

**DENGUE WARNING SIGNS**

Many people with dengue can be cared for at home with adequate rest and hydration. But, if you experience any warning signs, go immediately to the nearest medical centre.

**Watch out for dengue warning signs!**

A drop in body temperature accompanied by any of the following symptoms:

- Increased and continuous abdominal pain
- Disseminated bleeding
- Persistent vomiting
- Drop in body temperature
- Disorientation
- Bleeding from gums or nose, blood in stool
- Redness in eyes

If you have any of these symptoms, go to the nearest medical centre IMMEDIATELY

# JINDRAH IMAGES

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## Fight against terrorism in J&K in its last stage: PM Modi

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 3

Stating that the fight against terrorism is in its last stage in Jammu & Kashmir, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the remnants of terrorism will be eliminated completely from the Union Territory.

Replying to the Motion of Thanks on the President's address, the Prime Minister, who took oath for the third consecutive time last month, said Jammu & Kashmir has witnessed a huge decline in the number of terrorism-related incidents.

"The stone-pelting, shutdowns, threats, bomb blasts, and other related incidents were overshadowing democracy in Jammu and Kashmir," he said, according to the news agency Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

"The situation has changed now as stone-pelting incidents hardly



take place. Our fight against terrorism and separatism is ending and is in its last stage. We are heading towards eliminating terrorism completely," Modi said, adding that the people of Jammu & Kashmir have been extending complete support in ensuring the elimination of terrorism from the soil.

The PM added that the recent Lok Sabha polls

held in Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a massive poll percentage, the highest in the last four decades. "Such an outcome is not confined to pressing the buttons, but the people have put their faith in the Constitution of India," he said while congratulating the people of Jammu and Kashmir for their unwavering faith in the Constitution and taking their deci-

sions on their own.

Notably, the Prime Minister made a statement on Jammu and Kashmir for the second consecutive day.

Earlier on Tuesday, he said India can go to any extent to protect the nation and it was the BJP government that entered enemy territory to carry out surgical strikes and

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## Army Chief reviews security along LoC, stresses steadfast response to challenges

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JUL 03

Newly appointed Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Wednesday reviewed the security situation along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir, exhorting the troops to remain steadfast in meeting all security challenges, officials said.

On a maiden visit to the Jammu region after taking charge as the 30th Chief of the Indian Army on June 30, General Dwivedi interacted with troops at a forward base, instilling confidence among them. The visit assumes significance in view of the ongoing Amarnath Yatra and massive anti-terror operations underway, especially in parts of the Jammu region, where security forces successfully neutralized five terrorists in Doda and Kathua districts in June alone.

A Jammu-based defence spokesperson told the news agency that the Army Chief reached



Jammu in the morning and flew to the border district of Poonch to review the security situation and operational preparedness along the LoC.

"The Chief of Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi, accompanied by GOC-in-C Northern Command Lt Gen M.V. Suchindra Kumar and Corps Commander 16 Corps Lt Gen Navin Sachdeva, visited the District Police Headquarters in Poonch on the sidelines of his maiden visit to the forward area. They were warmly received by DIG Rajouri-Poonch Range Tejinder Singh, District Magistrate Poonch Yaseen M. Choudhary, and SSP

Poonch Yougal Manhas," he said.

During the visit, General Dwivedi familiarized himself with the workings of the district police and the general area of Poonch. He interacted with the territorial police officers and emphasized the importance of close coordination between the army and civil authorities to achieve better results.

General Dwivedi's visit underscores the commitment to maintaining strong collaboration between military and civil forces for enhanced security and development in the region.

The Additional Direc-

torate General of Public Information of the Army said Chief of Army Staff General Dwivedi visited forward locations of the 'XVI Corps', known as the White Knight Corps, to review the security situation along the LoC.

"He was briefed on the operational preparedness by the commanders on the ground. The COAS lauded all ranks for maintaining high standards of professionalism and exhorted them to remain steadfast in meeting all current and emerging security challenges," the additional directorate general of public information said.

The Army Chief met with Jammu and Kashmir's Principal Home Secretary, Chandraker Bharti, in Poonch and discussed security matters. He interacted with the parents of the martyrs of the Poonch region who laid down their lives in the service of the nation. The COAS also met the veterans, assured them of unwavering

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## ACB files case against RDD officials for misappropriation of funds in Kishtwar

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JUL 3

Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau has registered a case against officials of Rural Development Department block Dachhan of Kishtwar district for misappropriation of funds worth over Rs 30 lakh.

According to a statement, issued to news agency, the case was filed against Parveen Sharma, then BDO Block Dachhan, Mohd Abass then VLW, Mohd Hussain then VLW, Munshi Ram then VLW, Ranjeet Raina then GRS, Daleep Kumar then GRS, Asif Hussain sarpanch panchayat Janakpur and others.

The statement reads that the verification revealed that the

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## Gadkari agrees to no re blind wall between Kunjwani to Narwal expressway: Jugal

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

Senior BJP leader and Member Parliament Mr Jugal Kishore Sharma today expressed gratitude to Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Mr Nitin Gadkari for conceding to the most vociferously projected demand of the people of Jammu for not having RE blind wall between Kunjwani and Narwal, as part of Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway.

In a statement, after meeting the Union Minister, along with senior BJP leaders from Jammu including Mr Devender Singh Rana, Mr Vikram Randhawa and Mr Subash Langar, Chairman of the party's Traders Cell, Mr Jugal Sharma expressed



satisfaction over the issue resolved at the high level meeting of the National Highway Authority of India, presided over by Mr Gadkari.

Mr Sharma described the decision taken at the meeting with regard to preserving the commercial grandeur of the highway between Kunjwani and Narwal as fulfillment of the aspirations of the people of the Temple City,

who had been peacefully highlighting this demand under the aegis of the BJP.

"Today's decision has brought cheer to the people in general and respite to the stakeholders of the business hub in the Jammu outskirts", Mr Sharma said while lauding the pragmatic stewardship of the Union Road Transport and Highways Minister.

He said the stakehold-

ers have been seeking vehemently demanding construction of flyover between Kunjwani, Sainik Colony, Channi Himmat and Narwal Sector as the RE wall would have meant choking of business hub, impacting the sustenance of thousands of stakeholders directly or indirectly. They had always welcomed the Expressway to have seamless journey of spiritual bliss seekers to Shri Mata Vaishno Deviji but were seeking flyover instead of RE wall. BJP National General Secretary Mr Tarun Chugh had also taken up the issue with Mr Gadkari, keeping in view the concerns of the stakeholders, as the thickly populated city area, comprised schools, hospitals,

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## Amarnath Yatra crosses one-lakh mark in 5 days; 30,586 pays obeisance today

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JUL 03

Breaking all previous records, more than one lakh pilgrims have visited the holy cave shrine of Amarnath in the first five days of the annual yatra, which began on June 29.

The officials informed the news agency that over 30,000 more pilgrims paid obeisance to Lord Shiva in the cave shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas till this evening.

"A total of 30,586 pilgrims from different parts of the country paid obeisance at the holy cave of Shri Amarnath Ji till July 03, the fifth day of the yatra, which started from the twin tracks of Baltal and Nunwan-Pahalgam," they said.

With this, the total number of pilgrims visit-



ing the 3888-metre-high cave shrine in the deep Himalayas during the last four days since the yatra started has reached 1,05,282, surpassing all previous records, where it took more than a week to cross the one-lakh mark.

According to available data, in 2023, the yatra crossed the one-lakh mark on the 10th day of its commencement, while in 2022 it took nine days.

Meanwhile, stringent

security arrangements have been put in place for the smooth conduct of the yatra. Officials said that thousands of security personnel from the police, Central Reserve Police Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, and other paramilitary forces have been deployed along the route, while the army is overseeing the overall security with the air force providing all-round

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## Govt to establish tobacco cessation centres in all medical institutions, hospitals in J&K

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 3

The government has decided to establish tobacco cessation centres in all medical institutions and hospitals of J&K.

The move as per news agency has come as per the operational guidelines from MOHFW and upgrading the skills of students in accordance with the code of medical ethics.

"As per National Medical Commission guidelines, an Indian Medical Graduate should be able to recognize "Health for all" as a National goal and health right of all citizens and undergoing training for medical profession fulfill his/her social obligations towards realization of this goal and achieve competence in practice of holistic medicine, encompassing promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative aspects of common diseases,"



reads the communiqué of J&K Medical Council with Principals/ Deans of all medical colleges, a copy of which lies with KNO.

"Given the importance of tobacco cessation services in medical institutions and hospitals, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India has issued an Operational Guidelines for Establishing Tobacco Cessation Centers in Medical Institutions," it said.

Tobacco use is a leading preventable cause of death and disease globally, accounting for more than

8 million deaths annually. In India alone, tobacco is responsible for nearly 1.3 million deaths annually. Tobacco use results in fatal consequences, including carcinomas, coronary artery disease and coronary obstructive lung disease.

According to the second Global Adult Tobacco Survey Report of 2016-17, tobacco use prevalence in Jammu and Kashmir among adults (15 years and above) is about 24% (39.7% of men, 6.2% of women).

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## Many from Jammu traveled to S Korea on visas obtained through dubious means: Probe

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
MUMBAI, JULY 3

Several people from Jammu region travelled to South Korea for work in the last few years after obtaining visa through forged documents or other dubious means, an ongoing probe by Mumbai Police has found.

The crime branch of the city police last week busted a gang which allegedly obtained visas using fraudulent means for people seeking work in South Korea.

It managed to send at least eight persons to the east Asian country over the last one year but two of them were sent back to India, said an official, who is familiar with the probe, on Wednesday.

The Mumbai crime branch has so far arrested two Navy officers – Lieutenant Commander Vipin Dagar and Sub Lieutenant Braham Jyoti – along with



Simran Teji, Ravi Kumar and Deepak Dogra in the case.

The syndicate was active since May last year. During the probe, it was also found that many people from Suchetgarh in Ranbir Singh Pora tehsil of Jammu district traveled to South Korea using similar means (with the help of different syndicates) in the last few years, the official said.

After travelling on tourist visa, they worked in South Korea as daily wage workers in factories and also on construction sites,

he said, noting that wages in that country are much higher than those in India which makes South Korea an attractive destination even for illegal workers.

Braham Jyoti was allegedly the mastermind of the racket busted last week, the police had claimed two days ago.

While Braham Jyoti and Deepak Dogra are school classmates, Jyoti and Dagar have known each other for years, the official said.

Pune-based Simran Teji, who taught German, CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## J&K lithium block gets no bids in second attempt



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

Jammu and Kashmir did not receive any bids in a second attempt to auction mining rights for lithium reserves found last year, according to a sources.

The government in February 2023 found its first lithium deposits in Jammu and Kashmir with estimated reserves of 5.9 million metric tons.

After it failed to get a required minimum of three bids in its first auctions in November, the block was again put up

for auction in March with a May 14 deadline for bids.

The source, who declined to be identified as they were not authorised to talk to the media, said the block was likely to be given to a government agency for further exploration after no bids were made.

India's Ministry of Mines did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

As electric vehicles have focused on the need for lithium, used in making batteries, India has CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## Rural Sanitation Department Ensures Successful Waste Management during Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JULY 3

To ensure a sustainable Shri Amarnath Ji pilgrimage and achieve zero landfill goals, a significant quantity of wet and dry waste has been collected from different camp locations and enroute, and same has been processed using appropriate scientific methods, during the first six days of the yatra.

Total 15 waste processing facilities have been established on both the axis. Eight processing facilities have been setup at Baltal axis starting from Neelgrath till Upper Holy cave and 7 processing facilities setup at Pahalgam axis starting from Nunwan till Panchtarni.

The wet waste is being processed using the conventional composting methods and the dry waste is processed through segregating into different type



recyclable/ non-recyclable waste and further processing it using the baling machines.

Total 8 including 5 at Baltal Axis and 3 at Pahalgam axis number of vehicles have been deployed for collection & transportation of waste at the base camp locations. More than 600 workers and nearly 25 management/supervisory staff have been deployed in both the axis combined to handle day to day waste collection, transportation, and processing.

From the 27th June till 2nd July, 2024 nearly

61.350Tonnes of waste has been handled. Out of this, 17.25Tonnes of wet waste (3.315Tonnes on Pahalgam Axis and 14.205Tonnes on Baltal Axis) has been put into the compost beds for composting of same. Further, 22.23Tonnes of dry waste (7.31Tonnes on Pahalgam Axis and 14.920Tonnes on Baltal Axis) has been processed after segregating them into various recyclable and non-recyclable streams such as PET, HDPE, LDPE, Cardboard, Multilayered Plastic, metals etc. In addition, 21.60

Tonnes of inert & process rejects have been accumulated till now which will be disposed off through sending it to RDF utilizing industry by the service provider engaged for same.

Director General, Rural Sanitation, J&K said: "These figures highlight the effectiveness of our waste management strategy, which emphasizes the separate collection and processing of wet and dry waste to minimize environmental impact. The collaborative efforts of our service providers, volunteers, and pilgrims have been instrumental in maintaining the sanctity and cleanliness of the yatra routes".

She further added that the department remain committed to upholding these standards throughout the pilgrimage, ensuring a zero-landfill experience for all participants.

## JKEDI, IMS Jammu sign MoU on Entrepreneurship & Startup services

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JULY 3

Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) and Institute of Management Sciences Jammu on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work together for entrepreneurship development and Startup related services.

The MoU was signed in a formal ceremony held at JKEDI, Baribrahmana campus and attended by key officials from both the institutions. The signatories were Mr. Rajinder Kumar Sharma (JKAS), Director JKEDI and Dr. Meenakshi Sharma, Director IMS, Jammu.

Speaking on the occasion, Director JKEDI, Sh. Rajinder Kumar Sharma (JKAS) expressed optimism about the partnership, highlighting its potential to create a robust ecosystem for entrepreneurship in the Jammu



region. "This collaboration with IMS Jammu marks a strategic step towards nurturing a new generation of entrepreneurial leaders equipped to drive socio-economic growth in the region," he said.

Dr. Meenakshi Sharma, Director IMS Jammu, echoed these sentiments, emphasizing the role of education in empowering youth and fostering innovation. "By integrating JKEDI's expertise with our academic offerings, we aim to empower our students with the skills and mindset needed

to excel in today's dynamic business environment," she remarked.

The purpose of the MoU between the two institutions is to work together for Curriculum Design, by way of providing valuable inputs in teaching / training methodology and suitably customize the curriculum so that the students fit in the entrepreneurial scenario meaningfully, followed by industrial training and visits, Internship for the students, Research and Development, skill development programs and guest lectures.

## Labour Department, MVD Kishtwar organise Awareness Camp on e-Shram Portal for Truck Drivers, Helpers

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KISHTWAR, JULY 3

In accordance with the directions of the Labour Commissioner, Jammu & Kashmir, Charandeep Singh and guidelines from the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the Labour & Employment Department, Kishtwar, in collaboration with the Motor Vehicle Department (MVD), conducted an awareness camp on the registration and benefits of e-Shram Portal for Truck drivers, helpers, and co-drivers.

The camp aimed to educate participants about the necessary documents required and the benefits of registering on the e-Shram Portal.

The event was attended by the Deputy Labour Commissioner, Jammu, Vinakshi Koul; Assistant



Labour Commissioner, Kishtwar, Mamta Sudershan; Inspector, MVD, Kishtwar; staff from both departments, and representatives from the Driver Union, including /Truck drivers, helpers, and co-drivers.

ALC Kishtwar informed that this initiative aligns

with the government's efforts to promote the welfare and well-being of workers in the unorganized sector.

The e-Shram Portal registration aims to provide social security benefits, including insurance and pension schemes, to eligible workers. She added.

## Inter-Zone Handball Competition commences in Ganderbal

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
GANDERBAL, JULY 3

The Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Ganderbal commenced its inter-zone district level handball competition today at GCOPE Gadoora Ganderbal. The event featured boys competing in the U-17 and U-19 age groups, with all four zones of the district actively participating. District Youth Services and Sports Officer (DYSSO) Ganderbal, Sheikh Shafiq Iqbal, and Activity Incharge Manzoor Ahmad, graced the occasion, ensuring all arrangements were in place.

The officer addressed the students shared valuable advices and offering best wishes to participants.

The event's primary goal is to select and prepare top players for future district-level competitions



besides aiming to bring recognition to Ganderbal.

During the event, zone Tullamulla claimed victory in both age categories. Zone Kangan finished as the runner-up in the U17

category, while Zone Ganderbal secured the second position in the U19 category.

Meanwhile, Zone Hariganiwan organized an inter-school zonal hand-

ball competition for girls U-19 at BHSS Hariganiwan ground. BHSS Hariganiwan emerged victorious over BHSS Kullian in the finals.

The best players from this event will represent their zone in the upcoming inter-zone district competition.

In addition YSS Ganderbal celebrated last year's judo athletes who represented Jammu and Kashmir in the 67th National School Games 2023, earning 4 silver and 2 bronze medals. DYSSO Ganderbal visited their schools to present trophies and Track Suits and to commend their achievements in front of their teachers and peers.

This recognition aims to boost the athletes' confidence and inspire other students to engage in sports and strive for excellence.

## YSS Baramulla Commences Week-Long Inter-Zonal District Level Competitions

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BARAMULLA, JULY 3

Youth Services and Sports Department of Baramulla inaugurated a week-long series of inter-zonal district level competitions, including Kho-Kho, Volleyball, and Kabaddi, for under-14 and under-17 boys and girls. Additionally, the department organized the inter-school district Subroto Mukherjee Football competition for both boys and girls under-15 and under-17. The competitions are being held at Showkat Ali Stadium, Baramulla.

In a landmark event, the under-14 boys' competitions were held first and inaugurated by the Principal of GDC Boys Baramulla, along with Nazir Ahmad Bhat, DYSSO Baramulla. Both dignitaries officially launched the competitions. The event saw an overwhelming participation of nearly 600 students from 18 zones across the district.

Nazir Ahmad Bhat remarked, "These competitions are a vital platform for nurturing young talent and promoting sportsmanship among our youth. We are thrilled to witness such enthusiastic participation and are committed to providing more opportunities for our young athletes to shine." Sports play a crucial role in holistic development, and we are dedicated to fostering a robust sports culture in Baramulla, he added. The week-long competitions aim to identify and nurture young sports talent, encouraging them to pursue excellence in sports and potentially represent the district at higher levels.

## Director Agriculture engages with Devi Pindi -FPO workers at Tikri

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JULY 3

Director Agriculture, Jammu, A.S Reen, visited the Devi Pindi Farmer Producer Company Ltd. (FPO) located in Lehnu, Zone Tikri - District Udhampur today. The purpose of the visit was to engage with the members of the FPO and strengthen Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) in the Jammu region.

