

POONCH MIRROR

MONTHLY | POONCH | RNI NO.: JKBIL/25/A5203 | DECEMBER 2025 | VOL. 1 | ISSUE NO. 1 | PAGES: 8 | PRICE: ₹ 5/-

Dense Fog and Cold Wave Disrupt Transport and Daily Life in Jammu Region

Jammu: A persistent spell of dense fog combined with a sharp cold wave disrupted normal life across the Jammu region over the past two days, affecting road traffic, public transport and routine activities.

Early morning visibility dropped significantly, leading to traffic conges

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Centre Pushes for Greater Integration of Traditional Medicine

New Delhi: The Union Government has reiterated its commitment to promoting traditional systems of medicine alongside modern healthcare, highlighting their potential role in preventive care and wellness.

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Major Infrastructure Projects Approved to Boost Dev in Poonch

Poonch: Poonch district is set to receive a significant development boost with the approval of two major infrastructure projects aimed at improving connectivity and public facilities.

Officials said the projects would address long-standing demands related to road access and essential

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Poonch Administration Launches Comprehensive Drive to Improve School Education

Poonch: In a major administrative initiative, the district administration in Poonch has launched a comprehensive drive aimed at improving academic standards and infrastructure in government schools.

Officials said inspections are being conducted to assess teacher attendance, classroom practices,

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Administrative Promotions Signal Focus on Continuity and Efficiency

Jammu: The promotion of senior officers within the administrative framework of Jammu & Kashmir has been viewed as a step towards ensuring continuity and efficiency in governance.

Officials described the promotions as part of routine service matters, aimed at strengthening leadership

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Weather Department Forecasts Prolonged Cold Spell in J&K

Srinagar/Jammu: Weather authorities have forecast a prolonged cold spell across Jammu & Kashmir, warning of below-normal temperatures in the coming days.

District administrations have been asked to remain prepared to assist vulnerable populations. Citizens were advised to take precautions against extreme cold

Beloved and victorious Tricolor fly high in the world: LG Sinha

JAMMU: On Vijay Diwas, Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today unveiled the 108-foot high mast National Flag at Kachrial in Akhnoor.

The Lieutenant Governor paid homage to the martyrs, soldiers and officers, who made the country proud by their valour and sacrifice during 1971 war. He also felicitated the War Veterans and Veer Naris and saluted their courage and sacrifice for the nation.

“The land of Kachrial not only holds historical significance but it is also a holy land for the countrymen as every inch of this place gratefully remembers those brave soldiers who laid down their lives while guarding sovereignty and integrity of the nation



in 1965 and 1971 wars,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor congratulated the General Officer Commanding, White Knight Corps (16 Corps), Lieutenant General PK Mishra of this

very thoughtful gesture of installing the 108 feet high mast national flag.

He also appreciated the Flag Foundation of India for its remarkable contribution in this historic initiative.

“May our beloved and victorious Tricolour fly high in the world. Our tricolour is a symbol of our freedom, of our self-respect, and of sacrifices and martyrdom. Together, we should march to achieve the lofty vision of

making India a Developed Nation,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

Shri Satish Sharma, Minister for Youth Services & Sports, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science & Technology, Information Technology, ARI & Trainings; Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C), Northern Command; Lt Gen P K Mishra, GOC White Knight Corps (16 Corps); Maj Gen HS Brar GOC 10 RAPID; Brig. Dayanand Sharma, Commander Pallanwala Brigade, Maj. Gen. Ashim Kohli (Retd), Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Flag Foundation of India; senior officials; War Veterans, Veer naris and students were present.

Heightened Security Measures in Pir Panjal Belt as Winter Sets In

Rajouri-Poonch: Security agencies have intensified vigilance across the Pir Panjal region, including Rajouri and Poonch districts, as winter conditions limit mobility and increase operational challenges.

Officials said additional deployments, area domination patrols and surveillance measures have been put in place as part of routine seasonal preparedness. The focus remains on main-



taining peace and ensuring that border and hinterland areas remain secure during

the harsh winter months. Coordination between the Army, police and other

security agencies has been strengthened, with regular reviews of ground-level inputs.

Authorities stressed that the measures are preventive and aimed at reassuring the public.

Residents have been advised to cooperate with security personnel and report any unusual activity. Officials reiterated that civilian safety and normalcy remain the top priorities.

Centre Reviews Development Priorities in Jammu & Kashmir, Reaffirms Financial Support

Jammu: The Union Government has undertaken a comprehensive review of development priorities in Jammu & Kashmir, reaffirming its commitment to sustained financial and

administrative support for key infrastructure and welfare initiatives across the Union Territory.

Senior officials said that flagship schemes relating

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Centre Says UT Governance Decisions Driven by Public Interest

Jammu: The Union Government has stated that all decisions related to Union Territory governance are guided by public interest, long-term stability and inclusive development.

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Winter Session of Parliament Ends After Key Legislative Business



New Delhi: The Winter Session of Parliament concluded after days of deliberations marked by intense debates, interruptions and the passage of several important Bills with long-term implications for governance and administration.

During the session, the government introduced and secured approval for legislative measures aimed at reforming administrative processes, improving

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Good Governance Week campaign begins in Poonch under “Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore”

Central Prabhari Officer reviews progress achieved in Mankote block under ABP; public outreach camp held at Panchayat Sagra

POONCH: The Good Governance Week campaign under the nationwide initiative “Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore” was launched across the Poonch District.

Inaugural events were held across sub-divisions and tehsils, including Surankote, Mendhar, Mandi, Balakote, Mankote and Haveli. A series of field visits, inspections and public outreach programmes were conducted on the first day.

District Development Commissioner Ashok Kumar Sharma visited Panchayat Sagra, accompany-

ing Central Prabhari Officer for Aspirational Block Mankote Vivek Gupta.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Tahir Mustafa Malik; SDM Mendar Imran Kataria; ACD Shakeel Amhed Malik; DSEO (Nodal Officer ABP) Javid Ahmed; Chief Education Officer, Mukhtar Manhas; Tehsildar Mankote Maroof Ahmed Qadri; Executive Engineers, BDOs, Block and other concerned officers accompanied the CPO.

The Central Prabhari Officer inspected the health centre, Government High School, Tehsil Office and



Anganwadi Centre to assess service delivery and infrastructure facilities at these institutions.

During the camp, issues

related to the Health, Social Welfare, Education, Agriculture and allied departments were discussed in detail.

The Central Prabhari Officer directed the BDO and BMO to conduct inspections across all 11 health institutions in Block Mankote and submit a detailed report, highlighting infrastructure gaps and bottlenecks. He also instructed the CDPO and ABP Fellow to rectify data discrepancies in the JJM database and emphasized that corrections are essential for accurate KPI performance.

Further, directions were issued to the Lead Bank Manager to install an ATM at Mankote at the earliest to

improve banking facilities for the local population.

Emphasizing the importance of education, the chair directed the concerned departments to adopt measures such as parent-teacher meetings and door-to-door awareness campaigns to enhance student retention and transition rates, with special focus on female students.

Meanwhile, SDM Surankote Farood Khan and concerned Tehsildars conducted Good Governance Week activities and public interactions in their respective jurisdictions.

Centre Reviews Implementation of Flagship Schemes in Jammu & Kashmir

New Delhi/Jammu: The Union Government has undertaken a detailed review of the implementation of major flagship schemes in Jammu & Kashmir, focusing on progress, fund utilisation and delivery of benefits at the grassroots level.

Officials said schemes related to rural development, drinking water supply, healthcare, education, housing and employment generation were discussed during the review.

Particular emphasis was laid on identifying gaps in execution and ensuring that intended beneficiaries are not left out due to administrative delays or procedural hurdles.

