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BJP triumphs over Thackerays in Mumbai, trumps Pawars in Pune

most of them having ended between 2020 and 2023. Of these, nine fall in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), the most urbanised belt in India.

Voting took place on January 15 in these municipal corporations: Mumbai, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Navi Mumbai, Vasai-Virar, Kalyan-Dombivli, Kolhapur, Nagpur, Solapur, Amravati, Akola, Nashik, Pimpri-Chinchwad, Pune, Ulhasnagar, Thane, Chandrapur, Parbhani, Mira-Bhayandar, Nanded-Waghala, Parvel, Bhiwandi-Nizampur, Latur, Malegaon, Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad, Jalgaon, Ahilyanagar, Dhule, Jalna and Ichalkaranji.

Youth, entrepreneurs focused on solving real problems: Modi

most important aspect was the focus of India's youth on solving real problems, he appreciated the young innovators who had shown the courage to dream new dreams.

The prime minister underlined that today marks the milestone of 10 years of Startup India, and this journey was not merely the success story of a government scheme but the journey of millions of dreams and the realisation of countless imaginations.

He recalled that 10 years ago, there was a little scope for individual efforts and innovation, but those circumstances were challenged and the Startup India programme was launched, giving youth an open sky, and today the results were before the nation.

"In just 10 years, the Startup India Mission has become a revolution. Today, India is the world's third-largest startup ecosystem," he exclaimed.

Expressing happiness that Startup India had given birth to a new culture in the country, Modi remarked that earlier, new businesses and ventures were largely initiated by the children of big industrial families, as they alone had easy access to funding and support, while most middle-class and poor children could only dream of jobs.

"However, the Startup India programme has changed this mindset, and now youth from Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, even villages, are opening their own startups, attempting to solve the most pressing grassroots problems," he said.

He emphasised that this spirit of doing something for society and the nation holds immense value for him.

Upper reaches receive fresh snowfall

country, and the beautiful valley of Baderwah were also reeling under severe cold conditions.

According to officials, Gulmarg in Kashmir recorded about one centimetre of fresh snow, while Doothpathri and Sonamarg experienced light snowfall during the day.

Gurez plains received around two inches of fresh snowfall, while Drass recorded about one inch. Zojila Pass also witnessed nearly two inches of snow, affecting movement along the strategic mountain stretch.

Mortar shell found, defused

safely defused by an Army bomb disposal squad in the presence of police, the officials added.

There was no loss to life or property during the operation, officials said.

QD cell constituted for Budget Session

nated as nodal officer to keep liaison with the assembly secretariat in connection with the question/replies, government bills, resolutions, issuance of entry passes and other business related matters during the Budget Session 2026.

The cell would work under the overall supervision of Gulzar Ahmad Dar, special secretary, PD&MD.

Startup boom propels India to global top 3: Jitendra

"Today, the results speak for themselves. In just a few years, we have grown from 350-400 startups to more than two lakh, and India now ranks third in the world. This reflects how far we have come and how much we have achieved," he said while addressing a startup camp organised by the Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine here.

"This also points out that children had talent and the capacity to do things, but they were not channelised in a particular direction," Singh said.

Highlighting Doda as the birthplace of the purple revolution as part of the Startup India movement, he said the initiative had earned nationwide recognition and was now being celebrated across the country.

"From Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh to Arunachal Pradesh and as far as Nagaland, all Himalayan states are virtually part of this celebration," he said.

He said the region had emerged as a new centre of entrepreneurship for the youth, with agriculture at its core.

"For long, startups were believed to be synonymous only with IT, but agriculture is a vast and exclusive domain with immense potential. India's 10,000-km-long coastline also offers enormous opportunities," he said.