During the visit, Director Agriculture observed the diverse range of products offered by Devi Pindi FPO and appreciated both the quality of the products and their packaging.

On the occasion, the Director Agriculture was highly impressed by the dedication and quality of products showcased by Devi Pindi FPO. Director Reen said that the Agriculture Department is committed to supporting such initiatives that promote local agriculture and empower local farmers." He assured the members of Devi Pindi FPO that the Agriculture Department would extend full support to further enhance their initiatives.

Devi Pindi Farmer Producer Company Ltd.,



comprising 200 members, was incorporated with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) on 24th July, 2023. The FPO specializes in a variety of local products including Anar Dana chutney, Desi Haldi, Kashmiri masala tiki, Cow dung deys, Chili flakes, Kashmiri Lal mirch, Herbal soups,

Garam masala, Kandha masala, Bhaderwahi rajma, Jau sattu, Mango pickle, Galgal pickle, Desi ghee, and Rice atta.

The programme was attended by Directors and members of the FPO, as well as senior officials from the Agriculture Department including SDAO Udhampur, AEO

Tikri, and other Agriculture officers.

The visit underscored the commitment of the Agriculture Department to promote and support FPOs in the region, facilitating their growth and contributing to the local agricultural economy.

## Public Darbar at Srinagar

## Shaleen Kabra advocates greater coordination among departments to address public issues on priority



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JULY 3

Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Jal Shakti Department, Shaleen Kabra, today emphasized the critical need for enhanced inter-departmental coordination to address public grievances promptly and effectively.

Speaking during a Public Darbar held in Srinagar, Shaleen Kabra highlighted the importance of meeting the high expectations of citizens by resolving their issues with priority.

The Public Darbar was convened to assess and address various demands and concerns raised by the local populace.

The event saw a significant turnout of residents, civil society members, District Development Council members and Block Development Council members from Srinagar district. The participants raised a wide range of issues related to civic amenities, infrastructure, and other local concerns.

Delegations from various areas such as Padshahi Bagh, Harwan Dara, Onta Bhawan Soura, Shalteng HMT, Balhama, Shivpora, Jeelanabad, Peerbagh, Khonmoh, and other city locations raised their concerns regarding availability of drinking water. Specific grievances included inad-

equated water supply in Padshahi Bagh and Shivpora, where residents highlighted the need for improved drainage and completion of water pipe installations.

Similarly, residents from Noorbagh, Palpora, Khanyar Nowpora and HMT Omarabad requested for road widening in their areas to alleviate traffic congestion and improve road safety.

A delegation from Central Shalteng brought to attention the need for effective dewatering solutions in their area.

Likewise, civil society members raised issues related to environment, progress on Smart City initiative and the need for

identifying and addressing gaps in various developmental projects.

During the darbar, ACS listened to the concerns raised by the people. He gave on-the-spot instructions to the officers for ensuring speedy redressal of grievances projected by the participants.

Shaleen Kabra expressed gratitude to all participants for their active involvement and reiterated his commitment towards resolving all the genuine issues on priority. The event was attended by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, along with various HoDs and other officers.

## DDC reviews launch of Sampoorna Abhiyan in Kishtwar district



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
KISHTWAR, JULY 3

District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kishtwar Dr Devansh Yadav today convened a meeting of concerned officers to review the launch of Sampoorna Abhiyan in Aspirational Block (AB) Marwah and at District headquarter Kishtwar. The meeting focused on the formulation of the Action Plan for saturation of 06 identified Key Performance Indicators.

poorna Abhiyan to achieve saturation of 6 identified Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) at District level and Aspirational Block level under the thematic areas of Health, Nutrition, Education, Agriculture and Social Development. It was also given out that the aim of Sampoorna Abhiyan is to saturate the identified KPIs within a span of three months starting from 4th July and ending on 30th September 2024. "An Action Plan will be formulated for working towards saturation of the benign principle of Sampooranata" the meeting

was told. Speaking at the meeting, the DDC stressed upon the concerned officers to work with coordination and added dedication and ensure that all the identified key performance indicators are achieved within the stipulated time frame. The meeting was attended by PO ICDS Dr Rishi Kumar Sharma; CPO Shahnawaz Bali; SDM Marwah Mohammad Ashraf; ACD Phulail Singh; AD Food/DIO Shafiq Keen; DSWO Zubair Ahmed, CEO, CMO, XENS, DYSSO and other concerned officials.

## DC B'la presides a Block Diwas Program at Rakh-i-Hygam Haritaar, Sopore



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SOPORE, JULY 3

To listen to the issues and grievances of people at their door steps, the Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, today chaired weekly Block Diwas at Panchayat Halqa Rakh-i-Hygam Haritaar, Sopore. The event aimed at addressing the developmental concerns and grievances of the local residents, ensuring their voices are heard and their issues resolved promptly. The program was attended by the District Development Council Member Jrfan Hafiz Lone, Additional Deputy Commissioner Sopore, Shabir Ahmad Raina, Assistant Commissioner Development, Shabir Ahmad Hakak, Assistant Commis-

sioner Panchayat, Ibad-ur-Rahman, different stakeholders including public representatives, Officers of all line departments and other prominent citizens from Haritaar and other adjoining villages. The general public put forth the prevalent demands and grievances centered around R&B, Education, PDD, Health, Social welfare and the transfer of land to rightful landholders, appealing earnestly to the DC for prompt intervention to expedite the resolution of these issues. Speaking on the occasion, the DC highlighted the primary goal of the Block Diwas is to bring the administration directly to the people's doorsteps, ensuring easier access to highlight the issues con-

cerning the local population. During the program, the DC handed over sanction letters of Prime Minister Awas Yojna-Gramin PMAY-G cases to 43 landless families, thereby allocating 5 malras of land to each family for the construction of pucca house under PMAY-G Scheme. Minga Sherpa, while keenly listening to the grievances and demands raised by the public, provided prompt redressal to the multitude of the issues by involving the officers present during the programme. The DC further issued directions to the officers present, instructing them to address and expedite the resolution of all issues highlighted by the public representatives on priority.

## DC Samba chairs Block Diwas Program

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SAMBA, JULY 3

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Samba Abhishek Sharma on Wednesday chaired a Block Diwas public outreach Camp here in the Community Hall. The event aimed to listen to and resolve issues of the community, promoting the overall welfare and development of the area. The program saw participation of stakeholders across the social spectrum, including ex-PRIs, officers from all line departments and civil society members of the Samba district. During the Grievance Redressal Camp, numerous public delegations and individuals presented their developmental demands, seeking timely action. Key issues raised included the establishment of a Sabzi Mandi at Samba, parking facility in Samba for vehicles moving towards the border area, construction of roads from Kandi to Ambtali and Chak to Sadralia road, augmen-



tation of water supply to wards of Panchayat Diana, playfield in Panchayat Diani, seating arrangement in District Hospital near OPD, easing of traffic congestion in Samba town, ring road for Samba town and check on unscheduled electricity cuts. The public appreciated the facility of a WhatsApp number provided by the District Administration for registering their grievances for redressal. They also lauded the decision of holding Block Diwas for the resolution of grievances of the general public. DC Abhishek Sharma assured the public that the District Administration would actively support the development of the area. He promised that all issues and demands

would be forwarded to the concerned authorities for timely redressal. He directed the concerned departments to submit an action taken report within two days. Several immediate concerns were resolved on the spot, with the DC emphasizing the administration's commitment to streamlining public service delivery. He also highlighted ongoing efforts to identify and approve additional developmental projects. Simultaneously, weekly Block Diwas camps were organized at all subdivision levels within the Samba district, where respective sub-divisional heads presided over the functions, listening to and addressing the grievances of the people.

## Labour Department launches special drive for truck drivers to register on e-Shram Portal



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JULY 3

Labour Department, J&K Wednesday launched a special drive across the UT to facilitate the registration of truck drivers on the e-shram Portal. The initiative was taken on the directions of Labour Commissioner, J&K Charandeep Singh, and aims at safeguarding the rights and promoting welfare of the truck drivers. The registration cum awareness camps were set up along the National Highway, Railway Stations, Transport Yards, Mandies, Union offices and other locations and CSCs across each district. The truck drivers are an important component of the country's labour force. Majority of them, however, do not get social security benefits and face many challenges. In order to protect their rights, the

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) had issued an advisory to protect Human Rights of Truck drivers. The advisory underscored the critical role of truck drivers in the logistics and transportation sector and the steps to be taken by the Government for their overall wellbeing including their registration on the e-shram Portal. The e-Shram portal is the national database of unorganised workers. A unique Twelve (12) digit Universal Account Number (UAN) is uniquely assigned to each unorganized worker after registration on e-Shram portal. UAN number is a permanent number i.e. once assigned, it will remain unchanged for the worker's lifetime. The registration on the e-Shram Portal will facilitate the Government in ensuring that unorga-

nized worker including truck drivers can avail benefits of social security schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PM-JJB), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PM-SBY), Old age Protection under Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mann Dhan (PM-SYM) and other welfare measures meant for the workers including during any emergency or pandemic like situations. Till date, over 21,000 truck drivers belonging to J&K have registered on the e-shram Portal and the registration cum awareness drive shall continue to facilitate registration of the remaining truck drivers. Labour Commissioner, J&K has urged the Truck drivers to pro-actively register themselves on the e-shram Portal along with their co-drivers and helpers.

## District Shopian Shines at National Level as 'Best performing District' on preventing Drug Abuse among children

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SHOPIAN, JULY 3

Leading charge against the menace of Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking among Children in district Shopian especially past two years, efforts of the District Administration in coordination with police bore fruit this week with the award and appreciation from the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR), Premier Child Rights organisation of the country. The recognition as 'Best Performing District' for implementing Joint Action Plan on Prevention of Drugs and Substance Abuse among Children and Illicit Trafficking at a National level is a testament to the efforts of the district administration and police to prevent the spread of menace among children in the district.



The award ceremony, held at New Delhi, was presided over by Hon'ble Minister of State of Home Affairs, Shri Nityanand Rai. The award and certificate was received by top level officer of District Administration on the behalf of DC, Shopian. The district has done excellent work in last two years against the Menace of Drugs and Substance Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, reads the Certificate of Appreciation. The Administration in coordination with the police has led a concert-

ed and a result oriented Campaign against these Social evils by controlling Over the Counter Sale of Scheduled Drugs, installation of CCTV cameras across Pharmacies and Medical stores of the district, strictly implementing COPTA provisions in and around educational institutions, robust supervision of Medical stores by Drug and Child Welfare Officers, involving Prahari Clubs in Schools, in conducting Training and awareness programmes, etc. Notable among the achievements under the Action Plan has been that the district has not reported any case under Section, 77 & 78 of JJ Act. Deputy Commissioner while expressing happiness over the recognition of work at the highest echelons of the Government thanked all stakeholders and public at large for being hand in hand with the district administration in curbing the menace and committed that the collaboration against the menace shall continue till its decimation from the society.

## DC Kulgam conducts Public durbar at village Chowgam

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
KULGAM, JULY 3

The Deputy Commissioner Athar Aamir Khan today visited Chowgam Village in Devsar area and chaired a Public Darbar under the ambitious public outreach programme of the government. During the camp public delegations from Chowgam and other villages participated in the grievances redressal camp and demanded repairment of irrigation canal, establishment of ITI centre, repairment and macadamisation of Berigam road, construction of Mini-Secretariat building to house various departments, development of playfield, early completion of Hos-

pital building and other demands projected by the people. All the issues and grievances were listened to and noted for proper disposal. The DC while speaking on the occasion apprised the participants that all the demands were noted and will be taken up with concerned quarters for appropriate action. Deputy Commissioner said that the objective of the programme is to listen to the issues of the public for prompt and timely redressal. Others who were present in the programme including JDP, Zahid Sajjad, ACD, Syed Naseer, Tehsildar and other officers.

## Mega public outreach camp held at panchayat Sundla Block Khoon

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
UDHAMPUR, JULY 3

Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai, led an extensive tour of Panchayat Sundla in Block Khoon, today. She presided over a mega public outreach program at Panchayat Sundla, addressing the concerns of the local populace. Vice Chairperson District Development Council Juhli Manhas Pathania; Additional District Development Commissioner Rajinder Singh; IAS Probationer Swati Sheemar; Assistant Commissioner Revenue Dr. Umesh Shan; Assistant Commissioner ACD Dr. Ranjeet Singh Kotwal; ACP Tanveer Ul-Majid Wani; along with several other district and block-level officers participated in the outreach program.



The event saw active participation from Ex-PRI members and the general public, who raised several issues and demands. They demanded adequate staff in educational and health institutions, Augmentation of drinking water supply, Uninterrupted power supply, 24x7 operation of PHC Khoon with adequate staff and machinery, construction of Amrit Sarovar in Pyt. Sundla, Establishment of a permanent police chowki

in Khoon, Shifting of the health and wellness centre, Establishment of a veterinary hospital in Pyt. Bilaspur, resolving Mobile network issues in far-flung villages, Completion of JJM work in the Panchayat, augmentation of water supply in Khoon and Tehsil Majalta, Installation of a transformer in Ward No. 2 Khoon, Blacktopping of roads, Early completion of the health and wellness building, Early completion of JJM schemes in

the areas Responding to the public demands, the DC issued on-the-spot directions to address the schemes. She expressed gratitude to the public and Ex-PRI members for participating in the outreach and appreciated the efforts made by PRIs for the construction of a badminton hall and sports ground in Sundla Panchayat. The DC also highlighted the harmful effects of plastic and appealed to locals to avoid

its use and keep the environment clean. During the interaction with locals, the DC promptly resolved many issues and issued clear directions to stakeholder departments to address remaining concerns. The outreach camp received an overwhelming response, with people expressing their developmental issues and seeking intervention for redressal. The DC also sensitized the public about the HADP scheme and urged the general public to come forward and avail the benefits of credit linked schemes. She asked the concerned officers to initiate a campaign for sensitizing rural youth, SHG members, and other stakeholders about the various schemes launched by the government under HADP.

## Truck Drivers sensitized about e-Shram Portal at Doda

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
DODA, JULY 3

The Labour Department Doda in collaboration with the Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) Doda organized an awareness cum on-spot registration camp on the e-Shram Portal targeting truck drivers, helpers, and co-drivers at various locations in Doda. Participants were informed that registration on the e-Shram portal requires Aadhaar details, a bank account number linked with the Aadhaar card, and that the age limit for registration is 18 to 59. The camp aimed to educate attendees on the benefits of registering on the e-Shram portal, including access to social security



benefits such as insurance and pension schemes. On-spot registration counters were set up by the Labour Department Doda to facilitate immediate registration for the beneficiaries. The event at Doda Bridge was attended by Deputy Labour Commissioner Jammu, Vinakshi Koul; Assistant Labour Commissioner Kishtwar, Dr. Adnan Tariq; Labour Officer Doda, Inspector MVD Doda, staff from both departments, and representatives from the Driver Union, including

truck drivers, helpers, and co-drivers. These officials provided guidance and support throughout the registration process. Assistant Labour Commissioner Doda emphasized that this initiative aligns with the government's efforts to promote the welfare and well-being of workers in the unorganized sector. By registering on the e-Shram Portal, eligible workers can access essential social security benefits, enhancing their financial stability and security.

## DDC Kupwara chairs Mega Block Diwas at Manigah Hyhama

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KUPWARA, JULY 3

In order to take stock of essential amenities, progress of developmental activities and grievances faced by the general public, the District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today chaired a mega Block Diwas programme at Manigah in block Hyhama of Kupwara district.



Among others, ACD Kupwara, CMO, CEO, DFO Kamraj, BDO Hayhama, Tehsildar Kupwara BDO Hayhama and other District and Sectoral Officers and field functionaries attended the mega block diwas programme.

Speaking at the occasion, the DDC said that Government is committed to boost the livelihood of the people especially unemployed educated youth by providing dif-

ferent self employment generating schemes. She appealed the unemployed youth to come forward and establish their own income generating units like mushroom unit, sheep unit, polyhouse etc adding that major boost in rural economy is possible through agriculture and allied sectors.

Emphasizing the need

for awareness of schemes among the public, the DDC directed the BDO Hyhama to hold an awareness camp in the area involving line departments especially Agriculture & allied departments so that the people especially unemployed youth could take benefit under different government schemes. Regarding PM Surya Ghar

Muft Bijli Yojana, the DDC directed complete all the pending registrations so that the people can get benefitted under the Yojana. The DDC stressed upon all officers and field functionaries to be proactive, responsive, accessible and visible to the people on the ground so that the purpose of the government schemes is

fulfilled. On the occasion, people including youth and senior citizens from different areas of Hyhama block put forth various grievances before the DDC. The grievances/ demands pertained to road connectivity, macadamization of roads, electricity, water supply, playground and others. The DDC heard them patiently and passed on spot directions to the concerned officers for resolving the same on priority basis. Later, the DDC visited Subaya Behak in Hyhama area and inspected the ongoing macadamization of the local road. The local people also expressed their gratitude to the Deputy Commissioner for her visit to the area and demanded further extension of the road length in the village. Block Diwas programme were also held in sub divisions of Handwara, Karnah and Lolab.

## KPDCL rebuts news report, says transition of smart metered consumers to pre-paid mode is final

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JULY 3

Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL), today rebutted a news report published in a local newspaper regarding shifting of smart metered

consumers from pre-paid to post-paid mode.

In a press statement issued today, a KPDCL spokesman clarified that Kashmir DISCOM is steadily transitioning all smart-metered consumers to prepaid mode, with 1.22

lakh consumers already switched to this system.

The spokesman added that the transition of smart metered consumers to prepaid mode is final, with no option to revert to postpaid.

## Van Mahotrasav: Plantation drive conducted at IOC bottling plant Kartholi

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JULY 3

Van Mahotrasav (Jeevan ka Utsav) was today celebrated by Purmandal Forest Range in collaboration with Indian Oil Corporation at bottling plant of IOC at Kartholi, Bari Brahma



Samba Sagar Singh Ji.

During the event, 50 Ornamental and shade plants of different species were planted in the prem-

ises of IOC by staff of IOC & Purmandal Range.

On the Occasion, the Chief of IOC Plant Agha Shahi, Range officer Naresh Sharma and Block Officer Sunny Tidal urged the citizens to participate in plantation drives & plant as many trees as possible this monsoon season.

## DC Bandipora reviews Progress on Land Encroachment Litigations

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
BANDIPORA, JULY 3

Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman, chaired a District Level Standing Committee meeting at the Mini Secretariat to review the progress on pending litigation related to the encroachment of state and departmental land.