The UT administration presented district-wise data highlighting achievements as well as challenges faced in difficult terrain and border areas. Central ministries assured continued coordination and technical support to overcome bottlenecks.

Sources indicated that monitoring mechanisms will be further strengthened, with greater reliance on field inspections and real-time reporting to improve accountability.

Centre Highlights Role of States and UTs in Achieving Development Goals

New Delhi: The Union Government has highlighted the critical role of states and Union Territories in achieving national development goals, stressing cooperative federalism and collaborative governance.

Officials stated that effective coordination between the Centre and states/UTs is necessary to ensure uniform implementation of policies and schemes. Regular consultations and review meetings are being held to address region-specific challenges.

The emphasis on cooperation is aimed at bridging regional disparities and ensuring inclusive growth across the country.

Experts Call for Balanced Approach to Development & Environmental Protection

New Delhi/Jammu: Policy experts and environmental specialists have called for a balanced approach to development that takes into account environmental sustainability and long-term ecological impact.

They stressed that infrastructure development must be planned carefully, particularly in ecologically sensitive regions. Officials acknowledged the importance of environmental safeguards and said necessary clearances and impact assessments are integral to project planning.

The discussion reflects a growing awareness of the need to harmonise development objectives with environmental responsibility.

87 teachers served notices, one suspended over MDM, Academic Lapses in Poonch

RAJOURI: In a firm move to enforce accountability and improve the quality of education and student welfare, the Chief Education Officer (CEO) Rajouri Mohammad Hafiz has served explanation notices to 87 Masters and Teachers and placed one teacher under suspension after conducting district-wide surprise inspection of government schools.

The action followed the constitution of a panel of senior officers by the CEO to monitor regularity, punctuality, work culture, academic standards and effective implementation of the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Scheme. The inspection teams conducted comprehensive surprise inspections of government schools across district Rajouri on December 18.

As per inspection reports, 14 schools were found providing substandard Mid-Day Meals not in conformity with the approved menu, raising serious

concerns over students' nutritional well-being. In 10 schools, discrepancies were detected between actual student attendance and the data uploaded on the ARMs portal.

The inspections further revealed misutilization of School Infrastructure Fund (SIF) in 13 schools, while 9 schools had improperly utilized Samagra Shiksha grants.

In another 9 schools, items shown as purchased were not physically available during inspection. Additionally, 15 schools failed to maintain mandatory store stock registers, indicating serious financial and administrative lapses.

On the academic front, 5 schools were found lacking proper checking of students' notebooks, while 13 schools exhibited poor academic performance. Moreover, 8 schools showed unsatisfactory facelifting and maintenance of

school buildings despite the availability of funds. Taking a serious view of these lapses, the CEO Rajouri has directed the concerned 87 Masters and Teachers to submit their written explanations through their respective Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) within two days.

It has been made clear that failure to respond within the stipulated time frame will invite strict disciplinary action under rules without any further notice.

Meanwhile, Khalil Ahmed, Teacher, MS Padyara (Zone Peeri), has been placed under suspension for negligence and non-maintenance of Mid-Day Meal records.

During the suspension period, he shall remain attached to HS Treru (Zone Moghla) and will be entitled to suspension allowance as per rules.

Parliamentary Committees to Examine Key Policy Issues in Coming Months

New Delhi: Several Parliamentary Standing Committees are set to examine important policy matters in the coming months, following the conclusion of the Winter Session of Parliament.

According to officials, committees will review subjects related to public finance, internal security, social welfare and infrastructure development.

The process involves detailed scrutiny of government policies, interaction

with experts and submission of recommendations to Parliament.

Members across party lines have emphasised the importance of committee work in strengthening democratic oversight and informed law-making. Observers note that committee recommendations often play a crucial role in shaping future policy decisions. The committee meetings are expected to begin shortly, with reports likely to be submitted in phases.

Jammu & Kashmir Administration Focuses on Winter Preparedness Measures

Jammu: With winter conditions intensifying, the Jammu & Kashmir administration has stepped up preparedness measures to ensure uninterrupted essential services and support for vulnerable populations.

Officials said arrangements have been made to maintain electricity and water supply, keep major roads operational and ensure availability of healthcare services. District administrations have been directed to identify vulner-

able areas and populations requiring special assistance.

Temporary shelters, distribution of blankets and emergency medical facilities are part of the winter preparedness plan.

Authorities stressed that coordination among departments is key to addressing challenges posed by extreme cold.

Citizens have been urged to follow advisories and cooperate with officials during the winter period.

Administrative Reforms Aim to Improve Public Service Delivery

Jammu: The UT administration has reiterated its focus on administrative reforms aimed at improving efficiency, transparency and responsiveness in public service delivery. Officials said steps are being taken to streamline procedures, reduce delays and enhance the use of technology in governance. Online services, grievance redressal platforms and digital record management are among the areas receiving attention.

The reforms are expected to reduce inconvenience to citizens and improve trust in public institutions. Senior officers have been instructed to regularly review service delivery mechanisms and address public grievances promptly.

The administration emphasised that sustained reform efforts are essential for long-term governance improvement.

District-Level Mega Agriculture Workshop for youth organized at Poonch under JKCIIP

POONCH: The Department of Agriculture Poonch today organized a district-level mega sensitization and educational workshop for youth under the Knowledge & Management component of Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) 2025-26 and the Jammu & Kashmir Climate Investment Project (JKCIIP).

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from 250 individuals, including 87 selected Krishi Udhayamis, members of 10 youth clubs, self help groups and farmers from across the district.

District Development Commissioner (DDC), Ashok Sharma presided over the event as the Chief Guest. A booklet on JKCIIP was also released on the occasion.

In his address, the DDC highlighted the pivotal role of youth in nation-building and urged Krishi Udhayamis and youth club members to act as change agents in their respective communities by imparting knowledge gained through such events to the fellow youths and the farming community. He empha-



sized that JKCIIP aims to empower young entrepreneurs, promote start-ups in agriculture and allied sectors and create sustainable livelihood opportunities, encouraging youth to become job creators rather than job seekers through adoption of modern, climate-resilient and market-oriented practices.

Chief Agriculture Officer, Jograj Singh Slathia highlighted the significance of youth engagement in shaping a forward-looking agricultural ecosystem. He urged participants to utilize the training for community development, with a focus on environmental awareness and climate change mitigation. He described the JKCIIP project as a transformative step towards integrating innovation, digital tools, and sustainable practices such

as hydroponics and precision farming into agriculture.

He informed the gathering that three blocks — Lassana, Surankote, and Mendhar have been selected in Poonch district for the implementation of JKCIIP, covering 15,832 households, including 7,441 women (47%), 4,749 youth (30%), and 1,583 members of vulnerable communities (10%). He also reiterated the potential of Mandi-Loran Rajmash, the district's specialty crop, along with mushroom cultivation, bee keeping and protective vegetable farming aligning with the market demand. "Krishi Udhayamis Youth clubs, FPOs could play a major role in promoting online services, marketing of local produce, plantation drives, waste management and awareness activities

related to the project", he added.

During the event, a detailed presentation on introduction and objectives of JKCIIP scheme was presented by the Chief Agriculture Officer. The district officers from allied sectors viz Horticulture, Fisheries and Animal & Sheep Husbandry, Lead District Manager, CSC Manager along with the officers and officials of agriculture department including Sub-divisional level officers and field functionaries also participated in the workshop, delivered lectures and promoted departmental schemes, innovations and best practices from their respective sectors.

The proceedings of the event were conducted by SMS-SDL, Charanjeet Singh Raina.

