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## Anji Khad Bridge | Jammu & Kashmir | 18 Jan 2025

### Why in News?

Recently, [Indian Railways](#) completed [the Anji Khad Bridge](#), India's first [cable-stayed rail bridge](#), located in the **Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir**.

- It is a key component of the [Udampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link \(USBRL\) Project](#), designed to enhance regional connectivity and drive economic growth.

### Key Points

- **About the Bridge:**
  - The bridge spans **725.5 meters** with a **331-meter-high pylon**, built to withstand winds up to **213 km/h** and support trains traveling at **100 km/h**.
  - It utilizes **96 cables** of varying lengths (82 to 295 meters) and an **innovative hybrid foundation** to stabilize the mountain slopes.
  - It used **DOKA Jump Form Shuttering, Pump Concreting, and a Tower Crane Technique** to improve efficiency, reducing construction time **by 30%**.
    - The DOKA Jump Form Shuttering Technique is used for **constructing vertical concrete structures** like high-rises, bridges, and towers.
  - The bridge will enhance [tourism](#), **boost local economic growth**, and **improve transportation in the region**.
- **Challenging Terrain:**
  - The **Himalayan location posed challenges** due to complex geology, [seismic activity](#), and fragile features like faults, folds, and thrusts.
  - [IIT Roorkee](#) and [IIT Delhi](#) conducted site-specific studies to assess conditions and ensure the feasibility of construction.

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## Promoting Kashmir's Rich Cultural Heritage | Jammu & Kashmir | 18 Jan 2025

### Why in News?

The Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, distributed **10 Kani looms** and **25 sets of specialized Namdah (traditional Kashmiri felted carpet)** tools to local artisans free of cost.

### Key Points

- **Government's Strategic Initiative:**
  - The initiative is part of **ongoing efforts to sustain Kashmir's centuries-old craft traditions**.

- It ensures artisans have **access to essential resources** while opening **opportunities to expand into global markets.**
- **Benefits for Artisans:**
  - The distribution of Kani looms and Namdah tool kits **aims to improve artisans' craftsmanship quality and efficiency.**
  - It empowers artisans to create high-quality traditional products and boosts their competitiveness.

## Namdah

- **Origin and Introduction:**
  - Namdah Art **began in the 16th century when Mughal Emperor Akbar** desired **protective coverings** for his horses.
  - It was **introduced to Kashmir by Sufi saint Shah-e-Hamdan.**
- **Creation and Materials:**
  - Namdah is a type of traditional **Kashmiri felted carpet** made using **sheep wool.**
  - The wool is compressed and matted together; a process known as felting, giving it a distinct texture.
- **Manufacturing Process:**
  - Namdah carpets are typically created by layering multiple wool layers on top of each other.
  - Each layer is sprinkled with water and pressed using a tool called a '**pinjra**' (**woven willow wicker**).
  - The layers are compressed to create a solid and durable carpet.

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## Miyawaki Technique | Uttar Pradesh | 18 Jan 2025

### Why in News?

The Prayagraj Municipal Corporation has **developed dense forests** at multiple locations across Prayagraj to provide pure air and promote a healthy atmosphere.

- Using the **Japanese Miyawaki technique**, the corporation **established several oxygen banks** that have now evolved into lush green forests.

### Key Points

- **Benefits of the Project:**
  - The initiative **aids in managing industrial waste** and reduces dust, dirt, and foul odours.
  - It significantly improves the city's air quality and **promotes environmental conservation.**
  - Miyawaki forests help reduce **air and water pollution**, prevent **soil erosion**, and enhance biodiversity.
- **Environmental Impact:**
  - These forests lower the temperature difference between day and night during summers.
  - They enhance biodiversity, improve soil fertility, and create habitats for animals and birds.
  - Large forests developed through this technique **reduce temperatures by 4 to 7 degrees Celsius.**
- **Diversity of Species in Miyawaki Forests:**

- **Fruit-bearing trees:** [Mango](#), Mahua, [Neem](#), Peepal, [Tamarind](#), Amla, and Ber.
- **Medicinal and ornamental plants:** Tulsi, Brahmi, [Hibiscus](#), Kadamba, Bougainvillea, and Jungle Jalebi.
- **Other species:** Arjuna, Teak, [Sheesham](#), Bamboo, Kaner (red and yellow), Tecoma, Kachnar, [Mahogany](#), Lemon, and Drumstick (Sahjan).

## The Miyawaki Technique

### ▪ About:

- Developed by **Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki in the 1970s**, this method **creates dense forests in limited spaces**.
- Known as the '**pot plantation method**,' it involves planting native species closely together for rapid growth.

### ▪ Key Features and Benefits:

- Plants **grow 10 times faster**, mimicking natural forests with dense plantations.
- Improves soil quality, biodiversity, and carbon absorption.
- Effective in urban areas for **transforming polluted and barren lands into green ecosystems**.

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## Bihar's First Sports University Gets UGC Recognition | Bihar | 18 Jan 2025

### Why in News?

[The University Grants Commission \(UGC\)](#) has recognised [Bihar's first sports university](#), inaugurated by the State Chief Minister on [National Sports Day 2024](#) in Rajgir, Nalanda district.

### Key Points

#### ▪ UGC Recognition:

- The Bihar Sports University, Rajgir, has received recognition from the UGC under **Section 2(f) of the UGC Act, 1956**.
- This recognition **empowers the university to offer academic courses**, including undergraduate and diploma/PG diploma programs in physical education and sports sciences.

#### ▪ Academic Programs and Future Plans:

- The university plans to launch various academic programs starting from the 2025-2026 academic session.
- These programs will include:
  - Diploma/PG diploma in sports coaching (covering two or three sports).
  - Diploma/PG diploma in Yoga.
  - Four-year Bachelor of Physical Education (pending recognition from the National Council for Teacher Education).

#### ▪ Sports Complex and Additional Developments:

- The Bihar Sports University and the State's first sports academy are part of the [International Sports Complex in Rajgir](#).
- The complex also hosted [the Women's Asian Champions Trophy](#) in November 2024.

#### ▪ Grievance Redressal Mechanism:

- The UGC guidelines mandate the appointment of an **ombudsperson** for addressing student grievances, as per the [UGC \(Redressal of Grievances of Students\)](#)

**Regulation, 2023**), ideally within two months of the university beginning academic activities.

## University Grants Commission

- **The University Grants Commission (UGC)** came into existence on **28th December, 1953** and became a statutory Organization of the Government of India by an Act of Parliament in 1956, for the **coordination, determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination and research in university education.**
- It **operates under the Ministry of Education, the Central Government** appoints a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, and ten other members to the UGC.
- It functions from **New Delhi** as well as its **six Regional offices located in Bangalore, Bhopal, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Pune.**
- It **also regulates the recognition of fake universities, autonomous colleges**, deemed to be universities and distance education institutions.

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PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/statepcs/18-01-2025/print>