The committee discussed various cases filed before the Hon'ble High Court of J&K related to land encroachment. It was informed that there are five litigation cases related to land encroachment out of which 01 case has been disposed-off by the Hon'ble High Court and necessary responses for the remaining 04 cases stand submitted.

The DC issued directions to expedite the legal process and ensure timely follow-up on all cases to safeguard state and departmental land from encroachment. He emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts among different

departments to resolve the issues efficiently.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Umar Shafi Pandit, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Sahabir Ahmad Wani,

Chief Education Officer, DySP HQ Bandipora and Executive Engineer R&B Sumbal. District Litigation Officer, Tehsildars, ZEOs, and other concerned officials also participated in the meeting through virtual mode.

## DC Kulgam presides Block level Pani Samiti Convention at Devsar

J1 NEWS SERVICE  
KULGAM, JULY 3

A Block level Pani Samiti Convention was today organised here at Devsar under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) by Jal Shakti Department and the programme was presided over by the District Development Commissioner Kulgam Athar Aamir Khan.

The programme was also attended by ADC, Viqar Ahmad Giri, JDP, Zahid Sajjad, Exen Jal Shakti, Tehsildar and other officers besides Pani Samiti members.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC stressed for preservation & conservation of water resources besides judicious use of water.

A detailed interactions regarding different ongoing Water Supply Schemes, and related infrastructure was held among the Pani Simitis and members of the Jal Shakti department in the area.

During the programme, the role and responsibility regarding planning,



implementation, management, operation and maintenance of village water supply systems was highlighted.

It was informed that 6139 households have been provided with potable water connections to date, working towards the set target of 7717 households in Devsar block.

It was also disclosed that under JJM, Devsar block has a total of 11 schemes with 3 already completed and 3 schemes nearing completion and 5 would be completed within two months. It was emphasized that access to clean water is a fundamental right and a top priority under the JJM.

## Kissan Samparak Abhiyan 3.0 launched in Poonch



J1 NEWS SERVICE  
POONCH, JULY 3

Government's flagship programme Kissan Samparak Abhiyan-3.0(KSA 3.0) under HADP was launched in different panchayats of Poonch district. The abhiyan was launched under the instructions and overall guidance of Deputy Commissioner Poonch Yasin M.Chowdhary.

The purpose of KSA 3.0 is to Create and increase awareness about HADP and expedite the implementation of 29 projects for the welfare of the farming community. The orientation training programs for farmers were conducted simul-

aneously at 13 avenues across 11 blocks. The training was imparted to the farmers by the resource persons of Agriculture, Horticulture, Sheep, Animal Husbandry and other allied sectors.

District Nodal Officer KSA, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry, AGMO urged the resource persons to lay special focus on credit linked schemes and purpose of open Kissan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs). the District nodal officers KSA called upon all the stakeholders to come together to ensure the effective implementation of a holistic agriculture development program.

## FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

### Fight against terrorism...

airstrikes, teaching the mentors of terrorism a lesson. The Prime Minister said that Article 370 was used for vote-bank politics by the J&K parties and BJP broke this wall forever to pave the way for the entry of the Indian Constitution in the region.

Modi visited Jammu and Kashmir on June 21, 2024, where he mentioned that preparations for assembly polls in Jammu & Kashmir had started and would be held soon. He also announced the restoration of statehood soon. KNO

### Army Chief reviews...

support from the Indian Army, and appreciated the prominent civil dignitaries for their synergy and cooperation with the Indian Army in maintaining peace and harmony in the region.

Later, the Army Chief, along with other senior officers of the Army, including the Army Commander Northern Command and Corps Commanders of Srinagar-based 15 and Jammu-based 16 Corps, held a comprehensive security review meeting with the top brass of Jammu and Kashmir Police, led by DGP R.R. Swain and ADGPI (Law and Order) Vijay Kumar, at Nagrota.

Officials sources told KNO that the meeting deliberated upon the security of the Amarnath Yatra and the Army Chief lauded the synergy between security forces in dealing with the emerging threat of terrorism in the Jammu region. The Chief also appreciated officers making foolproof strategies to build a strong and fearless narrative, given the booming tourism in Kashmir and around 1 lakh pilgrims visiting Shri Amarnath Yatra in just the first five days. KNO

### ACB files case against...

officials under will-knit conspiracy with each other and beneficiaries, dishonestly and fraudulently abused their official positions to misappropriate amount of Rs 30,25,264 for 20 randomly selected different works of panchayat Loharna-B and Janakpur meant for execution of works under different schemes on account of payments for the material supplied with consequent loss to the state exchequer.

"During the course of investigation house search of accused public servant namely Parveen Sharma, then BDO Dachhan situated has also been conducted. Further investigation in the case is in progress," it reads. KNO

### Gadkari agrees to...

local markets, shops, malls, banquet halls, main-fruits Mandi,Main-Vegetable Mandi,Transport Nagar, ISBT bus stand and new railway station platforms with entrance and exit axis. Therefore, the blind wall would have spoiled all the establishments and also created obstacles in free movement of people.

It may be recalled that a deputation of the prominent citizens of the affected areas besides those engaged in trade and commerce, led by senior BJP leader Mr Devender Singh Rana and comprising Mr Sham Lal Langer BJP Traders Cell and Arun Gupta President Chamber of Commerce Jammu had called on the Union Minister Mr Nitin Gadkari a couple of weeks ago with this demand of immense public importance. The Union Minister had assured the delegation that necessary instructions would be issued to the National Highway Authority of India, keeping in view the public sensitivity over the issue.

"Finally, after several rounds of meetings, the Union Minister has been kind enough to communicate the decision to the National Highway Authority of India that there will be no RE wall between Kunjwani and Narwal sector of the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway". Mr Jugal Sharma and congratulated the people in general and the stakeholders in particular for fulfillment of their urges and aspirations.

### Amarnath Yatra...

aerial surveillance.

The sixth batch of 5,725 pilgrims left the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas base camp in Jammu for the Kashmir Valley to perform the pilgrimage to the Amarnath Cave Shrine. Chanting 'Bam Bam Bhole', the pilgrims left the base camp in a cavalcade of 238 vehicles early this (Wednesday) morning.

These included 4,481 men, 1,034 women, 25 children,

173 Sadhus, and 12 Sadhis (female sadhus). Of these, 2,514 pilgrims left for Baltal at 3:25 AM and 3,211 for the Pahalgam base camp at 3:45 AM. These pilgrims will reach their respective base camps by this evening, from where they will leave for the holy cave early tomorrow morning under tight security measures.

Over 125 free langars have been established by philanthropic organizations at base camps and in the yatra area up to the holy cave to serve the pilgrims. Moreover, thousands of pilgrims are reaching here from different parts of the country to perform darshan. There is a heavy rush at Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas as well as Saraswati Dham and Vaishnavi Dham near the Railway Station, where on-the-spot registration of the yatri has been opened.

The Amarnath Yatra began on July 29 from the twin tracks - the traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam route in Anantnag and the 14-km shorter but steeper Baltal route in Ganderbal. The 52-day-long Amarnath Ji Yatra will conclude on August 19 this year on the auspicious occasion of Shrawan Poornima, which also coincides with the festival of Raksha Bandhan.

More than 4.5 lakh pilgrims paid obeisance at the cave shrine last year. KNO

### Govt to establish...

According to the fourth Global Youth Tobacco Survey Report of 2019 prevalence of tobacco use among youths in Jammu and Kashmir (13 to 15 years) is more than 11%.

"All head of medical institutions and hospitals in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir are therefore, requested to establish a tobacco cessation center as per the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and also conduct the regular CME's on the Cigarettes and other Tobacco products Act (COTPA-2003) and also upgrading the skills of students in accordance with the JK Medical Council Code of Medical Ethics (Professional Conduct, Etiquette & Ethics Regulation 2003)," it reads. KNO

### Many from Jammu...

came in contact with Braham Jyoti through a dating app and got involved in the racket. Her bank accounts

were used to receive money from the people sent to South Korea, the official said.

Police were investigating whether the members of the syndicate, including naval officer Dagar, had sent people to other countries as well, and letters are being sent to the consulates of several countries seeking information, he added. (Agencies)

### J&K lithium block...

sought to secure assets overseas as well as domestically.

Analysts have however questioned the composition of the deposit in Jammu and Kashmir.

The government in June last year, listed 30 minerals, including lithium, nickel, titanium, vanadium and tungsten as critical to its quest for cleaner energy.

## CHOUBARS



Late Dr. Naresh Kumar  
(Retd. Veterinary Surgeon)

*Noble Souls never die but remain in the hearts of their beloved ones.*

It's been four years since you left us for heavenly abode. It has left such a hole in us that we have never been whole ever since. We remember you with pride, glory and gratitude. Your life and deeds continue to inspire and guide us. You shall live forever in our thoughts and in our heart. We promise to uphold the values you cherished and tread the path of righteousness, truth, justice, purity, morality & honor that you taught/guided us through & through.

Choubarsi of our beloved Late Dr. Naresh Kumar will be performed on 5th of July 2024 (Friday) at our residence Lane no.24, Greater kailash, Jammu.

Pooja Timing: 11 am onwards.  
Shej Timing: 1 Noon followed by Lunch from 2 pm onwards at our residence Greater kailash, Jammu. Know you are shining in the sky and looking from above over us & blessing us always.

Deeply Remembered By:

Smt. Kanta Devi (Mother)

ANKUSH (Deputy Manager SBI) & PRINCA: Son & Daughter-in-law

Dr. ANKUR SLADA: Son, MDS (Oral & Maxillofacial surgeon)

Contact: 9596683721, 9419118238.

## DC Pulwama Chairs Mega Block Divas in Pampore

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
PULWAMA, JULY 3

District Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr Basharat Qayoom presided over a Block Divas at the Block Headquarter Pampore, marking an important milestone in the Government's public outreach initiative aimed at grassroot engagement.

At the event, residents raised a spectrum of pressing issues, including challenges with access to drinking water, the need for road macadamization, progress on the PMGSY, availability of medicines at govt health institutions, streamlining rural sanitation facilities, infrastructure improvements for power supply, playground allocation and other grievances and demands.

The DC promptly direct-

ed the concerned to provide detailed Action Taken Reports by the next day detailing specific timelines as also the feasibility of various demands so that feasible and doable demands are incorporated in appropriate schemes / programs demonstrating a swift and accountable approach to addressing public grievances. Immediate resolutions were offered for some issues on the spot, while others were duly noted for follow-up action with the relevant departments.

During interaction with participants a slew of suggestions and feedback was also received regarding planning and implementation of various govt proposals & interventions.

DC urged participants to actively participate and engage with RDD for making our panchayats

clean and green. Directed Concerned officers to activate village sanitation committees through training and exposure visits.

Significantly, during the gathering, the DC facilitated the distribution of 28 approvals totaling Rs 30 lakh under various flagship programs administered by the animal husbandry department. These approvals were disbursed to selected beneficiaries, underscoring the government's commitment to supporting local communities and fostering sustainable development.

The public gathering was honored by the presence of distinguished guests, including members of the District Development Council, Additional Deputy Commissioner Awantipora, Chief Planning Officer Pulwama, district officers, and the general public from the

area. This diverse participation highlighted a collaborative approach to address community needs and promote inclusive growth.

In addition to addressing immediate concerns, skit on the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) were also demonstrated, indicating a holistic approach towards addressing water-related challenges and enhancing access to clean water for all residents.

Through such proactive engagements and targeted interventions, the administration of Pulwama is committed to enhancing public welfare, fostering dialogue, and ensuring effective service delivery to all segments of society. The successful conduct of the block Divas reflects the government's dedication to promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen-centric governance.

## Syed Moin-Ul-Haq takes over as Director SHD Jammu



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JULY 3

Dr. Syed Moin-Ul-Haq today took over as Director Sheep Husbandry Department Jammu. A warm welcome was accorded to the Director by the officers and staff of Sheep Husbandry Department Jammu.

He interacted with

the different sections of the Directorate and took first hand review of the ongoing schemes of the Department and directed the officers and officials to work with full zeal, dedication and punctuality. The Director assured all the staff that their genuine demands shall be addressed in a time bound manner.

## Weekly Block Diwas DC Rajouri addresses public grievances at Teryath



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
RAJOURI, JULY 3

To address public grievances, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Om Prakash Bhagat chaired a comprehensive public outreach camp at Teryath today as a part of weekly block Diwas, facilitating a direct communication between the district administration and the local residents.

A diverse range of issues were projected by local residents seeking the macadamization of roads, up-gradation of government institutions, meeting shortage of staff in these institutions, augmentation of water supply and health infrastructure.

Specific demands highlighted during the event were adequate staff for GHSS Teryath, speedy implementation of JJM schemes, provision of electricity poles, sanctioning additional handpumps, renovation of Teryath to Sunderbani road. The Deputy Commissioner assured

the public that all their grievances have been properly documented. He committed to addressing genuine concerns in a phased manner, involving the concerned departments. He emphasized on the importance of raising mass awareness about the Government schemes to extend benefits to maximum number of the eligible persons.

Responding to the demands, DC Om Prakash Bhagat issued on the spot directives to the concerned departments to prioritize and resolve the issues highlighted by the public in a time-bound manner.

Several issues were resolved on the spot with the intervention of the concerned authorities. He underscored the need for sustained progress and cooperation among all stakeholders.

The Weekly Block Diwas at Teryath facilitated meaningful discussions on various public issues, and many issued were resolved on the spot.

## Amarnath Ji Yatra 2024: Cleanliness drive takes center stage at Ganta Ghar Lal Chowk

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JULY 3

The second day of the cleanliness awareness campaign for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra was celebrated with great enthusiasm at Ganta Ghar (Clock Tower) Lal Chowk, here. Pilgrims were welcomed with a grand reception marked by cultural performances and a strong commitment to cleanliness.

The event was graced by the chief guest Commissioner Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department, Mandeep Kaur.

Among others present were Keshav Verma, Advisor to J&K Government on Smart Cities besides senior officials from SMC, LCMA, ULB, CTP and line departments.

The celebration beautifully blended tradition and modernity to promote a clean pilgrimage experience.

The Housing and Urban Development Department has mobilized a dedicated Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) team in collaboration with 'Swaha,' an IIT Indore startup, and the artists' group Hanuman Dhvaj Pathk. Their one-hour performance,



"Swachhta ka Shiv Naad," used drums, cymbals and tambourines to convey a message of environmental responsibility to thousands of pilgrims.

Mandeep Kaur highlighted the significance of the awareness campaign, aiming to encourage pilgrims to minimize plastic usage and maintain cleanliness. The efforts of Srinagar Municipal Corporation and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in SANJY-2024 have been pivotal in achieving this goal.

Speaking on behalf of Swaha, Shri Sameer Sharma highlighted the comprehensive cleanliness campaign led by the

Housing and Urban Development Department, Jammu and Kashmir.

Cleanliness camps have been established along the yatra route, complemented by educational programs promoting a litter-free pilgrimage.

The inclusion of Nukkad Natak performances has further bolstered enthusiasm among pilgrims, fostering a collective commitment to uphold cleanliness standards and reduce plastic waste. These street plays will continue to engage pilgrims across various ULBs along the entire yatra route throughout the pilgrimage period.

## Weekly Block Diwas DC Kathua listens to people's grievances at Juthana; Resolves many issues on spot

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
KATHUA, JULY 3

District Development Commissioner Kathua Dr. Rakesh Minhas today presided over weekly Block Diwas proceedings at village Juthana and took stock of grievances and demands of people of the area.

The camp witnessed an overwhelming response from all sections of the society. The people appraised the DDC of issues being faced by the locals and sought his intervention in redressing the same.

The PRI members and Locals put forth the issues concerning their respective areas seeking up-gradation of local GHS to next level, development of a playground in the School, provision for Allopathic Dispensary, provision for Medical officer for monsoon season, Upgradation of electric transformer and requirement of more line workers, Upgradation of Lift irrigation projects, Completion of Juthana Bridge, Crates for flood protection, and Ration card bifurcation. The people also sought measures to resolve the problem of water shortage.

After giving a patient hearing, the DC Kathua assured people that all their genuine issues will be redressed with the active participation of the concerned departments.

Regarding the Up-gradation of GHS juthana, the DC asked the CEO to



prepare a proposal project the same to higher ups. He further assured that a volleyball court will be developed on the school playground.

Regarding the demand for the provision of a Medical Officer in Juthana, the DC asked the CMO to depute a Medical Officer once a week who will operate from the local Ayush centre.

Pertaining to the low lying HT electric wires, electricity shortage, and high bills, the DC asked the XEN PDD to make arrangements for lifting of electric wires, upgradation of Transformer and to inspect the cases of high bills.

Regarding lift irrigation upgradation, the DC informed that the district administration has allotted Rs 33 lakh for the same and the work will start soon after the problem of sinking and sliding is sorted out.

For cattle sheds and crates for the protection of land from flash floods, the DC asked the BDO to make

arrangements for crate work and Cattle shed for widows under MGNREGA.

Regarding the water scarcity problem, the DC informed that the alternate source of water has been arranged, and the supply from it shall start within a week.

Pertaining to the drainage system alongside the PMGSY road, the DC asked the XEN PMGSY to visit and find a way to develop the same.

The DC informed the locals about the status of Juthan Bridge that 8 spans out of the total 14 have been completed, and all other works, including approach roads, will be completed before 30th September 2024.

Earlier Vice Chairperson DDC Raghunandan Singh also highlighted the demands of people of Juthana. The proceedings were also attended by CPO, ACD, Tehsildar Kathua and Hiranagar, XEN Jal Shakti, XEN PDD, XEN PWD, BDO and other concerned officers.

## Power shutdown

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JULY 3

Chief Engineer (Distribution), JPDC, Jammu has informed that the power supply to Greater Kailash, Jallo Chak, Ratnu Chak and adjoining areas will remain affected on July 04 from 5 am to 9 am.

Similarly, the power supply to Gandhi Nagar, Shastri Nagar, Auqaf Market, Div Com Office, RBI, Bahu Plaza and adjoining areas will remain affected on July 04 from 5 am to 8 am.

Likewise, the power supply to Sidhra, Tawi Vihar Colony, Majin and adjoining areas will remain affected on July 05 from 5 am to 9 am.

Similarly, the power supply to Malhori Jaggir and adjoining areas will remain affected on July 06 from 5 am to 9 am.

Likewise, the power supply to Bathindi, Vidhata Nagar, Kargil Colony, Sunjwan and adjoining areas will remain affected on July 07 from 5 am to 9 am.

Similarly, the back power

from Serward Katra Grid will remain affected on July 06 and 07 from 7 am to 11 am.