Farmers from far-flung areas of the district took part enthusiastically, turning the event into a vibrant platform for knowledge sharing, interaction, and capacity building. During the programme, booklets related to JKCIIP activities were also distributed among youth clubs.

District Administration Poonch Intensifies Drive Against Administrative Lapses

Poonch: The district administration in Poonch has intensified its efforts to identify and address administrative lapses across various government departments, signalling a renewed focus on accountability and service delivery.

Senior officials said that a series of internal reviews and inspections have been initiated to assess the functioning of key offices, particularly those dealing with public-facing services such as education, health, revenue and rural development. The exercise aims to ensure that government schemes and welfare mea-

asures are implemented in a transparent and timely manner.

Officials indicated that disciplinary action may be initiated wherever serious irregularities or negligence are found. At the same time, departments have been advised to rectify procedural shortcomings and improve coordination.

The administration stated that strengthening governance at the grassroots level is essential for restoring public trust and ensuring effective delivery of services, especially in a border district like Poonch.

Education Sector Under Scanner as Poonch Reviews Academic Performance

Poonch: Concerns over academic standards in government schools have prompted the Poonch district administration to undertake a detailed review of the education sector, officials confirmed.

The review focuses on teacher attendance, syllabus completion, student performance and availability of basic infrastructure such as classrooms, sanitation facilities and teaching aids. Education officers have been directed to conduct surprise inspections and submit

comprehensive reports.

Officials said the objective is not merely punitive action but systemic improvement. Special emphasis is being laid on addressing learning gaps among students, particularly in remote and border areas where access to quality education remains a challenge.

Parents and local stakeholders have welcomed the move, expressing hope that sustained monitoring will lead to visible improvements in educational outcomes.

Border Villages in Poonch Face Winter Hardships, Administration Steps In

Poonch: Residents of border villages in Poonch district are facing increased hardships as winter conditions intensify, with freezing temperatures and limited mobility affecting daily life.

Local officials said measures have been taken to ensure availability of essential supplies, health-

care services and heating arrangements. Mobile medical units and emergency response teams have been kept on standby to cater to vulnerable populations, including the elderly and children.

The administration has also reviewed the condition of roads leading to remote villages to ensure con-

nectivity during adverse weather. Community representatives stressed the need for sustained support during the winter months, particularly for those living close to the Line of Control.

Authorities assured residents that all necessary steps are being taken to mitigate the impact of harsh weather conditions.

Development Works in Poonch Reviewed, Focus on Timely Completion

Poonch: Ongoing development works in Poonch district have come under review as the administration emphasised the importance of timely completion and quality standards.

Officials said projects related to road construction, drinking water supply, public buildings

and rural infrastructure were assessed during recent review meetings. Contractors and executing agencies have been instructed to adhere strictly to project timelines.

The administration warned that delays without valid reasons would not be tolerated and could invite penalties. At

the same time, officials acknowledged challenges posed by weather and terrain, stating that necessary support would be provided to facilitate progress.

The review is part of broader efforts to ensure that development initiatives translate into tangible benefits for local communities.

Health Department Strengthens Services as Seasonal Illnesses Rise

Poonch: The Health Department in Poonch has stepped up preparedness as hospitals and primary health centres report an increase in seasonal illnesses linked to cold weather.

Medical officials said cases of respiratory infections, fever and joint-related ailments have risen in recent weeks. Additional staff and medical supplies have been arranged to handle the increased patient load.

Awareness campaigns have been launched to educate people about preventive measures, including maintaining hygiene, staying warm and seeking timely medical attention. Special attention is being given to remote areas with limited access to healthcare facilities. Health authorities urged citizens not to ignore symptoms and to utilise government health services.

Public Grievance Redressal Mechanism Gets Boost in Poonch

Poonch: In an effort to improve responsiveness and transparency, the Poonch district administration has strengthened its public grievance redressal mechanism.

Officials said regular grievance hearings are being held to address issues related to revenue matters, welfare benefits, infrastructure and public utilities. Departments have been directed to dispose of complaints within stipulated timelines.

The administration noted that effective grievance redressal is essential for citizen satisfaction and trust in governance. Steps are being taken to track complaints digitally and ensure follow-up action.

Residents have been encouraged to use official channels to raise grievances rather than resorting to informal means.

Rural Livelihoods in Focus as Administration Reviews Welfare Schemes

Poonch: The district administration has reviewed the implementation of rural livelihood and welfare schemes aimed at supporting farmers, labourers and self-help groups in Poonch.

Officials said the review covered employment generation programmes, agricultural support measures and skill development initiatives. Emphasis was

laid on ensuring that benefits reach eligible beneficiaries without delays.

Local officials were instructed to conduct awareness drives to inform people about available schemes and application procedures. The administration stated that strengthening rural livelihoods is key to economic stability and social well-being in the district

Revenue officials imparted skill training on digitization of land records in Poonch

POONCH: The Revenue department Poonch organised a training for Tehsildars, Naib Tehsildars, GQs and patwaris under the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP)

The training focused on Digitization of the Revenue record and freezing of digitized jammabandies. While taking stock of the progress achieved so far, Deputy Commissioner Ashok Kumar Sharma emphasized ensuring accuracy, transparency and timely completion of digitization activities.

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH: "Good governance is not judged by promises made, but by relief delivered when it is needed the most."

Poonch Mirror: Reflecting the Soul of a Frontier – Paving Paths to Shared Prosperity

AJAZ MADNI

In the shadow of the Pir Panjal's eternal sentinels, where the Line of Control etches a fragile line between memory and hope, a new mirror emerges for Poonch. This is no ordinary broadsheet; it is the unfiltered gaze of a district forged in the fires of history, now turning inward to reclaim its destiny. Our pledge: to hold up truths long obscured, to echo the stories of shepherds and scholars alike, and to illuminate roads literal and metaphorical that lead not to division, but to dawn.

The December frost clings to the eaves of Poonch town's weathered bazaars like a reluctant farewell to autumn's warmth, while the call to prayer drifts from the spires of the historic Jamia Masjid in Mandi, mingling with the whisper of wind through the dense pine forests of Dehra Gali. It is here, in this cradle of contrasts where azure skies meet jagged peaks and the Poonch River's gentle murmur belies the scars of strife that Poonch Mirror takes its first breath. As our inaugural monthly edition graces your hands, we do not arrive as interlopers but as kin, chronicling the quiet revolutions of a community that has endured more than its share of tempests. Spanning 1,674 square kilometers of undulating terrain in the northwest reaches of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory, Poonch cradles over 450,000 souls—mostly Pahari-speaking Muslims and Hindus whose rhythms sync with the harvest cycles, the migratory flights of Kashmiri stags, and the vigilant hush along the de facto border with Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. This land, with its terraced orchards heavy with walnut bounty and meadows ablaze in wild rhododendrons, is a poet's reverie wrapped in pragmatism's cloak: a realm of profound beauty, yes, but one shadowed by the weight of unrealized potential.

The seismic shift of 2019, when Jammu and Kashmir shed its special status to embrace Union Territory governance, was touted as a clarion call for equity and acceleration a deluge of Delhi's dollars meant to irrigate parched aspirations. Initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) have spun webs of rural roads through the hills, while Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan funnels resources into classrooms long starved of chalk and promise. Yet, as 2025 wanes, the harvest in Poonch tastes bittersweet, uneven as the monsoon rains that drench some slopes while sparing others. The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) for July-September 2025 lays bare the unease: Jammu and Kashmir's unemployment ticked up to 6.1%, edging past the national 5.2%, but in Poonch's urban enclaves, it surges to a staggering 32% for youth aged 15-29. These aren't

sterile figures etched in spreadsheets; they are the lived elegies of ambition deferred. Picture Rahul, a lanky engineering aspirant from Surankote, who navigated the virtual labyrinths of IIT lectures amid COVID lockdowns, only to find his degree gathering dust in a family dhaba, overshadowed by a job market choked with credentialed idlers. Or consider Aisha in Mendhar, her nimble fingers schooled in the intricate weaves of Pahari shawls, now idle for want of markets that stretch beyond the local haat Poonch's woolen heirlooms, once traded across the LoC, now languish in obscurity.

