

**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 bleeding gums
- Discomfort
- Present vomiting
- A drop in body temperature
- Disorientation
- Swelling face, gums or nose, blood vomit, urine or stool

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

# JINDRAH IMAGES

DAILY | JAMMU | VOL NO: 11 | ISSUE NO: 158 | PAGES: 12 | PRICE: Rs 2/- | RNI NO: JKENG/2013/49471 | POSTAL REGD. NO. JK-497/22-24 | dailyjindrahimages.com/Epaper.php | jindrahimages123@gmail.com

## Prez Murmu confers gallantry awards to 36 bravehearts



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 5

The President of India has conferred 36 Gallantry awards, including 10 Kirti Chakras and 26 Shaurya Chakras, recognising the outstanding bravery and sacrifice of individuals in service. These awards, which include seven posthumous Kirti Chakras and seven posthumous Shaurya Chakras, highlight the unwavering commitment and courage of those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty.

As per details obtained by the news agency, among the distinguished awardees are five officers from the Jammu and Kashmir Police, honoured for their exceptional valour and dedication to duty. The gallantry awards are a testament to the extraordinary valour displayed by individuals in various operations across the country. Shaurya Chakra (Posthumous): Selection Grade Constable Saifullah Qadri, a well-known

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## Under Modi's leadership, J&K witnessing historic, transformative changes: LG

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 5

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Friday met H.E Dr. Eliska Zigova, Ambassador of Czech Republic to India, at Raj Bhawan Srinagar. The Lt Governor discussed with the Czech Republic Ambassador the investment potential of Jammu Kashmir in diverse sectors like Industries, Tourism, Start-ups, Handloom, Handicrafts, Food Processing, Agriculture & allied sectors.

He also spoke on the historic and transforma-



tive changes the UT of J&K is witnessing under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. "Jammu Kashmir is on

the verge of becoming a notable success story among Indian states and a global model for socio-economic development," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor invited Trade and Business Leaders from Czech Republic to explore the limitless opportunities that Jammu Kashmir has to offer.

He said the progressive reforms and futuristic policy interventions have positioned Jammu Kashmir as the preferred destination for the investors across the globe.

"Jammu Kashmir is CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## CS lays out steps to create enabling ecosystem for promotion of skill development in J&K



**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JULY 5

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today held a meeting with Vice Chancellor Shri Vishwakarma Skill University (SVSU), Haryana, Dr Raj Nehru, spe-

cially invited to share his knowledge and expertise regarding establishment of SVSU besides discussing the ways and means of nurturing skill environment in Jammu and Kashmir. Present

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## President JDU J&K calls on LG Sinha

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 5

GM Shaheen, President, J&K Janta Dal United (JDU), called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan, on Friday. Shaheen discussed with the Lt Governor various issues pertaining to Muharram arrangements,



road connectivity in Kashmir valley and smooth movement of fruit laden vehicles.

The Lt Governor assured the senior political leader of appropriate action on all genuine issues put forth by him during the interaction.

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## CS takes stock of physical status of transit accommodations in Kashmir

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 5

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Friday chaired a meeting to take stock of physical status of transit accommodations being constructed for PM package employees from migrant Kashmiri Pandit community across different districts of valley.

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## Assembly elections in Sept, Retrieving PoK to be part of manifesto: BJP leaders told in Jammu meet

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JUL 5

Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders from J&K were given a green signal on Assembly polls post Amarnath Yatra on Friday in a high level meeting chaired by the Union Minister and J&K election incharge G Kishen Reddy in Jammu. The party also evolved

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4



## J&K BJP unit likely to get new president, MP Jugal front runner

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JULY 5

Ahead of the assembly elections, the Jammu and Kashmir unit of the Bhartiya Janata Party will be seeing a major reshuffle in the cadre including the party president.

"The preparations for the assembly elections, which are yet to be officially announced,



are in full swing for which the party level deliberations are being held with the high command," party sources said.