Meanwhile, Superintending Engineer (Distribution), JPDC O&M Circle, Kathua has informed that the power supply to Rajbagh (Hardo Muthi), Sunjwan, Bakral, Khanpur, Bandhore, Marheen, Sanjimorh, Ghair, Balasakhu, Beeruchack, Chak Nathal, Thanger, Manyari, Kadyala, Devo Chak and adjoining areas will remain affected on July 04 from 5 am to 9 am.

## One-Day Training on revamped CRS Portal held in Ramban

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
RAMBAN, JULY 3

A one-day training session on the newly revamped Civil Registration System (CRS) Portal for Data Entry Operators from various registration units, viz, block development offices, municipal offices and private/government hospitals were held here today under the supervision of District Statistics and Evaluation Officer (DSEO) Ganesh Kumar in coordination with CMO Dr. Kamal Zadoo.

The session aimed to familiarize participants with the updated features and functions of the portal, ensuring efficient and accurate civil registration processes.

During the training, the DSEO highlighted that



reporting of Birth and Death events on the newly revamped Civil Registration System (CRS) Portal is mandatory within 21 days for all Government and Private Hospitals. Additionally, the process of manually seeking files has been dispensed with, streamlining the entire registration procedure in online mode. Hands-on demonstrations and interactive segments allowed attendees to engage direct-

ly with the new system.

The DSEO also emphasized the importance of the updated portal in enhancing service delivery and ensuring timely registration of vital events in District Ramban. Moreover, the training was also attended by Anil Sharma Statistical Officer, Mohammad Tanveer Ur Rehman & Various JSAs and staff members of CMO office, Ramban.

## DC B'la visits Pattan & finalizes arrangements for Muharram-ul-Haraam



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
BARAMULLA, JULY 3

Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today visited sub-division Pattan and convened a meeting with officers at Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Pattan to review and finalize arrangements for the smooth celebration of the upcoming Muharram ul Haraam month.

During the meeting, delegations present raised several concerns that need addressing to ensure a smooth celebration of Muharram. They stressed the importance of uninterrupted access to drinking water and power, sufficient medical supplies, and adequate arrangements, especially during the significant days.

After listening to the grievances and demands, the DC instructed officers from the relevant departments to coordinate and ensure adequate arrangements in Shia-dominated

areas during Muharram. The PHE department was instructed to ensure the availability of water tankers, while the Police Department was directed to ensure the overall security of religious sites.

Additionally, the food and supplies department was asked to keep sufficient ration stocked for the Muharram days and the PDD department was directed to keep round the clock power supply available.

Furthermore, Minga Sherpa directed the municipal authorities to ensure sanitation of all the religious places including Imam Baras, shrines, and masjids while the health department was entrusted to keep medical facilities available at all times.

The meeting was attended by SSP Baramulla, Amod Nagpure, SDM pattan, other district and sectoral officers, and representatives of various Shia associations besides other functionaries.

## Relief Organisation issues clarification on news report

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JULY 3

The Relief Organisation has issued clarification on a news report appearing in a section of press about protest lodged by the inmates of Jagti Township against power cuts, leakage of roofs and issues in distribution of ration items.

"The newspaper has

not taken official version or cross checked the facts with the authorities of Relief Organisation. The article presents one-sided perspective, and has not taken into account the efforts being put by the Relief Organisation for welfare of the migrants. There is no delay in the release of ration quota as reflected in the news article of 3rd July, 2024.

## EDITORIAL

## Row over Kunjwani-Narwal flyover

The construction of Kunjwani-Narwal flyover in Jammu has ignited a firestorm of controversy and discontent among local traders and residents. Characterized by its 'blind walls', the flyover has allegedly become a symbol of bureaucratic indifference and public disenfranchisement. Despite continuous protests and appeals from the community, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) persists with the project, citing the absence of written instructions to halt the work. This impasse underscores a glaring communication gap that exacerbates the issue. The decision to construct the flyover with blind walls was made during the preparation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the Delhi-Katra Expressway. As the project advances into execution, this decision has become increasingly contentious. The NHAI officials assert that they are merely following the plans laid out in the DPR, but this rationale has not assuaged the concerns of the local community. The flyover's blind walls are perceived as a significant impediment to local businesses, residential areas, hospitals, and schools along the route. Understandably, the local populace fears the potential negative impact on commerce and daily life, advocating for a pillar-based flyover as a more suitable alternative for the densely populated area. From the NHAI's perspective, altering the flyover design at this stage would lead to substantial cost escalations and delays. Contracts have been awarded, and significant progress has been made in casting and fabricating works. Changing the design now, they argue, would disrupt the project timeline and inflate the budget. While this stance is technically and economically sound from a project management perspective, it fails to address the socio-economic repercussions for the local community. Traders and residents, whose livelihoods and daily activities are directly impacted, feel ignored and marginalized in the decision-making process. Their appeals for a design review reflect deep-seated frustration with what they perceive as an unresponsive and indifferent bureaucratic system. This situation highlights a critical aspect of the controversy: the perceived disregard for public sentiment and the lack of adequate consultation with local stakeholders during the planning stages. The flyover, intended to facilitate smoother transportation, has instead become a symbol of public disenfranchisement. The ongoing protests and appeals for intervention underscore a broader issue of accountability. The NHAI's failure to address the community's concerns satisfactorily points to a need for more transparent and inclusive planning processes. Infrastructure projects of such magnitude and impact should incorporate comprehensive stakeholder consultations to ensure that the benefits are maximized while the adverse effects are minimized. Urgent intervention from higher authorities is necessary. The Union Minister's previous engagement with the issue must translate into concrete actions to mediate a solution that balances economic feasibility with public welfare. The traders and residents deserve a clear, authoritative response that addresses their concerns. The way forward is a dialogue that bridges the gap between the executing agency and the affected community. A potential solution could involve revisiting certain aspects of the project to incorporate design modifications that mitigate the negative impacts on local businesses and residents. The Kunjwani-Narwal flyover controversy serves as a serious reminder of the complexities involved in urban infrastructure development. While economic efficiency and timely project completion are crucial, they should not come at the expense of community welfare and public trust.

## Focus shifts to prudent public wealth management

UTTAM GUPTA

The new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is reviewing the existing disinvestment policy to shift its focus from selling central public sector undertakings (CPSUs) to 'prudent public wealth management (PWM), supporting not-for-profit enterprises, and ensuring strong presence of state-run firms in strategic sectors'.

A CPSU is an undertaking in which the Union government has majority share holding meaning it holds more than 50 percent of its shares. Disinvestment is fancy nomenclature for sale of these shares to private investors. When, disinvestment results in reduction of the government's shareholding in the CPSU to below 50 percent and concomitant transfer of ownership to private entity, this is termed as 'strategic' disinvestment or privatization. The extant policy on disinvestment was announced by the Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech for FY 2021-22.

Under it, CPSUs were classified into two broad categories i.e. strategic and non-strategic. The strategic group covers atomic energy, space and defense; transport and telecommunications; power, petroleum, coal and other minerals; and banking, insurance and

financial services. The non-strategic category includes all other sectors viz. industrial and consumer goods, hotel and tourist services, trading, and marketing and so on. The government's intent was to sell all undertakings in the strategic sector with the caveat that at least one (and a maximum of four) will be retained in the public sector.

As for undertakings in non-strategic sectors, it wanted to reduce its shareholding to below 50 percent in 'all' of them. Put simply, they would all be privatized. All loss-making undertakings in this category would be closed.

Also tagged to this policy was government's intent to use the proceeds from disinvestment for meeting its fiscal deficit (excess of total revenue over total expenditure) or FD target. This part was a continuation from the past when the Modi - government started selling its shares in CPSUs in 2015-16 with particular focus on 'strategic' disinvestment.

In the backdrop of devastation caused by Covid-19 pandemic and debilitating effect on its finances during 2020-21 (in that year, FD had scaled to 9.2 percent of GDP), in the budget for 2021-22, Sitharaman had put even greater reliance on proceeds of disinvestment by setting an ambitious target of Rs 175,000 crore.

During that year, the government had planned big ticket disinvestments such as Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), IDBI Bank, NMDC Steel and Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) and so on.

But, the process has remained stuck in the slow lane even as the targets of proceeds from sales were missed year-after-year. Only during two years viz. 2017-18 and 2018-19, it achieved the target. That was primarily because, in those years, it had conducted two big-ticket sales of its shares from one CPSU to another.

During 2017-18, the government sold 51.11 percent of its shareholding in Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) to the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) yielding Rs 37,000 crore. In the following year, it undertook the sale of its 52.63 percent stake in the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to the Power Finance Corporation (PFC) yielding Rs 13,000 crore. But, those sales can't be termed as strategic as the purchaser being another CPSU namely ONGC/PFC, the Government continues to have effective ownership over the divested entity viz. HPCL/REC.

The results during 2021-22 and 2022-23 were particularly disconcerting. During 2021-22, against a target of Rs 175,000 crore, the actual proceeds from disinvestment were a meager Rs 15,440 crore. During 2022-23, against a target of Rs 65,000 crore, the actual was nearly half at Rs 31,059 crore. For 2023-24, the FM had

lowered the target to Rs 51,000 crore which during the course of the year was further revised downwards to Rs 30,000 crore. Even against this, the actual proceeds were a meager Rs 14,564 crore.

## What does the interim Budget for 2024-25 say?

In a briefing following the presentation of the Budget by Sitharaman on February 1, 2024, Finance Secretary TV Somanathan had stated that the "government no longer views disinvestment from the perspective of balancing the budget". Can it be taken to mean that it has shed its age-old stance of using proceeds from share sale for reducing FD. The answer is 'No' as it has set a target of Rs 50,000 crore for 2024-25 under the head "miscellaneous capital receipts" which includes disinvestment proceeds besides receipts from asset monetization.

The very idea of garnering resources from the sale of government shares in CPSUs is inherently flawed. This is because unlike tax revenue, which can be projected with a degree of certainty based on the existing tax rate and a reasonable assessment of the growth in nominal GDP, the same cannot be said about proceeds from disinvestment. In this case, a lot depends on the market scenario and, in particular, the perception of investors about the company in which share-sale is contemplated.

In cases where the

strategic sale is mooted, the Government faces a bigger challenge as apart from a favorable market, it needs bidders with deep pockets. The lengthy and cumbersome process of approval and bureaucratic red tape further undermines the chances of its kicking the ball rolling just around the time when the strategic investors are ready to put in their bets.

The Niti Aayog identifies companies for disinvestment which are then considered by the Core Group of Secretaries on Divestment (CGD), a long-drawn process by itself, which takes it to the Alternative Mechanism (AM) - a group of ministers, including finance, road transport & highways, administrative reforms, etc., - for approval. After AM's approval, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) moves a proposal for in-principal approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

In view of above, the government shouldn't put any number to receipts from share sale while preparing the budget as the end of the year, slippage is inevitable.

Even so, the government's tax revenue is buoyant (for three years in a row since 2021-22, these have exceeded the target) and it is getting higher dividends from CPSUs as also higher dividends from the Reserve Bank of India (for its FY 2023-24, the RBI has made a huge dividend

transfer of Rs 210,000 crore to the Centre for latter's use during 2024-25) and public sector banks (PSBs). These positive trends should be good enough for managing fiscal deficits; hence, no need to depend on 'miscellaneous capital receipts'.

## What happens to strategic sale?

From the emphasis on public wealth management (PWM), strong presence of state-run firms in strategic sectors, one gets sense that the government has completely abandoned the path of privatizing CPSUs in these sectors. As it is, under the 2021-22 policy, it had intended to retain at least one (and a maximum of four) undertakings in the strategic sector. Now, it seems it won't privatize even one. The government's decision to drop its plan for sale of BPCL which was on its agenda since 2019-20 is an indication of things to come.

Changing horses mid-stream won't be in the best interest of the country. Fundamentally, the State shouldn't be in the business of running enterprises. There always remains a risk of political interference and bureaucratic red tape which can seriously hamper the working of CPSUs. The government should continue the process of share sale and focus on de-bureaucratizing it.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

## The Importance Of Good Qualities In Our Life

UMAR HAYAT HUSSAIN

God has made us into well-formed human beings, different from the rest of the creatures in the world. It is quite hard to believe that a person gets what is written in his fate and no one can challenge it. What we get in life is because of the certain qualities we possess. By sharing these qualities with our fellow human beings, we attain a good status in life. Those who do not possess these qualities often receive a lower status from society and are viewed differently by people.

Getting a good job and having a good status is based on how we have lived our lives. The more good deeds we

do, the better our status in life will be, and our lives will be blessed. A person with a good status is always sincere in his deeds and actions. Everyone respects him and gives him blessings. He has achieved his position because of the sincere actions he took during his growth. Every good deed counts in his life. He receives a good status because he has never hurt or harmed anyone when he had power. Those who misuse their power are dealt with strictly, and their names are tarnished daily.

No one can deny that humans are all the same and have the same feelings everywhere. However, some people are more important than others because of cer-

tain qualities that set them apart. We are all moulded from the same clay. Only our colour and way of thinking differentiate us from others. Good qualities matter, and bad qualities distinguish us from others. We have trouble meeting new people and forming relationships because of the bad qualities we possess. Our image is tarnished, and we face challenging tasks ahead if we do not meet people's expectations. We must address our bad behaviour to achieve a good status in society.

We are always in a hurry to blame God for all the troubles in our lives. We must ask ourselves whether we are living our lives as per His will. Mostly, we are on a mission to deceive

our fellow human beings and commit wrongdoings. God likes those who are passionate and ready to work for society. Such people sacrifice their best days and good times for those in need. On the other hand, some people, even after knowing everything, remain mute spectators and hardly work to correct people's faults. They always run away from the responsibilities that society demands of them.

It is better to learn from our mistakes and work towards correcting them to gain something from society. We should avoid harming our fellow humans by respecting them in times of crisis.

It is wrong to say that God has given all good qualities to people with

good status in society. Even the ones who are considered to have lower qualities can manage life well. It is their way of living that distinguishes them from others. They, too, are happy and have moral respect in society. Everyone is equal in the eyes of God; no one has superiority over another. It is only our society and our education that make us distinguish ourselves from others. Our responsibility towards society makes us different. More responsibility towards society leads to higher status in life. Every individual is blessed with one life; how well he lives is a question to ask. We must possess true, genuine qualities that shine our name in our absence. To do this, we must devote our lives

to simplicity and high-standard values.

Good qualities such as kindness, integrity, resilience, and empathy are not only admirable but also transformative. They have the power to shape our character, strengthen our relationships, and enhance our overall quality of life. By cultivating these qualities, we not only become better individuals but also contribute to a more compassionate and harmonious society. So, let us strive to embrace and nurture these qualities in ourselves and those around us, for they are the keys to a fulfilling and meaningful life.

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## The Evolving Path to Success with upskilling

RACHNA LAKHPATI

The saying "Where there's a will, there's a way" offers a reassuring belief that sheer determination can overcome any obstacle. However, navigating the complexities of real-world success involves more than just good intentions. It requires a foundation built on education, experience, and often, a blend of both. The path to achievement is multifaceted, demanding a strategic combination of willpower, continuous learning, and specialization. Enter the upskilling advocate. These individuals champion the importance of lifelong learning, asserting that the pursuit of new knowledge can unlock doors that even traditional qualifications cannot. The argument holds weight, especially in an era where technology evolves at breakneck speed. The ability to adapt

to these changes is crucial. However, the journey of upskilling can sometimes feel like an endless treadmill—each completed course leads to another, creating a perpetual cycle of learning without a clear endpoint. On the other hand, we have the specialist. Specialists possess targeted expertise, backed by rigorous education in a specific field. Their qualifications often serve as a shortcut past initial professional hurdles, providing a clear and direct path to success. Yet, this path can be fraught with its own challenges. As industries transform and new technologies emerge, specialization that once seemed advantageous may become obsolete. The clear road that once led to career success can abruptly end, leaving the specialist in need of new directions. So, who holds the advantage in this dynamic land-



scape? The truth, as with many aspects of life, is that the ideal path is a balanced one. The most successful individuals often embody a blend of both approaches. They possess a solid foundation in a core discipline but are equally committed to continuous learning and adaptation. For instance, someone with a degree in marketing might pursue courses in digital analytics to stay

relevant in an increasingly data-driven world. This duality—rooted in depth of knowledge but flexible in acquiring new skills—is what makes them particularly valuable. Employers who recognize the importance of this balance are making the smartest investments.

They seek out candidates who not only have the expertise to excel in their current roles but also

the ability to navigate the shifting landscape of the professional world.

These employers understand that a blend of foundational knowledge and a willingness to upskill can create a workforce capable of responding to change with confidence and competence. The key takeaway? While willpower is essential, it must be channeled effectively. Start by building a strong educational foundation in a chosen field, then continually seek opportunities for growth and learning. This approach fosters a mindset of perpetual improvement, positioning individuals to thrive amid the uncertainties of the modern workplace. Yet, the journey doesn't end with acquiring new skills. The future of work demands the ability to unlearn outdated practices and embrace new paradigms. The most successful professionals will

be those who approach each challenge with a growth mindset, eager to expand their knowledge and reshape their skills.

They understand that change is the only constant and that adaptability is the ultimate competitive advantage. Rather than seeing your career as a ladder to climb, envision it as traversing a vast, ever-shifting landscape. The willingness to learn and grow continuously is key to unlocking a fulfilling and successful career in an ever-evolving world. So, abandon the notion of being a finished product and embrace the journey of lifelong learning. It's a marathon, not a sprint. With the right mindset, you'll be well-equipped not just to survive but to thrive in the ever-changing world of work. Are you ready for the adventure? (The writer is an author and has penned three books; views are personal)

# 3% more babies with low birth weight born during pandemic in India, study finds

On average, birth weights during the pandemic years were found to be lowered by 11 grams

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, number of babies in India born with a low birth weight rose sharply by about three per cent, a new study has found.

Babies born during the pandemic were also found to be at double the risk of having a low weight at birth.

The increase in babies born with a low weight could impact the development of "human capital" in the long term, as these infants are known to often "struggle with school", corresponding author Santosh Kumar, an associate professor of

development and global health economics at the University of Notre Dame, US, said.

"Children who have lower birth weight as infants often go on to struggle with school and this limits their capacity to develop what economists often call 'human capital'—the key knowledge and skills that will affect their ability to earn a good living and support themselves and their families," Kumar said.

Roughly, one in every four babies (3 crore) around the world are born with a low weight, which the World Health Organization (WHO) defines as being less than 2.5 kilo-



grams. About 95 per cent of these babies are born in low- and middle-income countries, with around half being born in South

Asia, according to the authors of the study published in the journal Communications Medicine.