Geography, that inexorable sculptor, amplifies these fissures. Poonch unfurls like a horseshoe of defiant hills, its flanks grazed by the LoC, where echoes of 1947's partition still reverberate in the occasional crackle of artillery—though blessedly muted since the abrogation. Investor wariness lingers, a ghost in the machine of progress, even as cross-border confidence-building measures flicker like distant stars. The 2025 floods in the Chenab catchment, fueled by rampant deforestation in upstream watersheds, gnawed at riverbanks and marooned hamlets like Balakot, stranding families in a tableau of sodden despair. The Poonch-Rajouri highway, that vital artery pulsing from this frontier to Jammu's winter bustle, persists as a gauntlet of craters and cascade-vulnerable bends, where a simple commute morphs into an odyssey ambulances grinding to halts, school vans veering into ravines. Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhry's field inspection just last month spotlighted incremental triumphs: girders rising for span bridges, filaments igniting in off-grid outposts. But the devils in the details persist languid fund disbursements, labyrinthine land compensations that balloon timelines from moon cycles to monsoons. In a district where seven in ten souls till the earth or tend groves of apples and apricots, these delays aren't footnotes; they are foreclosures on futures, harvests rotting in the field while debts swell like storm clouds.

Education, that supposed ladder from the mire to the mountaintop, creaks under similar strain. Poonch's literacy stands at 66.74%—a hardy bloom in border soil, with men at 78.84%—yet the rift for women gapes at 53.19%, a chasm carved by custom and circumstance. Across the UT, government schools have contracted from 23,874 in 2014-15 to 18,785 by 2023-24, victims of consolidation and waning rolls, orphaning far-flung clusters in tehsils like Buzfiya where the nearest blackboard is a half-day's hike. Dropouts cascade after Class 5, girls foremost, threading patriarchal tapestries and arduous paths to skeletal high schools. The NCERT's 2025 UT dossier on Jammu and Kashmir

indicts the gaps: teachers adrift without upskilling, digital dreams dashed by flickering grids and 4G's phantom signals. Ponder the poignant irony—a domain laced with Mughal relics like the Krishna Ghati redoubt, bastions of ancient intellect, now wrestling a 20%-plus void in its cadre of 200 primary outposts. In these hollowed halls, children like little Fatima from a Loran fringe village recite rote verses by lantern light, their horizons hemmed not by peaks, but by the poverty of possibility.

The specter of ecological fragility haunts these narratives like a persistent fog. Poonch's woodlands—blanketing over 60% of its expanse in a verdant quilt of chir pine, deodar, and broadleaf sanctuaries teem with markhor grazing ethereal slopes and black bears lumbering through underbrush, biodiversity's unsung chorus. Yet, these lungs of the landscape gasp under axes of opportunism and wildfires fanned by a warming clime. Eco-tourism's siren song, hymned in feasibility tomes as a salve for the district's ledgers via Loran Valley's alpine idylls and Poonch Fort's storied ramparts, courts peril without reins. A 2025 monograph on Poonch's visitor vista cautions: windfalls in rupees shadowed by habitats hemorrhaged and aquifers siphoned, as populist guesthouses tax the Tawi's subterranean veins. Rustic sojourns Pahari harvest jamborees, trails lined with blooming cherries beckon with cultural nectar, but sans stewardship, they sour into streams clogged with castoffs and pastures pockmarked by hooves unbound. Climate's capricious hand, in monsoons askew and glaciers receding from Pir Panjal's brow, imperils the very endowments that might recast Poonch from periphery to paragon.

These tribulations indict no malice, only a machinery miscalibration to the post-Article 370 ethos. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's swing through Poonch earlier this fall, hammering "tangible footprints in the turf," heralds fresh momentum: outlays for vocational nexuses, photovoltaic pulses for arid furrows. Top-down edicts, however, demand the yeast of bottom-up babel the murmurs of Poonch's thronged souks or the barbers at Chakan-da-Bagh's erstwhile trade marts to rise into real reform.

To plumb Poonch's plight is to peer into the kaleidoscope of India's marches arenas where the drumbeat of defense drowns the cadence of nurture. Fiscally, the district's per-head yield trails the UT's median, lashed to the plow of maize paddies, walnut bowers, and crocus kin to saffron's spice. Joblessness transcends ledgers; it fractures fabrics. A 2025 sectoral sketch from the divisional commissariat mourns the discord: a youth swell cresting 40% under

25, pitted against a dearth of honed vocations, with 15% fleeing annually to metropolises' maws. This brain bleed starves the cradle, bequeathing elders to mechanization's mercy amid fertilizer's fiscal bite.

The sinews of infrastructure strain audibly. Monsoon '25's deluge, inundating a fifth of Poonch's nadir zones, unmasked levees' laughable leanness along the Poonch's serpentine course a dirge repeated, absconding herds and tilled tracts to crores in calamity. Blackouts, winter's wont when hydro hearts hibernate, sabotage silos of stone fruit and screens of scholarship. Minister Javed Rana's summons to hasten kilowatt quests rings true, yet sans slashing line losses tallied at 25% in LoC-lapped blocks these are poultices on punctures profound.

Learning's ledges fracture finer. The UT's PARAKH prism lauds Poonch's 95% fealty to midday repasts, but skewers the scaffolding: a third of academies sans sanitary sanctums, repelling maidens from mats, and STEM suites as sepia relics in AI's ascendancy. The gender gulf endures, moored in mores that exalt nuptials nascent over tomes tertiary, female ingress to higher ed a meager 12%. Salubrity's scaffold echoes: Poonch's nodal infirmary, burnished anew, founders on specialist scarcities, shunting supplicants on a 200-km crucible to Jammu's wards, over thoroughfares treacherous as tempests.

Ecologically, Poonch perches on a razor's ridge. Its allure for green wanderers pilgrimages to Baba Ghundi's ziarat, avian vigils in Balakot's bogs portends 10,000 sojourners yearly, per a 2023 probe refreshed in '25. Indigenous insights, gleaned from livelihood lenses, unveil trepidation at tourism's two faces: coffer brimming clashing with customs corroded and canopies crushed, trails trash-tangled and commons cropped to caltrops. Anomalies in downpours and Pir Panjal's ice thaw menace the sine qua non of reinvention.

These strands idleness, illiteracy, rot in routes, rift in realms green weave woe's warp. Yet, despondency dwells not in our dictionary; assaying ailments heralds healing's hymn.

Poonch Mirror strides into this scrimmage not as foe, but forge. As monthly mainstay, we vow vivisections of verdicts with critique's keen edge, citizen soliloquies via columns and countryside dispatches, parleys to plank the gulf 'twixt mandarins and masses. Our lodestar: bold, bedded—a Poonch where the LoC limns legacies joint, not jags; where the young forge, not flee; where summits spawn sustenance evergreen.

For livelihoods, localize the lash. Harness the UT's '25 aptitude arsenal to seed agronomy anchors in Surankote, schooling 5,000 fledglings yearly in

smart sowing and net bazaars for walnut windfalls Poonch's pecuniary phoenix, reaping 20,000 tonnes betimes. Triads of polity and purse might resurrect LoC liaisons, halted since '19, infusing 500 crore rupees while weaving weft of amity. For the fairer flank, enclaves of enterprise in ethnics Pahari pashminas, Basohli's bold brushes lashed to web emporia, might mow urban youth joblessness from 32% to slivers in ten tides.

