



Z-Morh Tunnel | Jammu & Kashmir | 13 Jan 2025

Why in News?

The **Z-Morh Tunnel**, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **13th January, 2025**, is a **6.5-kilometer-long, two-lane road tunnel** connecting **Gagangir in Ganderbal district to Sonamarg in Jammu and Kashmir**.

- Situated at an altitude of **8,650 feet**, the tunnel is designed to provide **all-weather connectivity**.

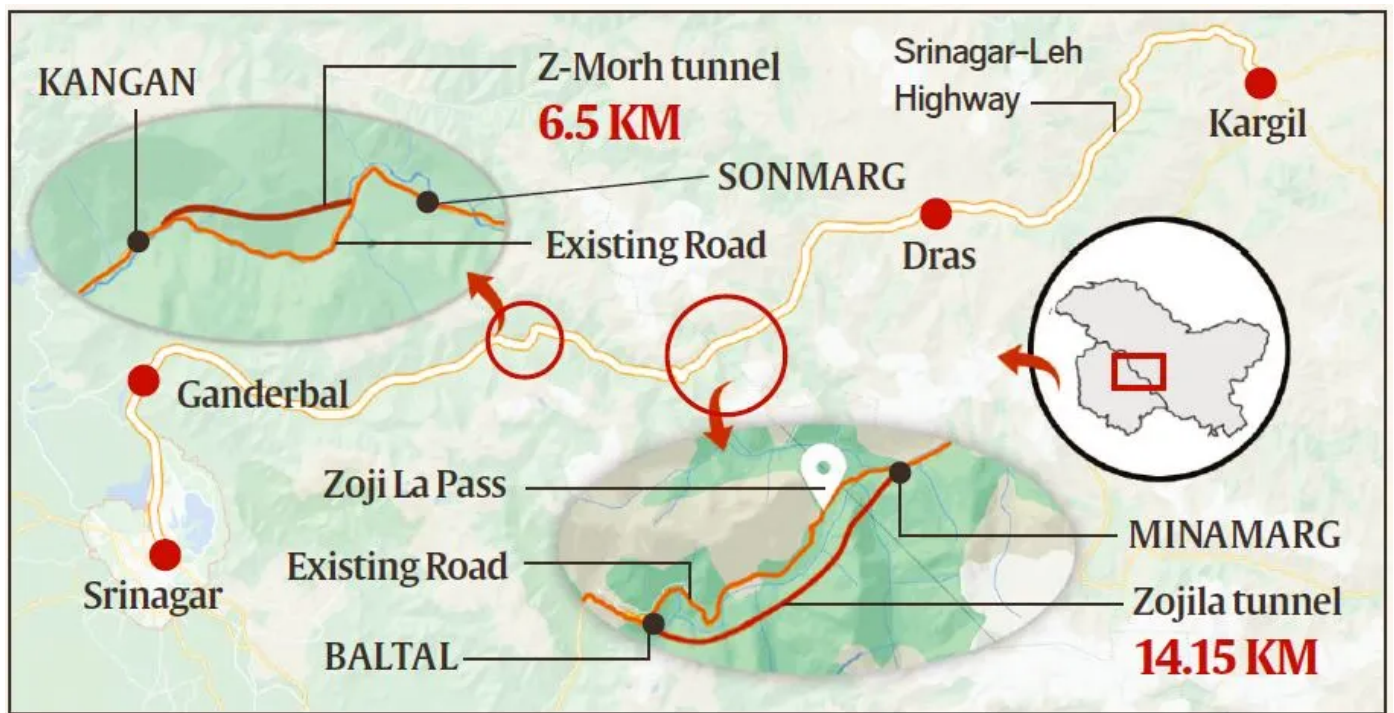
Key Points

- The tunnel is strategically located on the **Srinagar-Leh National Highway**, facilitating year-round access to the **Ladakh region**, which was previously hindered by **seasonal road closures** due to **heavy snowfall and avalanches**.
 - Constructed at a cost of **₹2,400 crore**, the Z-Morh Tunnel comprises a **6.4-kilometer main tunnel**, an egress tunnel, and approach roads.
 - It features a **two-lane bi-directional road** with a **parallel 7.5-meter-wide escape passage** for emergencies.
- Beyond enhancing civilian travel, the tunnel holds **significant strategic importance** for **defense logistics**, ensuring **uninterrupted connectivity to the Ladakh region**, which is in proximity to the **China border**.
- **Benefits:**
 - The tunnel is expected to **boost tourism in Sonamarg**, known for attractions like the **Thajiwas Glacier** and activities such as **whitewater rafting** on the **Sind River**.
 - By providing **all-weather access**, the tunnel is anticipated to **stimulate economic growth** in the region, facilitating trade and improving the **quality of life for residents**.
 - The tunnel is part of the larger **Zojila Tunnel project**, aimed at ensuring all-weather connectivity between Srinagar and Ladakh.

Zoji La Tunnel

- The Zojila tunnel project was **launched in 2018**.
- The tunnel is **Asia's longest** and **strategic bi-directional tunnel**, which will provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Kargil and Leh.
- Zoji La is a **high mountain pass** located in the **Kargil district of Ladakh**.
 - The pass links **Leh and Srinagar** and provides an important link between Union Territories of Ladakh and Kashmir.
- Zojila pass remains closed during winters due to heavy snowfall, cutting off Ladakh region from Kashmir.

//



UP Enforces 'No Helmet, No Fuel' Rule | Uttar Pradesh | 13 Jan 2025

Why in News?