Time for universities to solve society's toughest challenges: LG

nology) to B Tech (information technology & mathematical

Dy CM inaugurates Gandhi Shilp Bazar 2026 at Jammu Haat

JAMMU, JANUARY 16: The Jammu & Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JK-TPO) officially kicked off the Gandhi Shilp Bazar 2026 at Jammu Haat. After the successful launch of 03 major events — the Gandhi Shilp Bazar at Kashmir Haat, Srinagar, the GI Fair Buyer-Seller Meet at Budgam and the Pashmina Fest at beautiful temple town of Katra—the JK-TPO has organised another distinctive initiative the Jammu edition of Gandhi Shilp Bazar (District).

The 07-day event has started and will culminate on January 21, 2026, celebrating the timeless elegance and

craftsmanship of Jammu and Kashmir's world-renowned Handicraft products.

Organized by the JK-TPO and sponsored by the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, under the National Handicraft Development Programme (NHDP), the event aims to highlight the exceptional skills of artisans and craft enterprises, celebrating the timeless legacy of Handicraft sector craftsmanship.

The exhibition was formally inaugurated on January 16, 2026, by Sh. Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Choudhary, who also

innovation) in the four-year under graduate programme.

The LG emphasised that universities must set benchmarks for innovation and research and make regular revision of courses to incorporate Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cutting-edge IT technologies.

He directed the University of Jammu for collaboration with financial institutions to boost student employability and conduct a rigorous impact assessment of existing skill development courses.

He asked the university to take dedicated measures for promotion of studies in local cultural heritage, languages and arts and the revival of the Guru Nanak Dev Chair of Sufi Studies.

The LG said the universities must develop advanced early warning systems for natural disasters and provide solutions to local challenges.

He stressed that academic institutions cannot operate in isolation and must align and coordinate their research capabilities to address the societal needs. He also directed for establishment of animal welfare clubs in all the universities.

"It is the era of Universities 2.0. They must look beyond degrees and transform the campus as epicentres of creative solutions and social transformation," he said.

The Council reviewed the progress of the Gandhi Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and the expansion of IT-enabled services. To ensure administrative efficiency, Sinha directed the streamlining of the e-office system, implementation of IT enabled services and the timely completion of all ongoing infrastructure projects.

He also called for increased participation of youth in Yuva Connect programme and their active engagement in the Nasha Mukta Bharat campaign and other national awareness initiatives.

Discussions were also held on streamlining the process of direct recruitments for various posts, effective implementation of a robust and comprehensive Sports Policy of the University, and enhancing the overall quality of teaching, learning and research at the University.

Jammu University VC (Prof) Umesh Rai presented progress report of the university, highlighting various achievements. The JU registrar presented various agenda items before the council for report, consideration and ratification.

It was informed that the University of Jammu has been recognised as one of the SPOKE institutions with IIT Delhi as the Hub Institution under Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)-Partnerships for Accelerated Innovation and Research (PAIR).

The chair was also briefed on the action taken on the directions passed during the previous meeting of the council.

Among others, the meeting was attended by health & medical education minister Sakeena Masood Itoo, Kashmir University VC (Prof) Nilofer Khan, CUJ VC (Prof) KS Chandrasekhar, CUS VC (Prof) Mohammad Mobin, principal secretary, finance, Santosh D Vaidya, LG's principal secretary Mandeep K Bhandari, commissioner, higher education department, Ram Niwas Sharma, director IIM, Calcutta, Prof Alok Kumar Rai, former professor, department of sociology, BHU Varanasi, Prof A K Kaul, JU registrar Neeraj Sharma and other members of the council.

LA Speaker reviews preparations for Budget Session

ments and other logistical preparedness for smooth & seamless conduct of proceedings.

"All departments have vital role in successful conduct of the assembly session and departments need to maintain due coordination and synergy with assembly secretariat", he said while chairing a high-level meeting at the legislative assembly secretariat here.

During the meeting, Rather held comprehensive review of the arrangements being put in place for the budget session.

He laid emphasis on robust security measures and efficient logistical preparedness, highlighting that seamless coordination among all stakeholders was must for the conduct of smooth session.