Thoroughfares thirst for thrust. Beckon a Poonch Panorama 2030, foregrounding foul-weather veins via Bharatmala's second surge, a billion rupees ringed for ramparts 'gainst floods. Photonic pods for 50 fringe folds would quench blackout brumal, fueling cottage crafts and cyber clinics. Vouchsafes of verdict trimesters' townhalls, trialed in Rajouri must transmute treasury to tar, not to tomes of graft.

Learning's levy demands leveling. Refit roosts with rooms for repose gendered, muster 500 roving mentors for strays' reclamation, aiming 90% maiden script by 2030's gate. Weave Pahari parables into primers via hamlet heralds, husbanding heritage while kindling quests. Ethernet escalators—ultra-broad in 100 nodal nests—might mete platforms as SWAYAM, minting Poonch J&K's lore of learning lit.

For firmament and footfalls, stewardship is scripture. Herald hamlets' hostels in Loran, birthing 2,000 berths with barren bans on dross. Afforestation anthems, mustering myriad hands under Verdant Vale, could reconquer 5,000 hectares harried by harm. In statute, spur sequestration scrip for nut groves, pegging Poonch as emerald envoy in Bharat's zero-sum vow.

This cartouche is choral; its colors from communal canvas. Dispatch missives to editor@poonchmirror.com. We shall shadow strides, salute surges like the luminous linking of 200 nooks and scourge sloth, all abetting the amalgam that animates Poonch: creeds conjoined beneath communal crests.

With 2025's curtain call, Poonch Mirror poises at portal's precipice not herald of hegemony, but horn for the hearth. Echoing Allama Iqbal, kin to these kerfs, Tuloo-e-Islam se hai tamanna dil mein hamari hearts harbor the hill-climb, a sunrise where Poonch's progeny claim not clay alone, but chronicles of command.

The trail is toil, the tors unyielding, but annals acclaim the adamant. Enlist in this epic: peruse, ponder, proclaim. For in oneness, Poonch persists not it prevails.

Long live Poonch! Long live its luminous tomorrow!

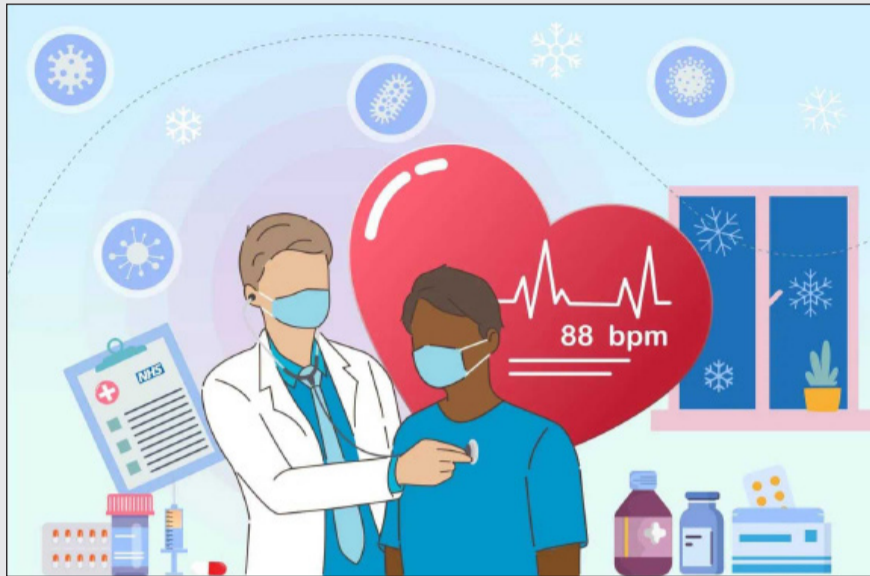
(Disclaimer: These reflections are the editorial collective's own, unbound to partisan banners. For memberships and missives, alight at poonchmirror.)

Public Hospitals Face Seasonal Pressure as Winter Illnesses Rise

Jammu/Srinagar: Public hospitals across Jammu & Kashmir are witnessing a steady rise in patients suffering from seasonal illnesses as winter conditions intensify, putting additional pressure on already stretched healthcare facilities.

Doctors report an increase in cases related to respiratory infections, influenza-like symptoms, joint pain and complications arising from prolonged exposure to cold weather. Children, senior citizens and those with pre-existing health conditions are among the most affected.

Health officials said additional medical staff have been deployed in major hospitals, while district administrations have



been asked to ensure availability of essential medicines and heating arrangements in healthcare facilities. Special attention is being given to primary

health centres in rural and remote areas, where access to advanced medical care remains limited.

Medical experts emphasised the importance of

preventive care, urging citizens to stay warm, maintain hygiene and seek timely medical attention instead of resorting to self-medication.

Civil Society Organisations Step Up Support for Vulnerable Communities



Jammu/Srinagar: Civil society organisations and volunteers have intensified efforts to support vulnerable communities during the winter months, providing relief in the form of warm clothing, food supplies and medical assistance.

These initiatives have complemented government efforts, particularly in urban slums and remote villages. Volunteers highlighted the importance of community participation and empathy in addressing social challenges.

Authorities acknowledged the role of civil society and encouraged coordination to ensure that relief reaches those most in need without duplication or gaps.

Education Department Pushes for Improved Learning Outcomes in Government Schools

Jammu: The Education Department has renewed its focus on improving learning outcomes in government schools, following concerns over academic performance and student retention.

Officials said measures are being taken to strengthen classroom teaching, ensure syllabus completion and address learning gaps among students. Teacher training programmes and academic monitoring mechanisms are being reinforced to enhance the quality of education.

Special initiatives are



being planned for students in rural and border areas, where challenges such as staff shortages and limited resources affect learning continuity. Education officers have been directed to closely monitor attendance

and teaching standards.

Parents and education activists have welcomed the move, while stressing that sustained effort and accountability will be key to achieving long-term improvements.

Mental Health Concerns Gain Attention Amid Social and Economic Stress

Jammu/Srinagar: Mental health concerns are gradually gaining attention in Jammu & Kashmir as social and economic pressures continue to affect large sections of the population.

Health professionals note a rise in anxiety, stress and depression, particularly among youth and working-age adults. Factors such as unemployment, academic pressure and uncertainty about the future have contributed to growing mental health challenges.

Authorities said counselling services and awareness programmes are being expanded at district hospitals and educa-



tional institutions. Experts stressed that mental health must be treated with the same seriousness as physical health.

Social stigma remains a

major barrier, prompting calls for sustained awareness campaigns to encourage people to seek professional help without fear or hesitation.

Women-Centric Welfare Schemes Show Mixed Results on Ground

Jammu/Srinagar: Women-centric welfare schemes aimed at improving financial independence and social security have shown mixed results across different districts, according to field observations.

While many beneficiaries have gained access to financial assistance, skill training and self-employment opportunities, gaps remain in awareness, timely disbursement and follow-up support.

Officials acknowledged that better coordination between departments and local institutions is needed to ensure effective implementation. Women self-



help groups have played a key role in promoting participation, but challenges such as market access and sustainability persist.

Experts stressed that empowerment initiatives must go beyond financial aid and focus on long-term capacity building.

Youth Skill Development Programmes Target Employability Gaps

Jammu: The government has stepped up efforts to address employability gaps among youth through skill development and vocational training programmes.

Officials said initiatives focusing on technical skills, entrepreneurship and digital literacy are being implemented in collaboration with training institutions and industry partners. The aim is to align skills with market demand and improve employment prospects.