The **Uttar Pradesh Transport Department** has proposed a strict "**no helmet, no fuel**" policy across cities in the state in an effort to reduce road accidents and fatalities involving two-wheelers.

- The Chief Minister observed that **road accidents claim approximately 25,000 to 26,000 lives** in the state annually.

Key Points

- The '**No Helmet, No Fuel**' policy is set to be implemented in Noida starting **26th January 2025**.
 - This move aims to enforce helmet usage among **two-wheeler riders** and enhance **road safety** in the region.
- Fuel stations across the state have been directed to install signage reading, "**No Helmet, No Fuel.**"
 - This initiative **had been introduced earlier in Gautam Buddha Nagar district in 2019** but was only implemented sporadically.
- The Transport Commissioner issued an official letter directing the fuel station operators not to sell fuel to **two-wheeler riders**, who are not wearing helmets, including the pillion.
- The **Uttar Pradesh Transport Department** is also working to ensure widespread awareness of the policy.
 - Fuel station operators must be educated about the relevant provisions of the **Motor Vehicles Act, 1988** and the **Uttar Pradesh Motor Vehicles Rules, 1998**.
- While some support the initiative as a necessary step to enforce helmet usage and save lives, others argue that the government should also consider **improving road quality** and **overall**

safety measures rather than enforcing new laws.

Motor Vehicles Act, 1988

- Replacing the **Motor Vehicles Act, 1939**, this Act came into force on **1st July 1989**.
- The Act provides in detail the **legislative provisions regarding** licensing of drivers/conductors, registration of motor vehicles, control of motor vehicles through permits, special provisions relating to state transport undertakings, traffic regulation, insurance, liability, offences and penalties, etc.

Uttarakhand Offers GST Registration Exemption | Uttarakhand | 13 Jan 2025

Why in News?

The Uttarakhand government has announced a significant relief for solar entrepreneurs by exempting them from the mandatory **Goods and Services Tax (GST) registration** under the **Mukhyamantri Saur Swarojgar Yojana**.

- This initiative aims to streamline processes and encourage investments in **renewable energy** projects across the state.

