SHO Police Station Hiranagar.

Inspector Rajeshwar Singh, previously serving as SHO Police Station Cyber and DPO Kathua, has been transferred and posted as SHO Police Station Basohli. Inspector Sandeep Singh has been moved from Police Station Kathua and posted as SHO Police Station Bani. Inspector Shakil Ahmed, who was serving as I/C ADU, has been appointed as SHO Police Station Malhar. Inspector Surinder

## CJ releases activity calendar of J&K Legal Services Authority for 2026

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: In a significant step towards reinforcing access to justice and strengthening legal awareness across the Union Territory of J&K, Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority, today released the Activity Calendar (Wall Calendar) 2026 of the J&K Legal Services Authority in pres-



ence of Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services

## JKBOSE notifies dates for re-evaluation, photocopies of answer scripts

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) has announced opening and closing dates of the online links for submission of forms for re-evaluation and obtaining photocopies of answer scripts of class 10 and 12 of Annual Regular 2025, WZ, JD (Oct-Nov session).

According to a notification issued by Joint Secretary, Seerecy, Jammu Division, the interested candidates

## Economic Survey reflects sustained growth, outlines roadmap for Viksit Bharat: PM

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said the Economic Survey has highlighted strong macroeconomic fundamentals, sustained growth momentum and the expanding role of innovation, entrepreneurship and infrastructure in nation-building.

Modi also said that the survey, presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Parliament, underscores the importance of inclusive development, farmers, MSMEs, youth employment and social welfare.

"The economic survey tabled today presents a comprehensive picture of India's Reform Express, reflecting steady progress in a challenging global environment. It highlights strong macroeconomic fundamentals, sustained growth of inclusive development, with focused attention on



**WEATHER**

Temperature (Jammu)  
Max: 20.3°C Min: 7.2°C

Humidity  
Max: 92 Min: 68

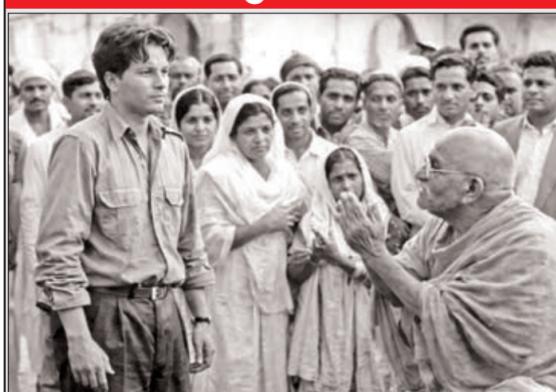
Temperature (Srinagar)  
Max: 8.8°C Min: -0.6°C

Humidity  
Max: 90 Min: 73

Sunset: 18:00 Hours  
Sunrise: 07:27 Hours

# WHY I KILLED GANDHI! GODSE'S COURT ROOM DEFENCE?

## Growing debate: Gandhi, Partition, Congress and the suffering of nationalists



JAMMU: A heated debate is unfolding across India over Mahatma Gandhi's perceived softness towards Pakistan during Partition, which critics allege compromised the nation's interests. Simultaneously, the Indian National Congress is being accused of weaving a political web that caused patriotic Indians to suffer, both physically and psycho-

logically. Frustration runs deep among many who feel marginalised in their own homeland. This sentiment has fuelled a rise in voices that seek to glorify Nathuram Godse, Gandhi's assassin.

This newspaper neither endorses nor subscribes to this view. However, Godse's final courtroom statement places direct responsibility on both Gandhi and the Congress for what he described as the challenges confronting India.

Ultimately, the people remain the best judges, free to draw their own conclusions from statements made in a court of law.

On February 20, 2017, the Central Information Commission ruled that the statement of Nathuram Godse, along with other records related to the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, should be "proactively disclosed" on the website of the National Archives of India. Information Commissioner Sridhar Acharyulu observed that while one may disagree with Godse and his co-accused, disclosure or circulation of his opinion cannot be refused. At the same time, the order made it clear that disagreement with a philosophy can never justify violence or murder.

However, a review of the National Archives of India website shows that Godse's final statement is not displayed in full. Instead, visitors encounter a list of documents related to the murder trial,

## The Trial: A verdict sealed in history

Nathuram Godse was arrested immediately after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, following an FIR lodged by Nandlal Mehta at the Tughlak Road Police Station in Delhi. His trial, conducted in camera, commenced on May 27, 1948, and concluded on February 10, 1949, with the pronouncement of the death sentence. His appeal before the Punjab High Court, then sitting in Simla, was rejected, and the sentence was upheld.

The intensity of Godse's courtroom statement left a profound impression on those present.

In his memoir 'The Murder of the Mahatma and Other Cases from a Judge's Diary', Justice G.D. Khosla, who heard Godse's appeal, later reflected on the extraordinary atmosphere inside the courtroom. He recorded that Godse's lengthy and forceful address momentarily affected the mood of the court, demonstrating how powerful oratory can influence public sentiment even in the gravest of cases. At the same time, Justice Khosla underscored a core judicial principle: emotional responses, however strong, cannot influence the application of law, which must remain guided solely by legal reasoning.

where he made a lengthy statement reportedly outlining his ideological beliefs, political grievances, and justification for his actions.

"Born in a devotional Brahmin family, I instinctively came to revere Hindu religion, Hindu history and Hindu culture. I had, therefore, been intensely proud of Hinduism as a whole. As I grew up I developed a tendency to free thinking unfettered by any superstitious allegiance to any isms, political or religious. That is why I worked actively for the eradication of untouchability and the caste system based on birth alone. I openly