Youth participants expressed optimism but emphasised the need for stronger placement sup-



port and industry linkages. Experts believe that sustained investment in skill

development is essential for economic stability and social inclusion.

J&K Judicial Academy organises workshop on Enhancing Judicial Sensitivity in Civil Suits

Jammu: Under the patronage of Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Judicial Academy), Arun Palli and guidance of Chairperson and Members of Governing Committee for J&K Judicial Academy, the Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy today organised a one-day workshop on "Enhancing Judicial Sensitivity in the Conduct of Civil Suits" for Civil Judges (Junior Division) of Jammu Province at the J&K Judicial Academy premises, Janipur, Jammu.

The inaugural address was delivered by Justice Rahul Bharti, Judge, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, and Member, Governing Committee of the J&K Judicial Academy. Justice Bharti expressed

concern over the practice of repeated adjournments in civil cases, observing that courts often grant time for years together at the request of both parties, resulting in enormous wastage of judicial time. He remarked that this concern formed the basis for conceptualizing the present programme.

Emphasizing that every case requires 100 percent mental and physical commitment, he cautioned against passing the burden of pending cases to successors and observed that habits formed at the entry level shape efficiency at higher judicial positions.

The first technical session was conducted by Justice Janak Raj Kotwal, Former Judge, High Court of J&K, who deliberated on judicial sensitivity in pleadings, framing of

issues and early-stage case management. He emphasized understanding pleadings beyond technicalities, identifying the real issues in dispute, effective application of Order X of the Code of Civil Procedure and the need to avoid unnecessary adjournments at the initial stages of civil suits.

The second session was addressed by Justice Bansilal Bhat, Former Judge, High Court of J&K, who focused on recording and appreciation of evidence while avoiding procedural rigidity.

The session highlighted the sensitivity during examination and cross-examination of witnesses, maintaining dignity of litigants, appreciating evidence in the light of ground realities and exercising judicial discretion mean-

ingfully to prevent delays caused by non-cooperation of counsel or witnesses.

The third session was conducted by Naseer Ahmad Dar, Director, J&K Judicial Academy, who through a PowerPoint Presentation discussed on balancing the urgency and fairness while deciding interim applications and final adjudication. He emphasized proportionality, equity, sensitivity in socially and emotionally charged disputes, the importance of hearing all parties effectively, delivering reasoned and concise judgments and ensuring timely pronouncement of judgments in accordance with the Code of Civil Procedure.

The sessions were highly interactive and evoked active participation from the judicial officers.

Chief Justice inaugurates newly constructed Court Complex at Hiranagar Kathua

Kathua: Chief Justice High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Justice Arun Palli, today inaugurated newly constructed Court Complex at Hiranagar in a solemn ceremony.

The ceremony was attended by Justice Sanjeev Kumar and Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Administrative Judge for District Kathua.

MK Sharma, Registrar General High Court; Rajeev Gupta Registrar Vigilance; Jatinder Singh Jamwal, Principal District and Sessions Judge Kathua; Vijay Kumar Sharma, MLA Hiranagar; Rajesh Sharma, Deputy Commissioner Kathua; Shiv Kumar Sharma DIG J-K-S Range; Mohita Sharma SSP Kathua and other officers were also present on the occasion.

In his address, the Chief Justice congratulated all stakeholders associated with the completion of the project and stated that creation of such infrastructure is part of sustained efforts to take justice closer to the people. He observed that while infrastructure facilitates access to justice, its effective delivery depends upon the commitment and cooperation of all stakeholders in the justice delivery system.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar expressed satisfaction at witnessing the steady progression of judicial infrastructure in the district, recalling the commencement of the Kathua Court Complex, the residential complex for judicial officers and now the dedication of the Hiranagar Court Complex.

Courts Emphasise Timely Justice and Procedural Fairness

Jammu: Courts across Jammu & Kashmir have reiterated the importance of timely justice and strict adherence to procedural fairness, stressing that delays in adjudication undermine public confidence in the legal system.

Legal experts noted that

recent observations from the judiciary highlight the need for efficient case management, reduction of pendency and greater reliance on technology to streamline court proceedings. Emphasis has also been placed on ensuring that litigants are not subjected to unnecessary procedural hurdles.

Judicial officers have been encouraged to adopt a balanced approach that safeguards the rights of all parties while ensuring expeditious disposal of cases. The observations are seen as a reminder that access to justice must be effective, affordable and timely.

RTI Applications Highlight Gaps in Public Service Delivery

Jammu/Srinagar: Information obtained through the Right to Information (RTI) Act has once again brought to light gaps in public service delivery across several departments in the Union Territory.

Activists said RTI replies have revealed

delays in project execution, incomplete utilisation of allocated funds and lack of proper record maintenance in certain offices. These disclosures have raised questions about internal monitoring mechanisms and accountability.

Officials acknowledged

the role of RTI in promoting transparency and said departments have been instructed to respond promptly and accurately to information requests. Legal experts stressed that proactive disclosure of information could reduce the need for repeated RTI filings.

Legal Awareness Needed on Citizens' Rights in Administrative Matters

Jammu: Legal experts have emphasised the need for greater public awareness regarding citizens' rights in administrative and revenue matters, noting that lack of information often leads to exploitation and prolonged disputes.

Issues such as land records, mutation, certificates and welfare benefits frequently become sources of conflict due to procedural ignorance. Lawyers pointed out that many disputes could be avoided if citizens were better informed about applicable laws and remedies.

Authorities have been urged to conduct legal literacy programmes at the grassroots level, particularly in rural and border districts, to empower people and reduce unnecessary litigation.

Public Interest Litigation Plays Key Role in Accountability

Jammu/Srinagar: Public Interest Litigation (PIL) continues to play a crucial role in holding authorities accountable on issues affecting the wider public, legal observers said.

From environmental protection to governance reforms, PILs have enabled courts to address systemic issues that may otherwise remain unaddressed. However, experts cautioned that PILs must be filed responsibly and not used for personal or publicity-driven motives.

The judiciary has repeatedly stressed the importance of maintaining the sanctity of PIL jurisdiction while ensuring that genuine public causes receive due attention.

Revenue Disputes Remain Major Source of Litigation in District Courts

Jammu/Srinagar: Revenue-related disputes continue to constitute a significant portion of litigation in district courts across the Union Territory, according to legal practitioners.

Land ownership, demarcation, inheritance and tenancy issues frequently result in prolonged legal battles, often spanning years. Lawyers attribute

the problem to outdated records, lack of clarity in documentation and limited awareness of legal procedures.

Experts have called for modernisation of land records and strengthened alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to reduce the burden on courts and provide faster relief to litigants.

Need for Strengthening Legal Aid Services for Marginalised Sections

Jammu: Calls have been made to strengthen legal aid services to ensure access to justice for marginalised and economically weaker sections of society.

Legal aid advocates said that while institutional mechanisms exist, awareness and outreach remain limited. Many eligible beneficiaries are either unaware of their rights or

hesitant to approach legal aid authorities.

Efforts are being suggested to expand legal aid clinics, involve law students and civil society organisations, and use digital platforms to reach underserved communities. Ensuring justice for all, experts stressed, requires not only laws but effective support systems

Justice Sindhu Sharma inaugurates National Lok Adalat at Jammu

Jammu: A National Lok Adalat was held today under the leadership of Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority), Arun Palli and Chairmanship of Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Judge High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Executive Chairman of J&K Legal Services Authority.