Key Points

- The Director General of Industries and Managing Director of SIDCUL (State Industrial Development Corporation of Uttarakhand Limited), disclosed this decision during the **Pravasi Sammelan (Diaspora Conference)**.
 - It was highlighted that the exemption comes in response to long-standing demands from **solar project investors** who faced delays due to **GST registration requirements**.
- Under the **Mukhyamantri Saur Swarojgar Yojana**, thousands of solar plants have already been installed, and many more are in progress.
- Previously, entrepreneurs had to register for GST to claim subsidies, despite solar energy being exempt from GST.
 - The **new policy eliminates this step**, making the process more efficient and reducing bureaucratic hurdles for solar project developers.
- **Uttarakhand Government's Renewable Energy Vision:**
 - This decision reflects the Uttarakhand government's commitment to promoting **renewable energy** and **sustainable development**.
 - By simplifying the investment process, the government aims to attract more entrepreneurs to the solar energy sector, contributing to both **economic growth** and **environmental conservation**.

Mukhyamantri Solar Swarojgar Yojana

- In 2020, **Uttarakhand launched the Mukhya Mantri Saur Swarojgar Yojana** to promote self-employment through solar energy farming.
- The aim of the scheme is to promote the production of **green energy** and to provide self-employment opportunities to the youth of the Uttarakhand and returning migrants.
- Each beneficiary of this scheme will be allocated solar plants of **25 kilowatts**.

Haryana Govt Committed to Providing Homes Under PMAY | Haryana | 13 Jan 2025

Why in News?

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has reaffirmed his government's commitment to providing housing for economically disadvantaged citizens through the [Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana \(PMAY\)](#).

- He has directed officials to conduct comprehensive surveys to identify eligible beneficiaries and expedite the allocation of housing under the PMAY.

Key Points

- In addition to housing initiatives, the Chief Minister announced plans to construct **2,200 new 'Amrit Sarovars' (water bodies)** across the state, building upon the **2,000** already established under the [Amrit Sarovar Yojana](#).
 - This project aims to enhance [water conservation](#) and **support agricultural activities**.
- Furthering the state's commitment to [renewable energy](#), the government has set an ambitious target to **install 100,000 solar panels**. This initiative is expected to promote **sustainable energy practices** and reduce the state's [carbon footprint](#).
- Haryana will become the first among the states and second after the union territory of Chandigarh to implement the **new criminal laws** by 28th February, 2025.
 - The Chief Minister has indicated that the **necessary processes are underway to adopt these laws**, which aim to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the state's legal system.
- These initiatives reflect the Haryana government's dedication to improving **living standards, promoting sustainable development, and ensuring legal reforms** for its citizens.

Amrit Sarovar Mission

- On **24th April, 2022, Mission Amrit Sarovar** was launched as part of India's "**Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**" celebrations for the [75th year of independence](#).
 - The mission aims to construct/rejuvenate at least **75 Amrit Sarovars** in each district across India to overcome the water crisis in rural areas.
 - The target for these water bodies serves as a crucial step towards ensuring **water sustainability** at the local level.
 - **Eight Central Ministries/Departments, including** Dept. of Rural Development, Department of land resources, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Department of Water resources, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate changes, Ministry of Railway, Ministry of Road, Transport & Highways, actively contribute to the mission's execution.
 - **Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Application and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N)** has been engaged as Technical partner for the Mission.
 - **BISAG-N** is an autonomous scientific society registered under the **Societies Registration Act, of 1860**. It comes under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**.
 - Geospatial data and technology play a pivotal role in identifying and executing the construction and rejuvenation of **Amrit Sarovar**.
-

Haryana to Include Gita in Class 8th Curriculum | Haryana | 13 Jan 2025

Why in News?

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has announced the inclusion of the [Bhagavad Gita](#) in the school curriculum up to **Class 8, aiming to instill moral values among students.**

Key Points

- During a meeting with education department officials, the Chief Minister emphasized the importance of **providing quality education in government schools** and rebuilding public confidence in the state's education system.
- It has been directed to resolve the **teaching staff shortage** by adjusting the teacher allocation based on student numbers, clarifying that although Haryana has sufficient teachers, their proper distribution requires focus.
 - A comprehensive **action plan is being developed to ensure that all teaching positions are filled** by the next academic session.
- It has been emphasized that sports and cleanliness should be made mandatory for the overall development of children.
- These initiatives reflect the **Haryana government's** commitment to enhancing the **quality of education** and fostering the overall development of students in the state.

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/statepcs/13-01-2025/print>