In this study, the researchers found that babies born between April 2020 and April 2021 weighed less than the WHO-defined limit, compared to those born before the pandemic.

Over two lakh infants were analysed, of which 12,000 were born during the pandemic and about 1,92,000 born pre-pandemic. Data was taken from the fifth round of the Indian National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), conducted during 2019-2021.

"The low birth weight prevalence rate (among babies) is 20 per cent in the pandemic cohort and 17 per cent in the pre-pandemic cohort," the authors wrote in the study, which they claimed is the first one to look at how the pandemic affected birth outcomes in India using a nationally representative sample.

On average, birth weights during the pandemic years were found to be lowered by 11 grams.

The authors also found that babies born during the pandemic were at double the risk of having a low birth weight compared to those born pre-pandemic.

While a significant number of pandemic-affected children were observed in rural areas and socially disadvantaged communities, the researchers found that a large number of babies from the richest households were also impacted.

Multiple factors related to the pandemic, including COVID-causing SARS-CoV-2 virus, stress related to social distancing, economic upheaval and the disruption of maternal and neonatal care, may have affected the health behaviours of pregnant women and contributed to lower birth weights, Kumar said.

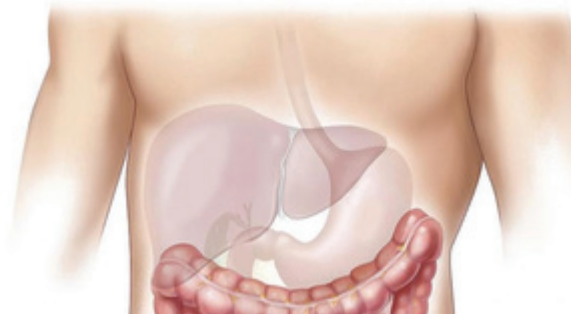
## Limit ghee, coconut oil if you have fatty liver disease: Expert

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

As fatty liver disease is increasing in India, a noted hepatologist on Wednesday advised limiting consumption of saturated fats like ghee and coconut oil.

Fatty liver disease is related to obesity and diabetes. Consuming excessive carbohydrates can raise insulin levels, and chronic high insulin levels lead to insulin resistance. This disrupts metabolism and converts excess glucose into fatty acids, which are stored in the liver.

It can be classified into two main types: alcoholic fatty liver disease (AFLD) and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD/MASLD) -- linked to liver inflammation and



damage, eventually leading to fibrosis, cirrhosis, or liver cancer.

"In the Indian context, if you have metabolic-disorder-associated fatty liver disease (previously NAFLD), remember to limit saturated fat sources in your diet," said Dr Abby Phillips, popularly known as LiverDoc, on the social media platform X.com.

"This means limiting foods containing Ghee,

clarified butter (north India), Coconut oil (south India), and Palm oil (processed/ ultra-processed foods)," he explained, adding that "saturated fats increase liver triglycerides and hence liver fat and inflammation."

While ghee is traditionally considered healthy, the doctor noted that it "is not a superfood. It is a super danger. It is almost all fat, and more than 60 per cent is saturated

(unhealthy) fat."

He stressed the need to replace it with "healthier (vegetable) seed oils that have low saturated fat and trans-fat content."

Dr Abby also recommended using a diverse range of seed oils in daily cooking. Instead of frying food items, he suggested "bake, boil, broil, grill, or steaming foods."

He also called out to "increase portions of plant-based protein in daily meals and to add daily fresh cut fruit portions (instead of fruit juicing)."

"This is far more important than limiting meat (including lean meat more than red meat), fish, and eggs -- all of which can be consumed in their recommended daily/weekly intake," the doctor said.

## India backs global standards for spices, vegetable oils at international food trade meet

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

India has backed global standards for spices and vegetable oils at the 86th session of the Executive Committee (CCEXEC) of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) said on Wednesday.

The CCEXEC, ongoing at Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) headquarters in Rome from July 1-5, plays a critical role in reviewing proposals for new work and monitoring the progress of standards development.

The CAC, an international body established by the FAO and the World Health Organisation (WHO), aims to protect consumer health and promote fair practices in food trade.



During the session, India, represented by G. Kamala Vardhana Rao, CEO of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), strongly supported the advancement of standards development for various spices, including small cardamom, turmeric, and vanilla, the ministry said.

"This initiative is particularly significant for India, being a major pro-

ducer and exporter of these spices, as it would facilitate smoother international trade," it added.

India also "backed the progression of standards for named vegetable oils, guidelines for the control of Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli".

It also called for the safe use and reuse of water in food production and processing and championed

the proposal for developing Codex guidance on food safety considerations related to the use of recycled materials in food packaging.

It is "crucial in addressing global challenges such as climate change, environmental protection, and sustainability," the ministry said.

Further, at the session, India shared its experience with the FSSAI guidelines on recycling post-consumer PET for food contact applications.

"India's participation, as a member, in the High-level Executive Committee (CCEXEC) underscores its dedication to establishing robust food safety standards and promoting fair practices in the global food trade, reflecting its pivotal role in the international food industry," the ministry noted.

## Centre issues advisory to states on Zika virus cases from Maharashtra

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI, JULY 3

The states have been advised to monitor the growth of fetuses of expecting mothers who tested positive for Zika.

The Centre on Wednesday issued an advisory to all states in view of Zika virus cases from Maharashtra and urged the states to maintain a constant vigil through screening of pregnant women for the virus.

The states have been

also advised to maintain a state of constant vigil through screening of pregnant women for infection and monitoring the growth of foetuses of expecting mothers who tested positive for Zika.

"As Zika is associated with microcephaly and neurological consequences in the foetus of the affected pregnant lady, states have been advised to alert the clinicians for close monitoring. States are urged to instruct the health facilities in the

affected areas or those catering cases from affected areas to screen the pregnant women for Zika virus infection, monitor the growth of the foetus of expecting mothers who have tested positive for Zika," said the Ministry of Health and Welfare said in the advisory.

The ministry has also emphasised on the importance of strengthening the entomological surveillance and intensifying the vector control activities in residential areas, work-



places, schools, construction sites, institutions and health facilities.

"States are also urged

to promote awareness through precautionary IEC messages in social media and other platforms to

reduce panic among the community, as Zika is like any other viral infection with most cases being asymptomatic and mild. Though, it is reported to be associated with microcephaly, no report of any Zika-associated microcephaly has been reported in the country since 2016," the advisory reads.

For timely detection and control of any impending outbreak, state authorities have been further advised to be vigilant, and prepared and ensure availabil-

ity of appropriate logistics at all level.

States have been also directed to immediately report any detected case to Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (LDSP) and National Centre for Vector Borne Diseases Control (NCVBDC).

Zika is an Aedes mosquito borne viral disease like Dengue and Chikungunya. It is a non-fatal disease. However, Zika is associated with microcephaly (reduced head size) in babies born to

affected pregnant women which makes it a major concern.

India reported the first Zika case from Gujarat in 2016. Since then, many other states including Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Kerala, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, and Karnataka have reported cases subsequently.

In 2024 till July 2, Maharashtra has reported eight cases including six from Pune one each from Kolhapur and Sangamner.

## Aspirin can prevent complications in pregnancy caused by flu infections: Study

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

Taking low-dose aspirin may treat flu-induced blood vessel inflammation, creating better blood flow to the placenta during pregnancy, according to the world-first study conducted in mice.

Low-dose aspirin is commonly taken to prevent preeclampsia -- high blood pressure condition in pregnancy -- as it stops the body from creating chemicals that cause inflammation.

The study, led by an international team from RMIT University in Australia in collaboration with a team from Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, examined whether the treatment for preeclampsia could be applied to flu infections.

They found very promising results in animal studies -- mice treated daily with low-dose aspirin had less inflammation and



improved foetal development and offspring survival.

On the contrary, foetuses and placenta from mice with influ-

enza A were smaller than those from uninfected mice. They also found the foetuses with low blood oxygen and poor blood vessel

development.

Flu infections during pregnancy can resemble preeclampsia, a pregnancy complication that causes inflammation to the aorta and blood vessels, said lead researcher Dr Stella Liang, a post-doctoral research student at RMIT University in Melbourne.

She explained: "When the vascular system gets inflamed, it leads to poor blood flow and affects the aorta's function."

"This is especially a problem during pregnancy where good blood flow to the placenta is crucial to the development of the foetus."

While the research still awaits human clinical trials, Liang said low-dose aspirin is already recognised as safe to take during pregnancy.

However, pregnant people must seek medical advice before taking new medications, the research team said.

## New AI model to boost patient response to cancer therapy

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

Australian researchers have developed a new artificial intelligence (AI) tool that can help to select the most suitable treatment for cancer patients.

The new tool DeepPT, developed by researchers at The Australian National University (ANU), predicts a patient's messenger RNA (mRNA) profile.

This mRNA -- essential for protein production -- is also the key molecular information for personalised cancer medicine.

When combined with another tool called ENLIGHT, DeepPT was



found to successfully predict a patient's response to cancer therapies across multiple types of cancer, said lead author Dr Danh-Tai Hoang from ANU.

Dr Hoang said, "DeepPT was trained on over 5,500 patients across 16 prevalent cancer types, including breast, lung, head and neck, cervical and pancreatic cancers".

# Won't spare NEET leak accused: PM; Oppn walks out of RS

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday vowed to continue the fight against corruption and not spare those involved in NEET paper leak while slamming the Opposition for accusing the government of misusing central agencies and politicising various issues.

Replying to the debate on Motion of Thanks to the President's Address in Rajya Sabha, Modi said that the government has given a free hand to investigating agencies to take action against the corrupt.

"No corrupt person can escape the law. This is Modi's guarantee," PM Modi said.

Opposition members staged a walkout from the upper house while the Prime Minister was addressing the members.

Kharge later said,



"INDIA parties walked out of Rajya Sabha because Prime Minister Modi was lying.

They say that we are against the Constitution, but the truth is that BJP-RSS, Jan Sangh and their political forefathers had strongly opposed the Constitution of India. They had burnt the effigies of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at that time. This was a shameful thing."

Before the Opposition members staged the walk-

out, the PM's speech was marred by slogan shouting by INDIA MPs.

Undeterred by the din, PM Modi continued to attack the Congress party over a range of issues and took multiple jibes at it.

He termed the Grand Old Party as a parasite and said that it ate up the votes of allies. He asked the Opposition to stop 'politicising' Manipur issue saying the state will reject them.

PM Modi highlighted the achievements of his

previous two terms and said that the next five years are crucial for the country.

"During elections, I used to tell people that the 10 years that we have worked are merely an appetizer of the kind of dreams and aspirations we have. Main course has started only now," he said.

He took a jibe at former Congress President Sonia Gandhi also and said that, earlier, governments used to be run by remote control.

"There are some scholars here who believe the country will automatically become the third largest economy. These are the people who ran the government on either auto pilot mode or remote-pilot," he said.

Modi cornered the Congress over Emergency and said that the party was the biggest threat to Constitution.

"The Congress party says Emergency happened in the past. Are your sins washed away with passing of time," he said.

Modi said that each time something goes wrong some Dalit or OBC (in the Congress party) has to bear the brunt.

"They knew that they would lose the Lok Sabha Speaker election but still nominated a Dalit leader. In 2017, they knew they would be defeated but still Meira Kumar was fielded. They disrespected former President Ram Nath Kovind and left no stone unturned in insulting the first Dalit woman President of the country," he said.

Following the reply of the Prime Minister, the Rajya Sabha adopted the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address. The House was then adjourned sine die.

## India-Mongolia joint military exercise 'Nomadic Elephant' begins in Meghalaya

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

The 16th edition of India-Mongolia joint military exercise 'Nomadic Elephant' commenced at the Foreign Training Node in Umroi in Meghalaya on Wednesday.

The Indian contingent comprising of 45 personnel is being represented by a Battalion of Sikkim Scouts along with personnel from other arms and services, and the Mongolian contingent is represented by personnel from 150 Quick Reaction Force Battalion of the Mongolian Army.

Exercise Nomadic Elephant that is scheduled to be held from July 3 to July 16 is an annual training event conducted alternatively in India and Mongolia. The last edition was conducted in Mongolia in July 2023, a Defence Ministry statement said.

The Opening Ceremony of the Exercise Nomadic Elephant was attended by Dambajavn Ganbold,



Ambassador of Mongolia to India and Major General Prasanna Joshi, General Officer Commanding 51 Sub Area of the Indian Army.

The aim of the Exercise is to enhance joint military capability of both sides to undertake counter insurgency operations in a sub conventional scenario under Chapter VII of the United Nations Mandate.

The exercise will focus on operations in the semi-urban and mountainous terrain.

Tactical drills during the exercise include response to a terrorist action, establishment of a joint command post, establishment of an intelligence and surveillance centre, secur-

ing of a helipad/ landing site, small team insertion and extraction, special heliborne operations, cordon & search operations besides employment of drones and counter drone systems amongst others.

Major General Gyanbyamba Sunrev, Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces of Mongolia is scheduled to attend the closing ceremony on 16th July along with Lieutenant General Zubin A Minwalla, General Officer Commanding 33 Corps of the Indian Army.

Exercise Nomadic Elephant will enable both sides to share their best practices in tactics, techniques and procedures of conducting joint operations.

## Judicial inquiry ordered into Hathras stampede incident: Yogi

AGENCIES  
HATHRAS, JULY 3

Uttar Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday said that a judicial inquiry by the retired judge of the High Court would be conducted into the Hathras stampede incident in which 121 people have been killed.

Talking to the reporters after reviewing the situation with the officials, the CM said, "We cannot deny that it is just an accident. Even if it's an accident then who is responsible for it? And if it's not an accident and is a conspiracy then who is behind it. Therefore we have decided that a judicial inquiry under the chairmanship of a retired judge of the High Court will be conducted."

He said, "Retired officers of the administration and police will be part of the inquiry and we will go to the bottom of the incident and will punish whoever is guilty. Besides suggestions will be taken so as such incidents do not reoccur in future. An SOP could be formulated



which can be implemented in future events."

Yogi said that a notification for the judicial inquiry will be issued by Wednesday evening.

The Chief Minister said that a sad and painful accident took place in a tehsil of Hathras on Tuesday. "To go into the bottom of the incident a committee was constituted, 121 people have died, who along with UP hailed from Haryana, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. 31 people got injured in the incident, who are being treated in Hathras, Aligarh, Etah and Agra, and all are out of danger," he said.

He said that as per the eyewitnesses account after the satsang was over a group of women moved

forward to touch the Kathavachak. "The group was followed by a crowd which eventually climbed on top of each other. The mob came from both sides of the GT road leading to the incident. During the entire episode the sewadaars also pushed the devotees back," Yogi said.

The CM said that the sad part is that sewadaars do not allow the administration officials to enter the enclosure. "Initially efforts were made to hush up the matter, but when the administration officials started the process of taking the injured to the hospital majority of the sewadaars fled from the spot," he said.

Yogi said that to probe the turnout of events a

Special Investigation Team (SIT) led by the ADG Agra zone was constituted which has submitted its preliminary report. "But it has been asked to get to the bottom of the incident. There are a lot of aspects which need to be probed and it is very important," he said.

The CM said that an FIR has already been lodged. "I visited the spot. Our three ministers along with the Chief Secretary and the DGP are already camping here since Tuesday. Steps are being taken to fix accountability and responsibility," he said.

To a question, he said that some people have the tendency of searching for politics in such sad incidents.

The CM said the state and the central governments have announced financial assistance of Rs 4 lakh to the kin of the deceased and Rs 1 lakh to the injured. "The education of the children of innocent people, who are victims of the accident, will be arranged under UP CM Bal Sewa Yojna," he said.

## Govt's focus is on promoting non-polluting energy sources to boost private, public transport: Nitin Gadkari

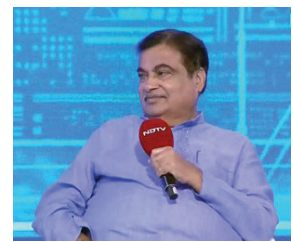
AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

As pollution has become a huge issue in India, the focus of the government is on promoting the use of non-polluting sources to power personal and public transportation, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari has said.

Speaking at the NDTV InfraShakti Awards, the minister said, "We need cost-effective, pollution-free and indigenous transport solutions. Now, Indian Oil is installing 300 ethanol pumps and automobile companies are bringing in flex vehicles."

"So, instead of filling petrol at Rs 120 a litre, it is better to use ethanol at Rs 60 per litre, with the vehicle running 60 per cent on electricity and 40 per cent on ethanol. This will also reduce pollution," he added. Union Minister Gadkari also stated that he is aiming for a "green revolution" in agriculture.

He emphasised that he



has no shortage of funds for his projects and investors are queuing up because "his ministry is sitting on a gold mine."

Union Petroleum Minister, Hardeep Singh Puri, who was also at the event, said that the country was using all available forms of energy and the outlook for the sector was never better.

"No matter which way you view it, if you look at green energy, the transition, biofuels... look at the 15 per cent transition we have done. We did 15 per cent biofuel blending. And we are solving the problem in agriculture," the minister said.

At the event, NDTV also spoke with experts about sustainable and climate-resilient infrastructure that protects the environment.

The panelists included - Amit Singh, CEO of Adani Green Energy; Ashwani Gupta, CEO of Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone; Anumita Roychowdhury, Executive Director of Research and Advocacy, Centre for Science and Environment (CSE); and Vinayak Chatterjee, Founder, The Infravision Foundation.

Amit Singh said that a huge surge in electricity demand is "coming our way and looking at what's happening around us in terms of increase in temperature and atmospheric conditions, it's important that sources of electricity become green."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set a target to install 500 GW renewable energy capacity by 2030.

According to the government, abundant solar energy and local technology are aiding in achieving this target while reducing carbon emissions.

"When we talk about focus on infrastructure, on energy and on industrialisa-

tion, all that is about trade. If we look at our figures, 95 per cent of our trade last year was maritime, which is 68 per cent of the value of all India," said Ashwani Gupta.

"This is very clear and more and more efficient trade, not only in India but globally, is going to contribute to this \$10 trillion economy," he added.

Anumita Roychowdhury said that there is a takeaway from the summer people just had as first there was a persistent heat wave and then an unprecedented flood.

"It's telling us that climate change is real and constant but we can't keep blaming climate change all the time, keeping in mind the way infrastructure is taking shape today, it aggravates and compounds the impact if we don't get the blueprint right," she added. Vinayak Chatterjee pointed out that India is burdened with very large historical installations of infrastructure from colonial times, be it railway bridges, dams or tunnels.

# HATHRAS STAMPEDE: DEATH TOLL RISES TO 121, CM REACHES GROUND ZERO

AGENCIES  
HATHRAS (UP), JULY 3

With a few more injured succumbing to injuries, the death toll in the Hathras incident, in which several people were killed in stampede during satsang in Sikandra Rao area, has reached 121.