The event was held in presence of Justice Sindhu Sharma, Judge High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Administrative Judge for District Jammu and under

the guidance of R. N. Watal, Chairman, District Legal Services Authority (Pr. District & Sessions Judge) Jammu and overall supervision of Maleeka Sharma, Secretary, District Legal Services Authority Jammu.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Judge High Court of J&K and Ladakh and Executive Chairman of J&K Legal Services Authority inaugurated the National Lok Adalat 2025 at District Court Complex, Janipur, Jammu.

Speaking on the occasion, Justice Sanjeev Kumar

emphasized the importance of National Lok Adalat in amicable settlement of long pending disputes.

He also added that alternative dispute resolution is a vital tool in the Justice delivery system which ensures speedy and one time settlement of disputes.

The general masses can take the benefit of Lok Adalats as the award passed by the Lok Adalat Benches attains finality, he added.

Further, while addressing the gathering, Justice Sindhu Sharma highlighted the importance of National

Lok Adalat.

She said it has an important role in resolving the cases by providing fast, affordable and accessible alternative to traditional Courts in India and providing forum which promotes settlement through compromise and mutual agreement fostering harmony between parties and saving time and money for the litigants.

On the occasion, Justice Sanjeev Kumar and Justice Sindhu Sharma also distributed MACT cheques among the claimants.

Life Along the Border: How Poonch Lives With Uncertainty and Resilience

Poonch (Special Feature): Life in the border district of Poonch is shaped by a unique blend of uncertainty and resilience. Nestled along the Line of Control, the region's residents have learned to adapt to challenges that go far beyond ordinary rural hardships.

For villagers living close to the border, routine life is influenced by factors beyond their control—weather extremes, geographical isolation and recurring security concerns. Agriculture, the primary livelihood for many, depends heavily on seasonal conditions, while access to markets and healthcare often involves long and difficult journeys.

Despite these challenges, community life remains vibrant. Local traditions, strong social bonds and a deep attachment to land define the char-



acter of the region. Schools function with limited resources, yet teachers and parents strive to keep education on track.

Youth aspire for stability and opportunity, balancing local realities with dreams shaped by the wider

world.

Administrations come and go, policies change, but the everyday resilience of people remains constant.

In Poonch, survival is not just about endurance—it is about dignity, patience and quiet strength.

Governance at the Grassroots: The District Office as the Citizen's First Court

For most citizens, governance is not experienced through national policies or televised debates. It is encountered at the district office, the tehsil counter or the local block headquarters. These institutions form the first and often most important interface between the state and the citizen.

In districts like Poonch and Rajouri, the role of local administration becomes even more significant. Distance from major urban centres and limited infrastructure mean that efficiency, empathy and responsiveness at the district level directly affect daily life.

Grievance redressal mechanisms, revenue offices, education departments and health services collectively shape public perception of governance. When these institutions function effectively, trust grows. When they falter, frustration and alienation follow.

Strengthening grassroots governance requires more than rules and circulars. It demands trained personnel, accountability, transparent procedures and above all, a mindset that views citizens not as petitioners but as rights-holders.

Cultural Traditions Keep Community Spirit Alive in Border Districts

Poonch / Rajouri: Cultural traditions continue to play a vital role in preserving community identity and social harmony in border districts like Poonch and Rajouri.

Folk music, local poetry, traditional gatherings and seasonal rituals provide residents with a sense of continuity amid changing social and political landscapes.

Elders stress that cultural heritage serves as a bridge between generations, passing values and collective memory to the



youth.

Cultural activists have called for greater institutional support to document

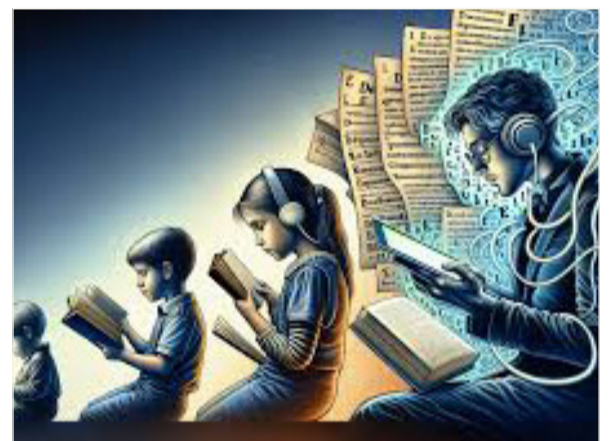
and promote local traditions, warning that neglect could lead to gradual erosion of intangible heritage.

Literature and Reading Habits Face Challenges in the Digital Age

Jammu: The habit of reading books and serious literature is facing challenges as digital media increasingly dominates public attention, writers and educators have observed.

While online platforms have expanded access to information, they have also shortened attention spans and reduced engagement with long-form reading. Libraries, once central to intellectual life, now struggle with declining footfall.

Educators emphasise the need to revive reading



culture through school initiatives, literary events and community libraries. Literature, they argue, remains essential for critical thinking and cultural depth.

Continued from Page 1

Dense Fog and...

tion on major highways and arterial roads. Several commuters reported delays, while authorities urged drivers to exercise caution during peak fog hours.

Health experts warned that prolonged exposure to cold and fog could aggravate respiratory and cardiovascular conditions. Citizens, particularly the elderly and children, were advised to limit outdoor activity during early mornings. The administration issued advisories and asked district officials to remain alert, especially in areas prone to accidents and health emergencies.

Centre Pushes for...

Officials said efforts are underway to strengthen research, standardisation and awareness related to traditional medicine practices. Policy initiatives aim to ensure scientific validation while preserving traditional knowledge.

Experts believe such integration could improve healthcare accessibility, especially in rural and underserved areas.

Major Infrastructure Projects...

services, particularly in remote areas. Preparatory work is expected to begin after completion of administrative formalities.

Local representatives welcomed the decision, stating that improved infrastructure would contribute to economic activity and better access to healthcare and education. The administration emphasised that project execution would be closely monitored to ensure timely completion and quality standards.

Poonch Admn Launches...

student performance and availability of basic facilities. The exercise follows concerns raised by parents and civil society regarding declining academic outcomes.

Education officers have been directed to submit detailed reports and recommend corrective measures. Teachers have been instructed to strictly adhere to academic calendars and curriculum guidelines.

The administration stated that the initiative is part of a broader effort to restore confidence in the public education system and ensure equitable learning opportunities for students in remote and border areas.

Admn Promotions Signal...

across departments. The move is expected to facilitate smoother policy execution and improved coordination.

Observers noted that administrative stability is crucial for sustaining develop-

ment momentum in the Union Territory.

Centre Reviews Development...

to drinking water supply, road connectivity, power distribution, urban development, healthcare and education were discussed in detail during recent high-level meetings. Emphasis was laid on accelerating project execution while ensuring transparency and accountability in fund utilisation.

The administration highlighted improvements in rural infrastructure and urban services over the past year, while also acknowledging challenges posed by difficult terrain, climatic conditions and logistical constraints. Officials stressed that district-level monitoring mechanisms are being strengthened to ensure that benefits reach the intended sections of society.

Government sources noted that development in Jammu & Kashmir is being pursued with a long-term vision focused on economic stability, employment generation and improved quality of life. Coordination between central ministries and the UT administration has been identified as a key factor in achieving timely outcomes.

The renewed assurance comes amid growing public expectations for visible improvements in governance and service delivery.

Centre Says UT...

Officials emphasised that consultations with stakeholders and careful assessment of ground realities form the basis of policy decisions. The statement comes amid ongoing discussions on administrative reforms.

Winter Session of...

economic management and strengthening institutional frameworks. Opposition parties participated actively in discussions, raising concerns over policy impact, federal balance and implementation mechanisms.