Reviewing security related arrangements, he directed the IGP security to maintain fool-proof security arrangements within and around the assembly secretariat to ensure safety of members, staff, media personnel and other employees.

He directed the security officers to maintain close coordination among security agencies, strengthen access control mechanisms and remain vigilant throughout the session.

Rather also asked the IGP for complete sanitisation of the assembly secretariat before the start of session. He asked for establishing a common control room for better monitoring and surveillance.

Reviewing other key arrangements like sanitation, power supply, drinking water, fire safety, medical facilities and traffic management, he directed the officers concerned to maintain uninterrupted essential supplies like drinking water, power supply and other basic facilities during the entire session.

He directed the officers of health department to ensure sufficient number of ambulances, doctors, medical supplies and other facilities available during the session.

He asked the director estates to complete all works related to renovation and repairing before one week of the start of session. He also asked him for timely rectification of sound sys-

tem in the House and addressing all logistical aspects well in advance so that the proceedings of the House were conducted without any inconvenience.

The Speaker also directed the officers of fire and emergency services to strengthen the fire control measures in and around the assembly secretariat.

He asked the GAD secretary to appoint nodal officers in all the departments for timely submission of replies to questions being submitted by MLAs. He also asked him to restrict passes for officers of civil secretariat and issue passes to those who were required to be present during the session.

Reviewing coverage and media related aspects, he underlined that the information department had a major role during the entire session which acts as a bridge between the government and the public.

He asked the director information to maintain close coordination with assembly secretariat for timely finalisation of media persons to be called for coverage of the session.

He also asked him to ensure timely issuance of passes and other arrangements for the media persons in synergy with secretary of legislative assembly. He asked him to ensure timely establishment of public address system in the House.

Emphasising the importance of discipline and decorum during the Budget Session, he called upon all the departments to discharge their responsibilities with utmost professionalism and accountability.

"Budget Session is one of the most important sessions of the House and must reflect the highest standards of legislative functioning," he said.

The Speaker directed all the officers to ensure that contingency plans were also kept in place to handle any kind of eventuality or unforeseen situation.

Among those present on the occasion included GAD secretary M Raju, divisional commissioner, Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, law secretary Achal Sethi, IGP (security) Sujit Kumar, JMC commissioner Devansh Yadav, deputy commissioner, Jammu, Rakesh Minhas, director information Nitish Rajora, DIG (Jammu-Kathua-Samba range) Shiv Kumar Sharma, SSP, civil secretariat, Sajjad Khaliq Bhat, SSP (security, Jammu), SSP traffic, Jammu city, director hospitality & protocol, director estates, director ayush, general manager of government press, Jammu, senior officers of health, jal shakti, PDD, fire & emergency services, legislative assembly secretary Manoj Kumar Pandit and other senior officers of the assembly secretariat.

India slams Pak for misusing UN platforms to drive its divisive agenda

unique set of developmental challenges that cut across development financing and climate justice and financing, among other areas.

"India has consistently endeavoured to bring these to the forefront across all UN platforms. Concerted and focused follow up action is required on this front. Moving forward, there is a need to translate the sentiments of the Global South to concrete and tangible steps," he said.

As the UN membership takes stock of the past, it is important to reflect upon the current context and the way ahead for the largest multilateral organisation, the United Nations.

"United Nations is going through a crucial phase, as it faces various critical challenges. World citizenry expects the UN to deliver on each of the three pillars - peace and security, development and human rights," he said.

As the UN membership takes stock of the past, it is important to reflect upon the current context and the way ahead for the largest multilateral organisation, the United Nations. "United Nations is going through a crucial phase, as it faces various critical challenges. World citizenry expects the UN to deliver on each of the three pillars - peace and security, development and human rights," he said.