Minister Sandeep Singh, who has been camping in Hathras since Tuesday evening, said the deaths of 121 people have been confirmed, whereas 35 people have been injured. "I want to assure that whoever is found guilty during the inquiry will not be spared, and stern action will be taken by the government," he said.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has reached Hathras, where he visited the hospital and is meeting the injured and their family members. Before visiting the hospital, he held a short meeting at the circuit house, where he took stock of the situation.

Besides, an FIR was lodged against the chief



sewadaar, Devprakash Madhukar, organisers and other sewadaar under different sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) late on Tuesday night. It has been alleged that while the organisers took permission for an assembly of 80,000 people, a mob of more than 2.5 lakh devotees assembled on the spot.

The complainant has also accused the sewadaars of creating mis-

management by pushing the crowd back with sticks after the satsang was over and Suraj Pal alias Bhole Baba was leaving. It has been alleged that this led to the stampede, in which several people were crushed. The organisers have also been accused of concealing the evidence.

Minister Asim Arun, who was rushed to Hathras by the CM on Tuesday evening, said an inquiry committee headed by

ADG Zone Agra has been constituted. "Besides, an FIR has been lodged, and a criminal investigation has started," he said.

It may be noted that the tragedy took place during satsang by Bhole Baba in Pulrai village under Sikandra Rao police station in Hathras on Tuesday.

Expressing his condolences to the bereaved families, Yogi announced financial assistance of Rs 2 lakh each to the families

of the deceased and Rs 50,000 to the injured.

He has directed Ministers Aseem Arun, Laxmi Narayan Chaudhary, and Sandeep Singh, along with the Chief Secretary and the Director General of the Police (DGP), to rush to the spot.

He also directed the district administration officials to immediately reach the spot, take the injured to the hospital, and provide them with proper treatment. He has also wished for the speedy recovery of the injured.

Meanwhile, a team of Additional Director General of Police (ADG) Agra and Divisional Commissioner Aligarh has been constituted to inquire into the cause of the stampede. The committee has been directed to submit its report within 24 hours.

The CM continuously monitored the situation with the senior officials at his official residence. He has directed that anyone found guilty in the incident will face strict action and will not be spared.

## US, India collaborate to enhance global food security through agricultural innovation

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

The Global CEO Conclave 2024, organised by the Wheat Products Promotion Society (WPPS), continued to build on impactful discussions under the theme "WPPS Global CEO Conclave Wheat and Wheat Products Vision 2030: Trade Dynamics, Trends, and Technologies".

The event concluded with a synthesis of profound insights and strategic recommendations aimed at shaping the future of the global wheat industry. The conclave provided a crucial platform for addressing the challenges facing the global wheat market, which is projected to reach \$258.7 billion by 2027 amid issues such as climate change and fluctuating demand.

More than 50 speakers from India and abroad participated in focused business sessions and panel discussions, delving into critical aspects of the wheat industry.

Discussions centred around flour fortification, aimed at reducing micronutrient deficiencies in 30 per cent of the global population, as well as examining wheat economics amid market volatility.

India's pivotal role in enhancing global food security, as the world's second-largest wheat producer, was also prominently featured. US-India agricultural collaboration for food security: Strengthening bilateral efforts

Clay M. Hamilton, Agricultural Minister-Counselor at the US Department of Agriculture/Foreign Agricultural Service, recently delivered a keynote presentation on "US-India Agricultural Collaboration for Food Security".

The session, held within the framework of international agricultural cooperation, highlighted strategic efforts between the US and India aimed at bolstering global food security through technological and partnership initiatives. The presentation underscored the critical role of agricultural collaboration between two of the world's largest democracies, the US and India.

Both nations face significant challenges in meeting the food demands of their population amid increasing global population growth, changing dietary patterns, and environmental uncertainties.

By leveraging their respective strengths and fostering strategic partnerships, the US and India aim to enhance agricultural productivity, improve food distribution systems, and ensure sustainable food security solutions.

Ajay Goyal, Chairman of WPPS, emphasised the importance of the strategic recommendations discussed during the conclave: "Our industry is at a pivotal point where collaboration and innovation are more crucial than ever. By leveraging the insights and recommendations from this conclave, we can navigate the challenges ahead and build a sustainable and prosperous future for the global wheat sector."

The theme of the conclave emphasised the critical role of sustainable agricultural practices in ensuring the long-term viability of the wheat industry.



## Egypt's new govt takes oath

AGENCIES  
CAIRO, JULY 3

Egypt's new cabinet has been sworn in before Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi at the Al-Ittihadiya Palace in the Egyptian capital Cairo on Wednesday, the state-run Nile TV reported.

Before the swearing-in ceremony, Sisi promoted Abdel-Maguid Sakr to the rank of lieutenant general and appointed him as the minister of defence and military production, succeeding Mohamed Zaki.

The new cabinet is headed by Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly, who has been in the post since 2018.

Comprising 30 ministers, the new government saw the merging of some ministries and the introduction of new ones, especially the economic portfolios.

On Sunday, the Egyptian president said the new government's top priority is to mitigate the impact of rising prices and create more job opportunities.

## Seven killed, 43 injured in unexploded ordnance accidents in Laos

AGENCIES  
VIENTIANE, JULY 3

Seven people were killed and 43 others injured in unexploded ordnance (UXO)-related accidents during past six months, with most of the accidents occurring while children were playing with these devices or farmers were digging.

From January to June, over 33,500 UXO devices have been cleared from 2,543 hectares of land, according to a report issued on Wednesday by the Lao National Regulatory Authority for the UXO/Mine Action Sector, reported Xinhua news agency.

A total of 1,425 explosive ordnance risk education sessions were organised in 472 villages, with 153,663 people attending. Twenty UXO-related accidents were reported, involving 43 victims.

In addition, assistance was provided to 1,832 victims of UXO-related accidents.

Laos is the most heavily bombed country in the world in terms of per capita. Throughout 1964-1973, over 2 million tons of ordnance were dropped on Laos, of which 30 per cent failed to explode.

Over 270 million cluster munitions were dropped from US warplanes, leaving an estimated 80 million live bomblets scattered and buried around the Southeast Asian country.

## Putin congratulates Lukashenko on Independence Day of Belarus: Kremlin

AGENCIES  
MOSCOW, JULY 3

Russian President Vladimir Putin congratulated Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko on the independence day of Belarus, adding that the bonds of friendship between the countries remain a reliable basis for the development of relations today, the Kremlin said on Wednesday.

"Dear Alexander Grigoryevich, please accept my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of Belarus. It is important that the bonds of friendship and mutual assistance ... remain today a reliable basis for the development of strategic partnership and alliance between our countries. Russia and Belarus cooperate fruitfully in various areas, effectively coordinate efforts in countering external threats and challenges," the message read.

The further building of the entire range of constructive bilateral ties and strengthening the institutions of the Union State fully meet the interests of both countries, Putin added.

## India, Japan to work together towards building safe & trustworthy AI: Hiroshi Yoshida

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

As the world leaders aim to control artificial intelligence (AI) and the user harms associated with it, India and Japan will work together in order to achieve safe, secure and trustworthy AI, said Japanese Vice-Minister for Policy Coordination (Internal Affairs), Hiroshi Yoshida, here on Wednesday.

Lauding India's prowess in the technology field, especially AI, Yoshida said they are delighted that India is one of the first countries to announce its participation in AI and how to harness its true potential.

"We believe India and Japan together, with all the other members, are working closely together to achieve safe, secure and trustworthy AI around the world," he said during the 'Global India AI Mission 2024' summit in the national capital.

"By working together, Japan and India can contribute further to the responsible development, deployment and use of AI in the world," Yoshida noted.

The two-day event is hosted by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to discuss issues related to AI with India firmly committed to the ethical and inclusive growth of AI.

Yoshida echoed the importance of secure and trustworthy AI at the event, which is being attended by global leaders, and AI researchers from at least 50 countries.

"Japan is convinced that India's AI initiatives will create synergy with the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI).

We've been advocating for a safety code and guidelines to mitigate risks like misinformation and intellectual property protection," Yoshida emphasised.

# Israel killed 900 militants in Gaza's Rafah: Israeli army chief



AGENCIES  
JERUSALEM, JULY 3

Israel has killed about 900 militants in Rafah since the beginning of Israel's ground assault on the southernmost city in Gaza in early May, Israel's military Chief Herzi Halevi said.

The casualties include "at least one battalion commander, many company commanders, and many operatives," Halevi said on Tuesday when inspecting a military logistic post in the southern Gaza Strip, according to a statement released by the Israel Defense Forces.

He added that the offen-

sive in Rafah is expected to be completed within weeks, Xinhua news agency reported.

"Now the effort focuses on the destruction of the infrastructure and the destruction of the underground infrastructure, and it takes time," he said, noting, "This campaign is long because we don't want to leave Rafah with the infrastructure intact."

Before the launch of the ground offensive, Rafah was one of the few locations where civilians sought refuge from the massive Israeli bombardments across the Palestinian enclave.

## No safe place in Gaza due to Israeli war: ICRC

AGENCIES  
GAZA, JULY 3

Residents in the Gaza Strip have no safe place due to the Israeli war, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said, referring to an evacuation order issued by the Israeli army.

Israel on Monday issued evacuation orders stretching from the southernmost regions of Gaza to the eastern parts of Khan Younis, including the European Gaza Hospital (EGH), the ICRC said in a press statement on Tuesday.

"Thousands of people learned of the evacuation instructions late in the day and fled in panic and fear," it added, noting that this group includes patients, families and the medical professionals who are crucial for the



running of EGH.

"Wherever people flee to, they will arrive scarred and traumatized. They will face a lack of food, drinking water, sanitation, health care - and the prospect of needing to flee again," it said.

On Monday, the Israeli army issued an evacuation order to the neighborhoods and areas in the cities of Khan Younis and Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip.

This came hours after the Al-Quds Brigades, the military wing of the Islamic Jihad Movement, claimed responsibility for launching 20 rockets at southern Israel.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) on Tuesday estimated that 250,000 people will have to flee Khan Younis, just weeks after people were forced to return

to the devastated Khan Younis.

So far about 1.9 million people, or 80 percent of Gaza's population, have been displaced across Gaza, the United Nations Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza Sigrid Kaag said on Tuesday.

Israel has been launching a large-scale offensive against Hamas in the Gaza Strip to retaliate against a Hamas rampage through the southern Israeli border on Oct. 7, 2023, during which about 1,200 people were killed and more than 200 were taken hostage.

The Palestinian death toll from ongoing Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip has risen to 37,877, Gaza-based health authorities said in a statement on Sunday.

## Over 2,500 households evacuated due to floods in Myanmar

AGENCIES  
YANGON, JULY 3

Floods displaced more than 2,500 households in several towns of northern Myanmar following heavy rains and rising river levels, official daily Myanma Alinn reported on Wednesday.

In Myitkyina of Kachin State, the water level of the Ayeyarwady River exceeded its warning mark on Monday and Tuesday, displacing 2,064 households, the report said.

In Hpakant Township of Kachin State, people from 386 households affected by floods caused by heavy rains were also evacuated on Tuesday, reported Xinhua news agency.

In Hkamti Town of Sagaing Region, the water level of the Chindwin River surpassed its warning mark on Tuesday and displaced 188 households, the report said.

Local authorities, fire service personnel, and rescue organisations have conducted rescue opera-



tions and evacuated the flood victims, the reports said, adding that the flood victims were taking shelter in relief centres, which have been set up in monasteries, churches, and schools.

According to the country's Meteorology and Hydrology Department, the water level of the Ayeyarwady River in Myitkyina was about 4.5 feet above its warning mark on Tuesday, and the water level of the Chindwin River in Hkamti was about 5.5 feet above its warning mark.

On Wednesday, the

water level of the Ayeyarwady River and creeks in several towns in northern Myanmar's Kachin State, including Mogaung and Bhamo, exceeded their relevant warning marks, the weather agency reported.

The weather agency also advised residents living near river banks and in low-lying areas in the townships to take precautionary measures.

In Myanmar, July and August are the middle of the rainy season, and heavy rains are typical during the period, according to the weather agency.

## Kim Jong-un inspects munitions factory after key party meeting

AGENCIES  
SEOUL, JULY 3

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has visited major munitions and machinery factories, calling for efforts to expand production in the overall economic sector, according to state media.

According to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), the inspection took place Tuesday, a day after North Korea wrapped up four days of a plenary meeting of the eighth Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, reports Yonhap news agency.

Accompanied by party officials, Kim visited a defense industrial enterprise, which the North said plays a key role in bolstering the country's defense capabilities.

He stressed the need for party officials to "thoroughly study and arm themselves in order to properly organise and guide the modernisation



of production lines at all units in the economic field," KCNA said.

Later in the day, Kim also visited major machine and medical appliance factories. During the latest plenary meeting, Kim expressed his satisfaction with the economic performance in the first half of the year, saying the country's economic situations are markedly on an upturn. The inspection appears to be aimed at encouraging party officials to expand the modernisation of the defence industry to other economic sectors. Photos released show that Kim

was accompanied not only by top party officials and close aides from relevant sectors, but also by many other officials.

Given reports that the visit took place right after the plenary meeting, it appears that Kim led the participants of the meeting to the factory for an observational tour.

North Korea has been intensifying its efforts to revitalise the defense industry, with experts suggesting that this is not only for strengthening its defense capabilities but also to benefit from Russia's ongoing war with Ukraine.

## Poland, Germany to cooperate in defence: Polish PM

AGENCIES  
WARSAW, JULY 3

Poland and Germany will cooperate to enhance the protection of the European Union's (EU) external borders and to promote European air defence, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said.

At a joint press conference with visiting German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Tusk said on Tuesday that he was pleased to hear that Germany was ready to share the responsibilities for the protection of the EU's eastern borders along with other EU member states.

According to the Polish Press Agency (PAP), Tuesday's meeting at the Polish Prime Minister's Office has been the first inter-governmental consultation since 2018, Xinhua news agency reported.

Tusk has recently announced a significant initiative to strengthen Poland's border with Belarus and Russia, known as East Shield. Talks have been underway to integrate this effort with a similar project proposed by the Baltic states.

The East Shield project, in collaboration with the Baltic states, is an infrastructural one, designed

to bolster the security of the European border, Tusk emphasised.

There is no doubt that it is also in the interest of Germany that the border can be protected effectively, the Polish Prime Minister added.

Tusk welcomed cooperation between Poland and Germany on bilateral solutions and the European Sky Shield Initiative (ESSI).

The ESSI, launched by Germany in August 2022, aims to bolster ground-based air defence across Europe.

At present, 21 countries participate in the initiative, according to PAP.

For his part, Scholz said: "We want to take a leadership role in the Baltic region within the framework of NATO and in protecting the eastern flank of the alliance."

He added that Poland and Germany are among the countries providing the most support to Ukraine politically, militarily, and in terms of accepting refugees from the war-torn country.

Scholz also said that Germany "wants a strong Polish voice in Europe... but in order to shape a good future, a clear view of the past is needed".

## Deep differences within UML-Maoist Center coalition led to collapse of PM Dahal's govt

AGENCIES  
KATHMANDU, JULY 3

What are the reasons that led to the sudden political shift in Nepal, with the Nepali Congress (NC) and the UML arriving at a power-sharing deal to replace Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'?

Differences between the ruling the CPN (Maoist Center) led by PM Dahal and the CPN-UML led by former PM KP Sharma Oli had become evident with the recent budget presented by Finance Minister Barsha Man Pun and the dispute over the appointment of a new chief of the Securities Board of Nepal (SEBON).

The UML's decision to form an alliance with the NC just four months after allying with the Maoist Center has taken Nepal by surprise.

Despite UML Chairman Oli seemingly dictating key government decisions, including the recall of ambassadors and other significant appointments, UML leaders were largely unhappy with Prime Minister Dahal's working style, writes myrepublisha.nagariknetwork.com

They particularly dis-



approved of the budget introduced by the Maoist Finance Minister Pun, which they labelled a 'Maoist budget' due to unilateral tax changes and the inclusion of the term 'Janayuddha' (people's war) in the budget. A large chunk of the budget was sent to the home districts of senior Maoist Center leaders.

Additionally, Prime Minister Dahal's refusal to appoint the UML's preferred candidate as SEBON chief further angered Chairman Oli, according to UML sources.

Prime Minister Dahal's misadventures, and his loss of trustworthiness and risky actions are to blame for the collapse of the government, they said.

Despite forming an electoral alliance with the NC, Dahal broke it abruptly,

without any warning, upsetting the NC.

The UML leadership was agitated with Prime Minister Dahal's proposal on Thursday to form a "national consensus" government with NC President Deuba.

UML Deputy General Secretary Pradip Gyawali stated at a press conference on Tuesday that Dahal's initiative to establish an alternative government without informing his UML ally triggered the coalition change.

Sources within the NC indicated that the Dahal-led government's preparation to secure a substantial loan under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) made both the NC and a section of UML top leadership suspicious. The NC clarified on Monday that it opposes taking loans under BRI,

advocating for BRI projects to be implemented only through grants.

Dahal's government was preparing to sign a significant loan agreement with China under the BRI framework. "We did not want this to happen. There has to be national consensus on issues of national importance. The working style of the prime minister is largely to be blamed for the new alliance," said NC lawmaker Ram Hari Khatiwada

Furthermore, Prime Minister Dahal's public claims of having a 'magic number' to stay in power for the entire parliamentary term seemed to undermine the roles of the two major parties—NC and the UML.

A senior NC leader, speaking on condition of anonymity, remarked that it was unnatural for a distant third-party leader to take the helm of the government and that Dahal's behavior did not sit well with the larger parties.

The leader also revealed that the NC was waiting for an opportunity to hit back at Dahal for breaking the alliance overnight, without warning four months ago.

## Sensex touches 80,000 for first time, Nifty at all-time high

AGENCIES

MUMBAI, JULY 3

Indian equity indices closed at record highs on Wednesday following a rally in heavyweights like HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, and Kotak Mahindra Bank.

At closing, Sensex was up 545 points, or 0.69 per cent, at 79,986 and Nifty was up 162 points, or 0.67 per cent, at 24,286.

During the day, Sensex and Nifty recorded a new all-time high of 80,074 and 24,309 respectively.

This is the first time ever when Sensex and Nifty crossed 80,000 and 24,300 mark.

In the Sensex pack, Kotak Mahindra Bank, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank,



IndusInd Bank, Power Grid, SBI, and JSW Steel were the top gainers. TCS, Titan Company, Reliance, Tata Motors and L&T were the top losers.