Parliamentary proceedings reflected broader political dynamics, with sharp exchanges on national issues alongside calls for constructive dialogue. Despite disruptions, both Houses managed to transact essential business before adjournment. Officials described the session as productive, stating that the legislation passed would contribute to streamlined governance and enhanced service delivery.

Political observers, however, pointed out that debates during the session also highlighted unresolved issues requiring continued engagement. The conclusion of the Winter Session sets the stage for policy implementation and administrative follow-up in the months ahead.

Deputy Chief Minister felicitates Rollball World Cup gold medallists

Jammu: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today felicitated the winners of the 7th Rollball World Cup, held in Dubai from December 14 to 18, 2025, for their outstanding performance at the international level.

Representing India, Hiteswar Singh and Suvudha Sarin, who competed in the Men's and Women's categories respectively clinched gold medals in their respective events, bringing immense pride and laurels to the Jammu and Kashmir.

Congratulating the players on their remarkable achievement, the Deputy



Chief Minister lauded their dedication, discipline and perseverance.

He said that their success reflects the immense sporting potential of the youth of Jammu and Kashmir.

“J&K youth possess exceptional talent and the ability to compete at any national and international

level. With the right platform, encouragement and institutional support, they can excel and bring glory to the region,” the Deputy Chief Minister said.

He reiterated the Government's commitment to promoting sports culture in Jammu and Kashmir and assured all necessary support to budding sportspersons to help them realise their full potential.

The Deputy Chief Minister added that achievements like these serve as an inspiration for young athletes and strengthen Jammu and Kashmir's presence on the global sports map.

District Poonch Taekwondo C'hips 2025-26 Begin with Enthusiasm

Poonch: The District Poonch Taekwondo Championships 2025-26 commenced with great enthusiasm at the Indoor Hall, Sports Stadium, Poonch, on Monday.

The championship is being organised by the Taekwondo Association of District Poonch under the aegis of the J&K Taekwondo Association, with the support of the J&K Sports Council (JKSC) under the My Youth My Pride initiative. The two-day event will conclude on December 24, 2025.

Around 200 players from various schools and clubs across District Poonch are participating in the championship, showcasing remarkable skill, discipline, and competi-

tive spirit. The event aims to promote Taekwondo at the grassroots level and provide a strong competitive platform for young athletes of the district.

The medal winners of the championship will earn the opportunity to represent District Poonch in the upcoming 28th J&K UT Taekwondo Championship, recognised by the J&K Sports Council.

The opening ceremony was graced by Dr. Ruby Naz Bhatti, Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Poonch, as the Chief Guest, along with the District Youth Services & Sports Officer, Poonch. Both dignitaries encouraged the players to pursue sports with dedication, discipline, and true sportsmanship.

Local Sports Continue Despite Limited Facilities and Harsh Weather

Jammu / Srinagar:

Despite limited infrastructure and harsh winter conditions, local sports activities continue across various districts of J&K, reflecting the determination of young athletes and sports enthusiasts. Football, cricket & volleyball tournaments at the local level remain popular, though organisers often struggle with inadequate grounds, lack of equipment and minimal institutional support. Winter weather further complicates training schedules, forcing players to adapt to shorter practice sessions. Sports officials acknowledged the challenges and said efforts are being made to improve facilities and encourage youth participation. Experts believe that sustained investment in grassroots sports is essential not only for talent development but also for promoting physical and mental well-being among young people.

J&K emerging as Hub of Sporting activities: Satish Sharma

Jammu: Minister for Youth, Services and Sports, Satish Sharma today remarked that Jammu and Kashmir is steadily emerging as hub of sporting activities, owing to sustained government support, improved infrastructure and increasing youth participation.

The Minister made these remarks while addressing the grand closing ceremony of the International Kushti Dangle and “Rustam-e-Jammu & Kashmir” Title Championship, held at M.A. Stadium here.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister said that government is committed to strengthen sports infrastructure, expanding grassroots participation and integrating technology and innovation to promote sports excellence across urban and rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

Highlighting the Jammu & Kashmir's rising stature



on the national and international sports map, the Minister underlined that the growing frequency of national and international tournaments in the region is a clear indicator of Jammu & Kashmir's evolving sports ecosystem.

While felicitating the winners and participants during the closing ceremony,

Satish Sharma congratulated the athletes for their outstanding performances and said that such international-level events reflect the positive transformation of Jammu & Kashmir into a vibrant sports destination. “Revival and promotion of traditional sports like Kushti not only preserve cultural heritage but also

provide meaningful avenues for youth engagement, fitness and discipline,” the Minister stated.

Secretary, Sports Council in her address said that the overwhelming response from athletes and spectators reflects a thriving sports culture in the Union Territory. She emphasised that promotion of indigenous sports will continue to receive focused attention.

President, Indian Style Wrestling Association of J&K, while speaking on the occasion, expressed gratitude to the J&K Government and the Minister for their continued encouragement. He lauded the efforts of officials, referees and volunteers for the successful conduct of the championship.

The championship witnessed participation of Wrestlers from different parts of India and abroad, who showcased exceptional skill and strength, trans-

forming the event into a spectacular celebration of indigenous sports.

The highlight of the championship was the “Rustam-e-Jammu & Kashmir” Title bout, in which Ishaq Ahmad demonstrated remarkable strength and technique to clinch the coveted title.

Aamir Khan secured the runner-up position, followed by Diler Khan and Sadaq Gajansoo.

Among the prominent bouts, Dinesh Dankar defeated Tamarlan of Russia, Balu Bodake of Maharashtra outplayed Khetag from Russia, while Tedo from Georgia registered a victory over Bania Min of Jammu. In other encounters, Hamid from Iran defeated Lucky Kohli of Punjab, Nadeem from Doda (J&K) emerged victorious against Irfan from Iran, and Arjun from Jammu defeated Mohamad from Iran.

Rajouri Police Organises Half Marathon 2025; Over 800 Participants Join the Initiative

Rajouri: More than 800 men and women from across Rajouri district participated in the Half Marathon 2025 organised by Rajouri Police, carrying forward the message “Every Step for Unity, Every Mile Against Drugs.”

Hon'ble Principal & Sessions Judge Rajouri, Rajinder Sapru, graced the event as the Chief Guest. At the same time, Tejinder Singh (IPS), DIG Rajouri-Poonch Range, and Abhishek Sharma (IAS), Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, attended as the Guests of Honour.



The marathon was flagged off by DIG Tejinder Singh, who appreciated Rajouri Police for taking this meaningful initiative to strengthen community engagement and inspire the youth toward a healthier, drug-free lifestyle.

Rajouri Police ensured

robust arrangements, including traffic management, medical teams, hydration points, and overall security, to guarantee a smooth and safe event.

A felicitation ceremony was later held to honour the winners. Chief Guest Rajinder Sapru, along with

DIG Tejinder Singh, DC Abhishek Sharma, and SSP Rajouri Gourav Sikarwar (IPS), presented trophies, medals, and certificates across various categories.

Sponsors from J&K Bank, including Cluster Head Deepak Sharma, were also felicitated for their support.

SSP Rajouri Gourav Sikarwar (IPS) expressed heartfelt gratitude to all participants, volunteers, and partners, reaffirming the Rajouri Police's commitment to promoting community welfare and a drug-free society.

LAST WORD

A Newspaper's True Duty

A newspaper's true duty is not merely to inform, but to illuminate. Beyond headlines and breaking news lies a deeper responsibility—to provide context, encourage reflection and give voice to those often unheard.

In times of uncertainty, journalism must resist noise and haste. It must choose accuracy over speed, depth over sensation and public interest over convenience. Only then can it earn trust—not for a day, but over time.

This publication aspires to be a record of events and a forum for thought, grounded in facts and guided by conscience.