India emphasised that UN's inability to purposefully intervene on its critical functions leads to questions related to efficacy, legitimacy and credibility. "This is quite pronounced in case of maintenance of international peace and security. As conflicts rage across different parts of the globe, the world hopes the UN to deliver, to put an end to human suffering and misery," Punnoose said.

Court sends 5 accused to jail, extends judicial custody of 2 others

self-sacrificial operations, the agency said. He was nabbed by NIA from New Delhi, and placed under arrest.

According to NIA, Dar - a resident of Shopian in Kashmir - was in close contact with the other accused persons in the case, including Dr Umar Nabi and Mufti Irfan.

As part of its investigation into the case, NIA had on December 1 carried out raids at multiple locations in Pulwama, Shopian and Kulgam districts of Kashmir. Searches were also conducted at the residence of Moulvi Irfan Ahmad Wagay at Shopian.

Wagay had emerged as the mastermind of radicalisation and recruitment of the 'white-collar' terror module busted early last month.

After the blast, Delhi police had reconstructed a chilling journey of Dr Umar Nabi, showing how he travelled from Haryana to Delhi through the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, halted for food at a roadside eatery, and spent night inside his car before entering the national capital the next morning.

Umar's movements, captured in footage from over 50 CCTV cameras, indicated meticulous planning and deliberate attempts to avoid detection. He was first spotted leaving Faridabad, making multiple halts, including one at a dhaba where he ate and another at a mosque where he offered prayers.

Investigations revealed that before the blast, Umar had gone to Firozpur Jhirka in Haryana.

3 terrorist hideouts busted in Billawar woods

forces came across a hideout of terrorists in Kamaad Nallah woods, officials said.

Its search led them to the recovery of two empty M4 cartridges, a plastic box containing desi ghee, a polythene packet of almonds, hand gloves, a cap, a blanket, a tarpaulin sheet, a small pouch and a polythene bag, the officials added.

While combing the woods further, forces came across two more hideouts of terrorists in the nearby Kaikhad and Kalaban woods. From there, forces recovered a cooking gas cylinder, cooking oil, a charger wire, hand gloves, cooking and eating utensils, an empty oil gallon, large plastic bags, a torch, blankets, containers and wrappers of eatables, along with other miscellaneous items, officials said.

All the three hideouts were later destroyed by the forces, the officials added, saying that the search operation was still continuing.

Ladakh poised to emerge as premier winter sports hub: Kavinder

perseverance of Ladakhi youth, noting that they had embraced the sport despite limited resources and difficult conditions, turning challenges into strength.

Highlighting the Government of India's vision under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said, "Sports is being promoted as a powerful medium for career development, youth empowerment and nation-building."

He said initiatives, such as Khelo India, had provided national platforms to talented youth from remote and border areas, including Ladakh.

He informed that Ladakh would host the 6th Khelo India Winter Games from January 20 at the international-standard Indoor Ice Hockey Rink in Leh.

He said the facility, constructed at a cost of around Rs 51 cr, was equipped with a fully automated chilling plant, modern spectator amenities and provisions for year-round training and competitions, marking a historic milestone in Ladakh's sports infrastructure.

He stated that nearly 500 players from across the country would participate in the upcoming Winter Games, describing it as a proud and historic moment for Ladakh.

He emphasised that every effort must be made to ensure that players, coaches and officials experience Ladakh's warm hospitality, vibrant sports culture and breathtaking natural beauty, so that they return as ambassadors of Ladakh, carrying positive impressions of the region to their respective states and communities. Referring to the recently implemented Ladakh Sports Policy 2025, the LG said the policy aims to strengthen sports development through systematic talent identification, equal opportunities for women and para-athletes, scholarships, incentives for outstanding players, robust sports infrastructure and the creation of Centres of Excellence.

"The objective is to enable Ladakhi athletes to bring laurels to the nation at national and international levels," he said.

He urged young athletes to view sports as a means to develop discipline, confidence and essential life skills, and not merely as competition.