They said that a reshuffle in the BJP organisation is also on cards including an appointment of new J&K head.

"Discussions at the top level are in progress with the J&K cadre and various names for

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## ACB registers case against JE, Jal Shakti dept, Poonch division

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 5

Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Friday said to have registered a case against Junior Engineer, Jal Shakti Department, Division Poonch on corruption charges.

As per a statement issued to the news agency, J&K Anti Corruption Bureau registered a case against Dil Pazeer, Junior Engineer posted in Jal Shakti Department, Division Poonch under FIR number 04/2024 PS ACB Rajouri U/s 13(1)(b) r/w section 13(2) Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended in 2018).

"The instant case was registered on the outcome of a verification conducted by ACB into the allegations of accumulation of assets disproportionate to known source of income by above named accused person," the statement reads.

The verification conducted has revealed

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## Amarnath Yatra crosses 1.30 lakh mark in 6 days, fresh batch of around 7000 pilgrims leaves from Jammu

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JUL 5

Over 24,000 pilgrims paid obeisance at naturally formed Ice Shivlingam at Himalayan cave in South Kashmir's Anantnag district till yesterday evening, this year's yatra crossed 1.30 lakh mark in just six days, breaking all previous records of scared pilgrimage. While a fresh batch of 6919 pilgrims left Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas base camp in Jammu towards twin base camps of Baltal in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district and Nunwan -Pahalgam in Anantnag district under tight security measures early this morning.

Officials told the news agency, on the sixth day (yesterday), 24,978 pilgrims paid obeisance at holy cave of Swami Amarnath Ji. With this, the total number of pilgrims visiting the 3888-metre-high cave shrine in the deep Himalayas during the last four days since the yatra started has reached 1,30,260, surpassing all



the previous records.

Officials said among the 24,978 pilgrims who performed darshan today at holy cave included 16,667 male, 5367 female, 354 children, 520 Sadhus, two Sadhvis and seven others besides 2061 security personnel and service providers.

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, the eighth batch of 6919 pilgrims left the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas base camp in Jammu for the Kashmir Valley to perform the pil-

grimage to the Amarnath Cave Shrine.

Chanting 'Bam Bam Bhole', the pilgrims left the base camp in a cavalcade of 259 early Friday morning. These include 5241 Men, 1435 Women, 16 Children, 214 Sadhus & 13 Sadhvis (female sadhus). Of these, 2542 left for Baltal whereas 4377 departed for Pahalgam base camp from where they will proceed for their further journey to the holy cave. The administration has placed stringent security arrangements for the smooth conduct of the yatra. Officials said that thousands of security

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## J&K breathes sigh of relief from heat wave as temp records slight dip

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 5

After recording back-to-back hottest July days, Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir and other parts breathed a sigh of relief on Friday as the mercury plummeted slightly, ending the four day-long heat wave in the Valley.

According to the details available in the news agency, Srinagar has recorded a maximum temperature of 34.2 degree Celsius, which was 1.5 degree Celsius less than



yesterday. Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, has recorded a maximum temperature of 32.0 degree Celsius while

Pahalgam, a famous destination, recorded 26.3 degree Celsius. The mercury in Kupwara

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## Special summary revision of electoral rolls in J&K

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 5

The Election Commission of India (ECI) will review preparedness for special summary revision of electoral rolls with the district election officers (DEOs) of Jammu & Kashmir on July 10.

Ahead of the beginning of the special summary revision of electoral rolls, the poll-body has convened a meeting with all 20 district election officers of the Union Territory to discuss the issues relating to the exercise, which

will begin on July 25 and culminate on August 20.