Sector-wise, almost all the indices closed in the green.

PSU banks, private banks, metal, and FMCG

were major gainers. Buying has also taken place in small and medium stocks.

The Nifty Midcap 100 index closed at 56,293, up 438 points or 0.79 per cent, and the Nifty Smallcap 100 index closed at 18,700, up 191 points or 1.03 per cent. Banking

shares supported the market's rally in the trading session. Nifty Bank closed at 53,036, up 921 points or 1.77 per cent.

Neelesh Surana, Chief Investment Officer, Mirae Asset Investment Managers (India) said: "The market has reached another milestone. We believe this is logical as markets are leading indicators of macro stability and future growth.

We believe that India has strong and sustainable drivers for secular growth, and thus our view on equities remains constructive."

"We would advise investors to follow a well-crafted and balanced allocation towards equities, and remain committed preferably via SIP," he added.

## After layoffs, Unacademy CEO denies rumours of merger, acquisition

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JULY 3

After reported layoffs of around 250 employees in the latest job cuts, edtech firm Unacademy Co-founder and CEO Gaurav Munjal on Wednesday denied the reports of a possible merger or an outright acquisition, saying "ignore the rumours".

"There is a lot being said about Unacademy currently," Munjal wrote in a post on X.

He further said that the edtech firm have its best year in terms of growth and profitability and many years to run the company.

"To set the record straight, Unacademy will have its best year in terms of growth and profitability. We also have many



years of runway. We are building Unacademy for the long run," the CEO said.

As per reports, Unacademy has approached coaching institute Allen, edtech firm Physics Wallah, education serv-

150 in sales.

The layoffs bring Unacademy's total job cuts to around 2,000 since the second half of 2022.

Last month, Munjal, in a post, commented on edtech firm Byju's fall.

He said that Byju Raveendran, Founder and Group CEO of Byju's, faced setbacks as he put himself on a pedestal and stopped listening to anyone. "Byju failed because he didn't listen to anyone. He put himself on a pedestal and stopped listening. Don't do that. Never do that. Don't listen to everyone but have people who can give you blunt feedback," Munjal said.

"You might not always like the feedback, but take the feedback and act on it," he added.

es company K12 Techno and other large education coaching companies.

According to TechCrunch, citing sources, the edtech firm will be letting go of 100 employees from marketing, business and product, and about

## Collective effort must to harness AI's potential while limiting user harms: Ashwini Vaishnaw

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JULY 3

Artificial intelligence (AI) can be a very big tool to solve many socio-economic problems but we need to contain the risks associated with AI and the solution has to come via a global thought process as it cannot be done in isolation by any country, Union Minister for Electronics and IT, Railways and I&B Ashwini Vaishnaw, said on Wednesday.

Addressing the 'Global IndiaAI Summit 2024' in the national capital in the presence of global leaders and experts from 50 countries, the minister said as we look at the potential of AI, we also need to collectively figure out a way



what guardrails we need to place on the new technology so that it can be properly integrated with our social and democratic institutions.

"Over the last year, there has been a huge realisation about the dangers, the risks and the threats to our social institutions that AI can pose.

In the recent general elections, we have seen how big a threat misinformation and fake news can be, and that threat gets multiplied manifold by the power of AI," Minister Vaishnaw emphasised.

He said that this is not something which only India is experiencing but the entire world has wit-

nessed the emergence of new risks based on AI.

"We need to work with the industry to make sure that those harms are contained," said the minister.

Whether in India, Europe, Japan or in the US, "we are facing the same challenges, and the Global South is today looking for universal support, a universal thought process, at least some common basic principles on which the world has to respond to the potentials on the one hand and the challenges on the other," the Union Minister explained.

Stressing that the thought process in India has been to democratise technology under the vision of Prime Minister

Narendra Modi, the minister said technology should be accessible to all.

"The approach that PM Modi has always adopted is that technology should be accessible to everybody. The Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) is a classic case where no single payment or service provider has a monopoly over the industry," the minister told the gathering.

And this approach is consistent with the last 9-10 years of the 'Digital India' initiative.

"This is very much in line with what we are doing in the healthcare sector, the logistics sector and the financial services sector in the country," said the minister.

## Committed to learning from India how to make AI more impactful for society: OpenAI

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JULY 3

India has a unique approach to making AI more beneficial for people and OpenAI is committed to learning from it, Srinivas Narayanan, Vice President of Engineering at OpenAI, said here on Wednesday.

He said that India had made AI use more impactful while reducing user harm through initiatives like the Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and OpenAI was committed to learning from the country in order to make this technology more impactful.

Speaking at the 'Global IndiaAI Summit' here,

Narayanan said an ascendant India has a leading role to play in the development of digital institutions and leading the beneficial adoption of AI towards becoming 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

"We are really committed to learning more from India. We want AI to be aligned with human values and safety is deeply at the core of our mission. We want to maximise the benefits while reducing the harms," he told the gathering.

He said that India is already harnessing the power of AI.

"First, AI has added speed and dynamism to the already dynamic

entrepreneurial ecosystem in India. Entrepreneurs are building innovative products with tools like ChatGPT which are helping them accelerate in a completely new way. We're reducing the cost of intelligence," Narayanan told a packed house.

He said that OpenAI is enabling developers to write code and helping them create completely conversational and natural interfaces to computing.

"OpenAI is committed to supporting the IndiaAI mission which has set a great example not just in Global South but also around the world," the company executive noted.

## Indian food services market to reach Rs 10 lakh crore by 2030: Report

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JULY 3

The food services market in India is poised to grow at 10-12 per cent annually over the next seven years, reaching Rs 9-10 lakh crore by 2030, a report showed on Wednesday.

The food services market in India, which encompasses dining out and ordering in, is currently valued at Rs 5.5 lakh crore.

The growth trajectory will be driven by robust fundamentals including an expanding customer base, growing consumption occasions, and a rise in supply, according to the report by Bain & Company and online food aggregator Swiggy.



Additionally, online food delivery is expected to grow faster at 18 per cent CAGR, contributing 20 per cent to the overall food services market by 2030.

"Higher incomes, digitisation, improved customer experience and an inclination to try new experiences have all contributed to this growth.

We are very upbeat about the growth in the coming years," said Rohit Kapoor, CEO, Food Marketplace, Swiggy.

The report suggests that the Indian food service market, catering to middle and higher-income segments, will expand from Rs 4-5 lakh crore at present, to about Rs 10 lakh crore by 2030, Kapoor

added. According to the report, approximately 70 per cent of food services consumption as of 2023 is concentrated in the top 50 cities and among upper-middle and high-income segments, which are expected to remain demand hotspots in the medium term.

However, incremental growth is expected to come from other Tier 2 and beyond cities as well.

"By 2030, the market is poised to serve an additional 110 million customers, gradually shifting eating out from a special event into a convenient lifestyle," said Navneet Chahal, Partner and co-author of the report.

## BMW posts strong performance in H1, sees over 21 pc boost in car sales in India

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JULY 3

BMW Group India has posted a strong performance in the first half (H1) of 2024 (January-June) as it witnessed a boost of over 21 per cent in car sales (BMW+MINI), fuelled by high demand for its sports activity vehicles, luxury class and electric cars.

The luxury carmaker delivered 7,098 cars (BMW and MINI) and 3,614 motorcycles (BMW Motorrad). BMW sold 6,734 units and MINI 364 units.

"The strong affinity for our vehicles is driven by our competitive edge in exclusive mobility paired with unmistakable driving pleasure and best-in-class innovations," Vikram Pawah, President, BMW Group India, said in a statement.

BMW electric vehicles (EV) emerged as the top choice of luxury consumers when it comes to sus-



tainable mobility - 397 units of fully electric BMW and MINI cars were sold in the first six months.

It also becomes the first luxury car manufacturer in the country to cross the milestone of over 2,000 EV deliveries to date.

BMW iX is the most popular luxury EV in India with over 1,000 units sold to date, according to the company.

BMW luxury class vehicles registered a growth of over 17 per cent, contributing 18 per cent to total

sales. The BMW X7 was the highest-selling luxury class model.

BMW Sports Activity Vehicles (SAV) contributed 54 per cent to sales, posting a growth of over 24 per cent.

BMW X1 was the most popular SAV with around 19 per cent share in sales.

BMW 3 Series was the highest-selling BMW sedan with a 17 per cent share, the company mentioned.

## Indian real estate registers \$2.5 bn in investments in Q2: Report

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JULY 3

After a steady start in the first quarter (Q1) of 2024, Indian real estate saw accelerated momentum in the second quarter (Q2), registering \$2.5 billion of inflows - the highest in any quarter since 2021, a new report showed on Wednesday.

According to the professional services and investment management company Colliers, the industrial & warehousing segment accounted for the highest share of 61 per cent of total investments, at \$1.5 billion, led by select large deals.

The institutional investments in the industrial & warehousing segment grew manifold during Q2 2024, 11 times compared to Q2 2023 led by select large deals in the segment

"Private equity investments in Indian real estate have shown



remarkable resilience and strength in the first half (H1) of the year at \$3.5 billion, reflecting robust market confidence," said Piyush Gupta, MD, Capital Markets & Investment Services at

Colliers India.

"With foreign investments leading the charge at a significant 73 per cent share in H1 2024, the sustained momentum is expected to drive positive sentiment for the

entire year," he added.

The residential segment also witnessed a significant rise in quarterly inflows, 7.5 times compared to Q2 2023, capturing a 21 per cent share of total institutional inflows into Indian real estate.

As per the report, foreign investments remained robust, accounting for 81 per cent of the total inflows in Q2 2024, predominantly led by investors from the US and UAE.

During Q2, multi-city deals continued to drive the majority of the investment inflows at 72 per cent share.

Bengaluru and Delhi-NCR together corresponded to about 23 per cent of the total inflows during the quarter driven by foreign investments.

Led by inflows into the office segment, Delhi-NCR witnessed about 86 per cent (year-on-year) rise in investment inflows during Q2.

## Indian startups raised nearly \$7 billion in first half of 2024

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JULY 3

Indian startups have raised nearly \$7 billion in funding during the first half (H1) of 2024, more than the \$5.92 billion raised in H1 2023.

However, the figures are still far less than \$20 billion in H1 2022, according to data compiled by TheKredible.

The \$7 billion funding included 182 growth or late-stage deals worth \$5.4 billion and 404 early-stage deals worth \$1.54 billion. About 99 were undisclosed deals, reports Entracker.

During H1, Indian startups produced a couple

of unicorns - Perfios and Krutrim SI Designs. Last year, only two startups managed to cross the unicorn valuation while 2022 and 2021 witnessed the emergence of 26 and 44 unicorns, respectively.

When it comes to month-on-month trends, June witnessed nearly \$2 billion in funding which is more than double the average of \$1 billion monthly funding until May this year, the report mentioned.

Late-stage companies such as Zepto, Flipkart, PharmEasy and Lenskart topped with \$665 million, \$350 million, \$216 million, and \$200 million funding, respectively.

Moreover, H1 2024 saw 55 mergers and acquisitions, which is lower when compared to 2023.

The year 2021 witnessed over 250 mergers and acquisitions which dropped to 204 in 2022 and further reduced to 145 in 2023.

Segment-wise, e-commerce topped the list with 124 startups raising more than \$1.87 billion. Fintech, healthtech, SaaS and EV startups were next on the list. Amount-wise, EV startups secured more funding than SaaS and healthtech. Agritech, foodtech, edtech and proptech saw a decline in funding during H1 2024.

## Hardik Pandya becomes joint new top-ranked all-rounder in ICC Men's T20I rankings

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

Hardik Pandya's impressive show in India's triumphant 2024 Men's T20 World Cup campaign has seen him become the top-ranked all-rounder in the latest ICC Men's T20I Rankings update on Wednesday.

Pandya has risen two places to go level with Sri Lanka's leg-spin all-rounder Wanindu Hasaranga as the top-ranked men's T20I all-rounder, the first time a player from India has achieved this landmark.

He made impactful cameos lower down the



order with 144 runs at a strike-rate of over 150, including an unbeaten 27-ball fifty against Bangladesh at Antigua. He also took 11 wickets with

the ball, and made a big contribution in the final by taking out Heinrich Klaasen and David Miller, as well as defending 16 runs in a tense final over

to help India win the T20 World Cup title for the second time.

Fast-bowling spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, who won the Player of the Tournament award at the T20 World Cup for his scintillating 15 wickets, moved up by 12 spots to be at 12th place, his highest position since the end of 2020.

Left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav entered the top ten of the bowling rankings, moving up by three spots to joint-eighth. Left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh has moved up by four spots to a career-best No.13 after topping the wickets chart at the T20

World Cup with 17 scalps.

Spinner Tabraiz Shamsi moved up by five positions to reach the top 15 in bowlers' rankings. Anrich Nortje rose up by seven places to a career-best second spot to go just behind top-ranked Adil Rashid with 675 rating points.

Other movements in the top 10 of the men's T20I all-rounder rankings include Marcus Stoinis, Sikandar Raza, Shakib Al Hasan and Liam Livingstone rising up by one spot, while Mohammad Nabi moved back by four spots to go out of the top five.

## F1: 'He's not going to change', says Christian Horner on Verstappen ahead of Silverstone GP

AGENCIES  
SILVERSTONE (ENGLAND), JULY 3

The ripple effects of what transpired in the final ten laps of the Austrian GP is expected to be on full display at the Silverstone Grand Prix this weekend.

Three-time World Champion, Max Verstappen and the only man who has shown any kind of threat to the Dutch, Lando Norris made contact at the Red Bull Ring which resulted in Norris having to retire the car.

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner has made comments on the event and how Verstappen will react this weekend stating "he is not going



to change". "I understand they've (Max and Lando) spoken already, I don't think there is any issue. Certainly, from Max's side, he's not going to change. There's an element, I think, of Lando learning how to race Max and they're discovering that. Inevitably, there is going to be more close racing between the two of

them as the cars look so close over the forthcoming races," said Horner on his first ever race at the Miami Grand Prix earlier in the season and has constantly finished in the top three.

Mclaren as a team has drastically improved this season to the extent that Verstappen himself admitted that Red Bull may not be the fastest car on the circuit anymore. Norris and McLaren know that Red Bull is in a vulnerable position but they have failed to capitalise on their advantage as the team should be winning races more often and will hope Lando's home race at the British Grand Prix falls in his favour.

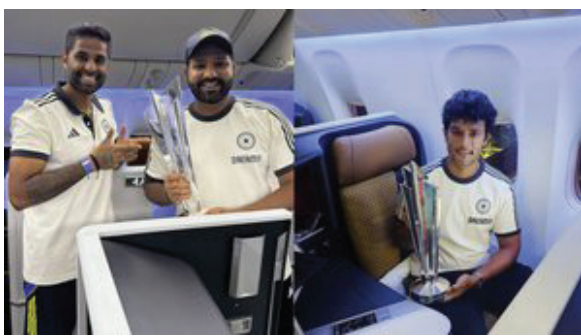
## Team India 'coming home'; set to meet PM in Delhi, to have an open-top bus parade in Mumbai

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

The ICC Men's T20 World Cup-winning Indian team led by Rohit Sharma are set to arrive home as the players finally left for Delhi after being stranded in Barbados for three days due to Hurricane Beryl.

The T20 World Cup-winning squad, accompanied by its support staff, several BCCI officials, the players' families, and 22 Indian journalists left Barbados around 6 am on Wednesday (IST).

Rohit Sharma, Shivam



Dube, and Mohammad Siraj gave an update on 'Instagram' of their departure with a picture of them holding the T20 World Cup trophy with the caption, "Coming home."

Upon their arrival in New Delhi, the Indian team will be meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi around 11 am. Soon after the meeting with the Prime Minister, the team

will depart for Mumbai.

A source has confirmed to IANS that in Mumbai, the "BCCI has arranged an open-top bus ride followed by a function at the Wankhede Stadium." The bus ride is expected to be around Marine Drive and is likely to start around 4 pm.

The World Cup winning team was originally scheduled to depart from Barbados at 11 am local time (8:30 PM IST) on Monday but the departure was delayed due to Hurricane Beryl, which intensified from category 3 to 5.

## We've to learn to play without big stars', says Brazil coach after Vini Jr suspension

AGENCIES  
CALIFORNIA, JULY 3

Brazil faced Colombia in their final game of the Group Stage at the Levi's Stadium. The game finished 1-1 resulting in Colombia topping Group D with the Selecao finishing in second place.

The side will be without star player Vinicius Junior for their quarter-final against record champions Uruguay after the Real Madrid forward picked up his second yellow card in the Group Stage which resulted in a one-game suspension.

Head Coach Dorival Jr spoke about Vini's yellow card and how players will have to step up in his absence.

"It was very strange, the booking. It was the first challenge of the game. But people say we have to learn to play without our big stars, so now is the time. In certain moments, we won't have important players. We've already lost Neymar. It's a moment for other players to step up," said Dorival Jr in the post game conference.

Brazil took the early lead in the game thanks to a brilliantly taken free kick by Raphinha in the 12th minute of the game. Colombia took their time to play themselves into the game and equalized at the 45+2 minute mark.

Brazil were also denied an opportunity to score their second after

Vinicius Junior was fouled inside the box but the side were not awarded a penalty in a controversial decision. Dorival Jr took the time to mention that particular incident

"The referee was not decisive. Especially because, inside the stadium, only the VAR and he did not see the penalty, which was undoubtedly a penalty. It happened, there was no reaction from anyone. If the score had been a little higher, a little wider, the actions could have been different," added the Brazil Head Coach.

Colombia finishing top of the group resulted in the side being squared up against Panama in the quarter-final whereas Brazil will take on Uruguay on Sunday.

## Shakib Al Hasan undecided on Bangladesh's tour of India participation

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

Bangladesh's veteran left-arm spin all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan said he is unsure of being a part of the side's tour of India happening later this year.

Bangladesh are scheduled to play two Tests and three T20Is against India from September 19 to October 12, with Chennai, Kanpur, Dharamshala, New Delhi and Hyderabad being host cities. Their trip to India will happen following their two-match Test tour of Pakistan in August. After playing in the 2024 Men's T20 World Cup, Shakib is set to play for the Los Angeles Knight Riders in the upcoming Major League Cricket (MLC) season two in the USA, beginning on July 5. "I don't have many plans. There are two T20 tournaments in front of me one is MLC and the other one is the Global T20

League in Canada and let me see where I stand after playing these two tournaments because I need to understand (how I feel)."

"There is international cricket and there is a series against Pakistan and I am planning till that point of time and not planning beyond that. Now I don't have time to plan for three four years and so planning for three to six months is better and later will think about my next plan and so till now I am planning till the Pakistan series," said Shakib to reporters at the Airport before departing for the USA.