He assured them of full support from the administration, stating that their hard work and success would inspire continued efforts to take Ladakh's sports ecosystem to the next level.

Appreciating the performances witnessed during the championship, the LG congratulated the winning and runner-up teams and commended all participating teams for their dedication, discipline and sportsmanship.

He said the tournament was competitive, thrilling and inspiring, and emphasized that the true spirit of sports lies not only in winning medals but in building character, confidence and team spirit.

He lauded the Kargil district administration, sports department, organising committee, volunteers, security agencies and local residents for the successful conduct of the championship, and formally declared the 5th LG Cup Ice Hockey Championship 2026 closed.

The LG also felicitated the winning ITBP men and women teams and handed the winning trophies to them. He also felicitated the participating players and officials.

Chairman/Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC Kargil, Mohammad Jaffer Akhooon, appreciated the Department of Youth Services and Sports for organising the tournament in a professional manner and requested the LG to consider the continuation of the CEC Ice Hockey Cup by allocating budget.

He also highlighted the importance of obtaining administrative approvals for the proposed multi-car parking project, stating that improved infrastructure is essential for hosting major sporting events and accommodating spectators.

Administrative Secretary, Youth Services and Sports, Moses Kunzang, in his welcome address, emphasised the growing significance of the LG Cup Ice Hockey Championship and appreciated the support extended by the Curling Federation of India (CFI) towards the promotion of winter sports in Ladakh.

As part of the programme, friendly demonstration matches of ice skating and ice curling were also organised, showcasing the expanding scope and potential of winter sports in Ladakh.

Executive Councillors, Councillors from LAHDC Kargil, Kargil SSP Nitin Yadav, ADC Inteeaz Kacho, School Education Director Tsering Paldan, YSS Joint Director Tahir Hussain, officials from YSS, Curling Federation of India and other senior officials were also present on the occasion.

ED seizes Rs 49 lakh from woman's bank account in narco-terror funding

Srinagar, Jan 16: The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Srinagar Zonal Office, has provisionally attached proceeds of crime amounting to ₹48,99,500 under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. The attached amount was lying in the bank account of Syed Sadaf Andrabi, wife of accused Abdul Momin Peer, in a case related to the smuggling and sale of narcotic drugs for generating illegal funds to nourish and propagate terror activities in Jammu and Kashmir.

According to a statement, the ED initiated its investigation on the basis of an FIR and charge sheet filed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), Jammu, following the arrest of Abdul Momin Peer by the Jammu and Kashmir Police in 2020. He was apprehended during checking at a checkpoint in Handwara with six kilograms of heroin and ₹20 lakh in cash.

Subsequently, the NIA also seized ₹1.15 crore in cash and 15 kilograms of heroin from the relatives and associates of the accused.

Further investigation in the case is underway.



graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner Secretary to the Government, Industries & Commerce Department, Guest of Honour. The inauguration ceremony was also attended by senior officers from the Industries & Commerce Department and

other officials. During the inauguration, Deputy Chief Minister interacted with the participating artisans and appreciated the quality, creativity, and rich cultural value of the products on display.

He underscored the significance of such platforms in

enhancing artisan livelihoods, promoting indigenous crafts, and strengthening national-level market linkages. He also commended JK-TPO's sustained efforts in promoting Jammu & Kashmir's rich craft heritage through such dedicated platforms.

Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, Vikramjit Singh expressed his sincere gratitude to the Deputy Chief Minister for gracing the occasion. He encouraged artisans and participants from different regions to continue showcasing the diversity of cultures and traditions represented at the exhibition and assured con-

tinued support of the Government of J&K for organizing similar initiatives in the future.

Managing Director, JK-TPO, Sudershan Kumar warmly welcomed the dignitaries and acknowledged the institutional support extended by the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles.

He appreciated the enthusiasm and commitment of the participating artisans and appealed the general public to visit Jammu Haat to experience the vibrant artistic showcase and craftsmanship on display.