Shakib also revealed fast-bowler Taskin Ahmed apologized to his teammates for missing the game against India after he missed the team bus and reached late for the Super Eights clash at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua.

Interestingly, on Tuesday, Taskin said to Dhaka-

based newspaper Ajker Patrika that missing the team bus was not a reason for him missing the match against India. "The team bus starts at a certain point and there is a rule for cricketers that team bus does not stop for anyone and if anyone misses it in that case he comes in the next car."

"The manager's car or a taxi is there and the support of transport was difficult in the West Indies. When Taskin arrived it was five to 10 minutes before the toss and certainly it was difficult to pick him at that point in the team and it was difficult for him as well."

"Taskin apologized to the team for that afterwards and everyone in the team took it normally because a man can mistake and anyone can commit unintentional mistake and he accepted it and the thing ended at that point of time," concluded Shakib.

## Graeme Smith lauds South Africa's performance at ICC T20 World Cup

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

Former South Africa cricketer and SA20 league commissioner, Graeme Smith has praised the performance of the Proteas men's team at the T20 World Cup and noted the increased positivity around South African cricket, both locally and internationally.

The Proteas lost narrowly to India by seven runs in the Final as Smith wished to congratulate the team. "We are proud of the Proteas' achievements at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup," he said.

"From the outset, the league, alongside cricket South Africa, has wanted to provide South African cricketers with the opportunity to be exposed to a higher level of domestic cricket where the players are able to rub shoulders and learn from some of the best the game has to offer."

"Coupled with a unique



fan experience that has brought the cricket-loving public back to our stadiums to support our heroes on the field, there is now a bridge that joins provincial and international cricket. Players are exposed to high-pressure and competitive cricket and this experience stood them in good stead in the US and Caribbean," he added.

Smith was particularly pleased to see the leading wicket-taker in the history of SA20 Ottniel Baartman having made his debut at a global showpiece and excelling.

"Ottniel is the epitome of a SA20 success story. A relatively unknown player that has transformed and grown in confidence due to experiences with the Sunrisers Eastern Cape is phenomenal. Despite playing in his very first T20 World Cup, he backed

reflect our corporate values and our commitment towards having a positive impact on society. Our purpose is to proactively innovate together with our clients for a prosperous and sustainable future.

Our fundamental approach to all our activities is to operate responsibly. We are honoured to partner with IIS, who were our partner of choice for the first ever Sports CSR investment in India as we share their vision of developing and nurturing Indian talent to succeed in the world of international sports. As one of the youngest nations in the world with about 60% population being under the age of 28, we believe that India should claim its rightful place on the podium in this aspect too. Sports play a vital role in

building essential skills like competitive mindset, resilience, discipline, team work etc., and we hope to inspire many others by shining a spotlight on the talented athletes from across the country," said Piyush Agarwal, senior MD & head - corporate & institutional banking (India).

Talented young swimmers Maana Patel, Kushagra Rawat, Ishaan Mehra, Astha Choudhury, Ashmitha Chandra and Bikram Changmai are among those part of the Mizuho Elite Swimming Programme. The Inspire Institute of Sport's expertise in swimming also extends to its satellite centre in Odisha, where over 4000 young swimmers are impacted through the 'Learn to Swim' programme, in partnership with the Odisha government.

## Mizuho bank to support 30 high-potential swimmers at Inspire Institute of Sport

AGENCIES  
BELLARY (KARNATAKA), JULY 3

The Inspire Institute of Sport on Tuesday announced that Mizuho Bank Ltd is set to support 30 high-potential swimmers, as part of their newly-launched swimming programme.

The Inspire Institute of Sport - India's first privately funded high performance training centre and India's largest Olympic sports development programme - provides 100% scholarships to over 800 talented athletes across centres located in Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Manipur. IIS provides access to world class infrastructure, coaching, sports science support and an integrated academic curriculum, which focuses on holistic development of athletes in an

effort to achieve glory for the nation.

A leading global bank, Mizuho operates five branches in India - Mizuho Bank, Mizuho Securities, Mizuho Global Services and Mizuho Leasing. It has been present in India for 28 years and has over 1000 employees serving Japanese & non-Japanese clients. It will soon start its operations in GIFT city.

"For an organisation as large as Mizuho Bank to choose to support the Inspire Institute of Sport is a matter of immense pride for all of us. It's moments like these that put a spring in our steps in our quest to make India a sporting superpower. The power of sport shines through in their belief in our swimming programme, and I am really excited to see what the future holds,"



said Parth Jindal, founder of the Inspire Institute of Sport.

"The Inspire Institute of Sport is delighted to welcome Mizuho Bank as partners of its Elite Swimming Programme. This partnership underlines our joint effort and commitment to contribute to the development of swimming in India, and

Mizuho's support will go a long way in helping us raise the bar. The growth and success we've seen in a short period of time is unprecedented, and I'm certain that this will prove to be a watershed moment in Indian sport," said Rushdeep Warley, CEO of the Inspire Institute of Sport. Warley, whose expertise in swimming and high per-

formance has previously been extended to South Africa Swimming and New Zealand Swimming, has overseen the progress and qualification of several young swimmers to global competitions, including the Olympic Games.

The IIS swimming programme, launched in 2023, features two state-of-the-art pools, allowing

swimmers access to its high-performance center, hostels and learning center. Through the programme, the athletes are provided with technical coaching and competition exposure, coupled with support around sports science, strength & conditioning, nutrition, education, mental health, and residential facilities.

A truly global sport with over 160 nations in participation at the Olympiad, swimming represents the second-highest tally of medals available at the Olympic Games (after athletics). With as many as 111 medals up for grabs at Paris 2024, the Inspire Institute of Sport and Mizuho Bank recognise swimming as a sport where India must make great strides to be an Olympic nation.

"Our corporate social responsibility initiatives

reflect our corporate values and our commitment towards having a positive impact on society. Our purpose is to proactively innovate together with our clients for a prosperous and sustainable future.

Our fundamental approach to all our activities is to operate responsibly. We are honoured to partner with IIS, who were our partner of choice for the first ever Sports CSR investment in India as we share their vision of developing and nurturing Indian talent to succeed in the world of international sports. As one of the youngest nations in the world with about 60% population being under the age of 28, we believe that India should claim its rightful place on the podium in this aspect too. Sports play a vital role in

building essential skills like competitive mindset, resilience, discipline, team work etc., and we hope to inspire many others by shining a spotlight on the talented athletes from across the country," said Piyush Agarwal, senior MD & head - corporate & institutional banking (India). Talented young swimmers Maana Patel, Kushagra Rawat, Ishaan Mehra, Astha Choudhury, Ashmitha Chandra and Bikram Changmai are among those part of the Mizuho Elite Swimming Programme. The Inspire Institute of Sport's expertise in swimming also extends to its satellite centre in Odisha, where over 4000 young swimmers are impacted through the 'Learn to Swim' programme, in partnership with the Odisha government.

## Sankalp HEW Doda intensifies outreach campaign - A Pioneering Effort towards Women Empowerment

JNEWS SERVICE  
DODA, JULY 3

The Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW) Doda has been making significant strides in promoting women's rights and empowerment through a series of impactful initiatives.

Over the past weeks, the organization has intensified its efforts, focusing on key issues such as gender equality, legal awareness, and health rights.

In a noteworthy achievement, Sankalp HEW has successfully completed the third week of its ambitious 100-day event aimed at sensitizing Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) about the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act. This initiative is part of a larger campaign to eradicate selective abortions and promote gender equality.



In addition to the awareness sessions for ASHA workers, Sankalp HEW has been collaborating with Advocates to discuss critical changes in legislation related to women's rights.

These programs provided a platform for in-depth discussions about Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam breaking the

centuries old shackles of colonial legacy.

New laws will enhance the efficiency and transparency of our justice system. Such collaborations are pivotal in fostering a robust legal framework that protects and empowers women.

Recognizing the importance of equipping its team with the necessary skills and knowledge,

Sankalp HEW recently conducted an intensive training session for its officials. This training is expected to significantly enhance the effectiveness of future awareness camps and outreach programs conducted by the organization. By investing in the capacity building of its team, Sankalp HEW ensures that its initiatives are executed with professionalism.

Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW) is dedicated to promoting women's rights and gender equality through advocacy, education, and community engagement. Based in Doda, the organization works tirelessly to address issues such as gender-based violence, health rights, and legal awareness, striving to create a more just and equitable society for all.

## DC Shopian presides over public outreach programme-Block Diwas at Imamsahib

JNEWS SERVICE  
SHOPIAN, JULY 3

To ensure effective service delivery and prompt grievance resolution of the public at their doorsteps, the District Development Commissioner, Fazlul Haseeb, today presided over a Public Outreach programme, Block Diwas at Imam Sahib, here.

On the occasion, besides the public of Imam Sahib, locals of adjacent villages- Hendeew, Wadipora, Kadigam, Aada-kharan, Wasohalan, DK Pora, Wuyan and Losed-enow apprised the DDC of various issues ranging from road connectivity to cleanliness of irrigation Khuls and portable drinking water facility. Uninterrupted power supply, repairs of lanes, drains and sanitation issues were also flagged off.

The DDC patiently lis-



tened to all the issues and demands put forth by the locals and directed the concerned officers to redress the genuine grievances in a time bound manner, as per their feasibility and norms.

Earlier, the DDC sought feedback from the line departments on their ongoing works and reviewed their perfor-

mance vis a vis developmental targets.

While interacting with the people, DDC said that the block diwas is being organised with the sole objective to provide more transparent, accountable, public-friendly and responsive administration to the people. This initiative of the Government is contributing immensely to

good governance, he said.

He said that the purpose of organising such programmes is to reach out to the unreached habitations, listen to their genuine issues and resolve them as per norms.

He further added that no stone shall be left unturned in meeting the expectations of the public and fulfilling their genuine issues within a time bound manner. Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmad Lone, SDM Zainapora, ACP and other districts officers and officials were present on the occasion.

The event concluded with the distribution of scholarship Certificates among Students.

## DDC Doda leads Block Diwas Programme at Shermatoo Top Panchayat Chiralla

JNEWS SERVICE  
DODA, JULY 3

District Development Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh presided over the weekly Block Diwas Programme here today at Shermatoo Top Panchayat in Sunarhawa-Block Chiralla.

District and Sector Officers, including CEO BDA Bhaderwah Bal Krishan, accompanied the Commissioner to address the issues and concerns of the local populace.

DDC Singh emphasized the importance of public outreach initiatives in bridging the gap between the administration and the people. He highlighted that such events provide a platform to residents to voice their grievances and seek redressal directly from the officials. The presence of District and Sector Officers ensured



that the concerns raised were promptly addressed, and solutions were discussed on the spot.

The Block Diwas Programme also included interactive sessions where villagers engaged directly with the officers, discussing a range of issues from infrastructure development to social welfare schemes. DDC Singh assured the attendees that their feedback would be taken seriously and efforts would be made to implement necessary changes to improve their living conditions.

The programme concluded with a commitment to strengthen the administrative machinery's responsiveness and enhance the overall development of the region.

During the public outreach program, Ex-sarpanchs raised different issues, grievances and demands before the DDC Doda.

The prominent demands raised in the event included road connectivity towards Jantroon Dhar, adequate staff in local school, bringing the area on the tourism map,

hosting of Jantroon Dhar festival, demarcation of the land for construction of school buildings, opening of J&K Bank branch, linking the Kahara to Jantroon Dhar, replacement of the damage wooden electric poles, issuance of APL and BPL ration cards to separated families, prevention of forest fires, plantation drive in the area, holding of awareness camp on new criminal law, blacktopping and renovation of roads connecting adjoining areas, measures to resolve problem of shortage of water.

The locals also demanded the holding of a block diwas event at Thallela, removal of a big boulder on Puneja to Bhilara road, and development of a power receiving station.

Similar Weekly Block Diwas event was held at Dhamunda Park Panchayat Manthla to redress the

grievances of people.

The event was chaired by DDC chairman Dhananter Singh who listened to the issues of the public in presence of ADC Bhaderwah, BDO Bhaderwah, BMO, LDO, CDPO, TSO, DFO, and officials from other Horticulture, Agriculture and other departments.

The government officers provided different services and listened to the grievances and demands of people. They resolved many issues on the spot pertaining to their respective departments.

Local participants projected a variety of demands before the DDC chairman and ADC, particularly the burning issue of drinking water, who assured them of early redressal.

The chairman and ADC assured to resolve the issue of drinking water on priority within one week.

## Weekly Block Diwas public outreach camps held across Ramban

JNEWS SERVICE  
RAMBAN, JULY 3

The District Administration Ramban, under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, organized the Block Diwas outreach camps at various locations across the district today.

The programs aimed to provide a platform to the public to raise their grievances and demands, and to ensure on-the-spot redressal of their issues.

The programs were held at Block Rajgarh, Block Ramban, Block Batote, Block Gool-Sangaldan, and in Block Ukhral-Banihal.

At Rajgarh the Block Diwas was presided over by ADDC, Roshan Lal along with ACD Srinath Suman and other officers, while at Ramban headquarter the program was headed by ADC Varunjeet Singh Charak, while at



other locations the public interaction/ grievances redressal camps were chaired by SDMs, Tehsildars and BDOs.

The programs were attended by public representatives, PRIs, and a large number of people from the respective areas. Issues related to water supply, road macadamization, upgradation of schools, better health services, and other related issues were raised by the public. Concerned officers assured quick action on the issues raised.

"The Block Diwas program is an easy and accessible platform for the public to raise their grievances and demands. We are committed to ensuring on-the-spot redressal of their issues," said Roshan Lal, Additional District Development Commissioner, Ramban.

The Block Diwas program has been instrumental in providing a platform for the public to raise their grievances and demands, and ensuring on-the-spot redressal of their issues. The program has been successful in resolving several local issues, and has been appreciated by the public at large.

## Block Diwas organised at 13 venues across Kishtwar Kisan Sampark Abhiyan sessions held to promote HADP

JNEWS SERVICE  
KISHTWAR, JULY 3

The weekly (Block Diwas) outreach events were held here today at 13 panchayats across all the blocks of district Kishtwar.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Devansh Yadav along with other senior and district officers from the District Administration presided over the Super Wednesday (Block Diwas) and ensured the best proceedings of the day. This included special sessions for Kisan Sampark Abhiyan 3.0, HADP schemes, Daksh Kisan, and other centrally sponsored schemes.

DC Kishtwar presided over the Block Diwas (Super Wednesday) at Filler Panchayat of Block Thakraia.

Besides, ADC Kishtwar at Block Trigam, ACR Kishtwar at Block Kishtwar, ACD Kishtwar at Drabshalla and other designated officers from District Administration Kishtwar, including SDMs, Tehsildars presided over the events and the Department of Agriculture and Allied sectors, were present at the scheduled venues to



attend the programmes. Presiding officers took detailed notes of the proceedings and progress achieved during Super Wednesday (Block Diwas). Additionally, the grievances of people and farmers were listened to and addressed by the presiding officers as a part of Super Wednesday.

It is pertinent to mention that the Kisan Sampark Abhiyan 3.0, under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), was launched today in various panchayats of the 13 blocks of Kishtwar District. The Abhiyan was launched under the instructions and overall guidance of Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Dr. Devansh Yadav, who is also Chairman of HADP, and under the close supervision of the Director of Agriculture Jammu, who is also

the Supervisory Officer of the programme.

The purpose of Kisan Sampark Abhiyan 3.0 is to increase awareness regarding the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme and expedite the implementation of projects under HADP for the welfare of the farming community. The training was conducted simultaneously at 13 locations in the district. Farmers received training from resource persons of agriculture and allied departments through various audio-visual aids. A baseline survey is being conducted by the skill gap study person of the farmers who attended the training programme. Officers and officials of allied departments, along with a large number of farmers, participated in the training programme. District Nodal Officer

HADP, Chief Agriculture Officer Kishtwar, Amjad Hussain Malik coordinated the programmes.

During KSA 3.0, special focus was laid on the awareness of credit-linked schemes and the purpose of opening Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) in various panchayats in Collab with Bankers.

Nodal officer called upon all stakeholders to come together to ensure the effective implementation of a holistic agriculture development plan.

District Administration Kishtwar extended full support to ensure the maximum success of Kisan Sampark Abhiyan 3.0, including the dissemination of detailed information to the farming community regarding HADP schemes, Daksh Kisan, and other centrally sponsored schemes.

## District Development Commissioner Reasi chairs weekly Block Diwas at Panthar

JNEWS SERVICE  
REASI, JULY 3

District Development Commissioner Reasi, Vishesh Mahajan today chaired the weekly Block Diwas event at Community Hall, Sirah Kotla, Panthal block. The event saw enthusiastic participation from local residents and the departmental representatives.

The residents raised several demands including infrastructure development, augmentation of water supply and healthcare facilities, Fresh survey of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, up-gradation of electric transformers, completion of PWD and PMGSY roads, opening of a Primary Health Center (PHC), release of pending payments under MGNREGA, renewal of gun licenses, sanction of pending old age and widow pensions, installation of solar lights, and improvement in educational facilities.

Additionally, the locals also demanded widow pensions for Above Poverty Line (APL) individuals.

DDC Mahajan said that Block Diwas aims at bringing governance



to the doorstep of the people, providing people a platform to voice their concerns, seek redress of grievances and get first-hand information about various government schemes and initiatives.

The residents informed DDC Mahajan about a tragic accident that claimed the lives of four family members, requesting assistance from the district administration. Responding to the same, the DDC assured them of help from the Red Cross

Society. Officers from different departments also apprised the public about their departmental schemes.

Addressing another concern, he asked the Block Development Officer Panthal to identify and propose land for women who cultivate vegetables to sell their produce, thus generating self-income.

Earlier, the DDC interacted with the public, listened to their issues, and directed the concerned officials to address them

promptly. He instructed the XEN PDD to survey and upgrade transformers where needed.

Regarding the demand for a playground, the DDC stated that discussions would be held with the District Youth Services and Sports department to develop a playground in the area. He also inspected the 160 meter Panthal and Jhajjar Kotli bridge project and instructed the executing agency to start the pending construction work. He also inspected other developmental projects.

Meanwhile, to promote agricultural mechanization and enhance productivity, District Development Commissioner Vishesh Mahajan issued tractors to farmers under a 50% subsidy scheme as a part of Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP).

DDC Member Rajinder Mengi, SDM Katra Piyush Dhotra, SP Katra Vipin Chandran, ACD Pardeep Kumar, CEO Mushtaq Ahmed, XENS PDD and PHE, DSWO, Tensildar Katra, BDO Panthal and other officers were present.