As per the letter written by joint chief electoral officer to DEOs, a copy of which is in possession of news agency, the meeting would discuss vacancies of electoral registration officers and assistant electoral registration officers, status of appointment of booth level officers, status of house-to-house verification by BLOs, rationalization/rearrangement of polling stations, health of electoral roll, removal of discrepancies in

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## Unusual, abnormal temperatures, peaks, lows part of climate change: Experts

**JI NEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JUL 5

As Srinagar and rest parts of Jammu and Kashmir witnessed record-breaking maximum temperatures this July, the experts here have claimed that the unusual, abnormal temperatures and precipitation is the outcome of the climate change. However, the experts are of the belief that the shifting of Monsoon winds as well as the absence of Western Disturbances has shown the abnormal behaviour.

Professor Ghulam

Jeelani, Dean, School of Earth & Environmental Sciences, Kashmir University, told the news agency, said that the rising temperatures, unusual precipitation is not the Kashmir phenomenon; these things are being witnessed across the globe and is clearly linked with the climate change.

However, about the shift in the Monsoon winds and absence of Western Disturbances, he stated that the research is still going on whether the Monsoon and Western Disturbances are

affected by the climate change, whether they are strengthening with time or weakening with time.

"It is still debatable, but there are people who are doing different research on different aspects of it, but they show some abnormal behaviour over the years," he added.

Prof Jeelani further added that some researchers link it directly with the climate change and some people link it ocean oscillations. Nonetheless, Dr Sami-ullah Bhat, Senior Assistant Professor

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

## Principal Secretary PDD chairs Public Darbar at Mandal Jammu

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JULY 5

Principal Secretary, Power Development department (PDD) H Rajesh Prasad today chaired a Public Darbar at Block Mandal here to address various issues and grievances of the general public.

Deputy Commissioner Sachin Kumar Vaishya; Additional District Development Commissioner, Sher Singh; Chief Planning Officer, ACD, Block Development Officer and other senior officers were also present on the occasion. The darbar also saw participation from BDC Chairman, Madan Lal, former PRI representatives, eminent citizens, and large number of locals.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Principal Secretary urged upon all to welcome the installation of smart meters. He underlined that in order to achieve robust and uninterrupted



power supply for prosperity of Jammu & Kashmir, the ongoing power reforms are crucial and must be welcomed wholeheartedly.

During the darbar, the locals raised several issues before the Principal Secretary like enhancement of interior village roads, flood mitigation measures, mining related concerns pertaining to river Tawi, issues related to Rural Development, Revenue departments and others.

The public also appreciated the introduc-

tion of Smart Buses and expressed hope for more such buses in the future.

While interacting with locals, the Principal Secretary assured them that all of their genuine demands and grievances would be addressed promptly. He noted that some issues would be taken up with the UT administration as well.

During the interaction, the Principal Secretary made out that significant reforms have been initiated in power sector from last several years,

adding that Rs.10,000 crores have been invested to enhance the power infrastructure, including setting up grid stations, receiving stations, transformers, and power line networks besides an additional amount of Rs 10,500 crores have been allocated for replacing poles and wires with superior insulated power cables.

The Principal Secretary further highlighted that despite challenges, the UT government continues to provide power to consumers at subsidised rates. He emphasised on the need to reduce power losses in Jammu and Kashmir, which are primarily due to non-payment of dues and pilferage. He informed that 22 lakh consumers are slated to receive smart meters, with 6 lakh already installed, to ensure accurate billing and payment of dues. He also dispelled concerns about overcharging or arbitrary charges by smart meters.

## Shivkhori Shrine Board gears up to host month long Shravan Mahotsav

JNEWS SERVICE  
REASI, JULY 5

Deputy Commissioner Reasi, Vishesh Mahajan, who is also the Vice Chairman of Shivkhori Shrine Board (SSKSB), on Friday chaired a meeting to discuss the arrangements for the Shivkhori Shravan Mahotsav 2024 with functionaries of Government Departments and representatives of hospitality sector.

The annual Mahotsav, scheduled to run from 22 July to 19 August, attracts thousands of devotees from across the country to the sacred shrine of Shivkhori.

The meeting focused on making all necessary preparations for the smooth conduct of the festival.

Deputy Commissioner Mahajan highlighted that the Mahotsav would feature different spiritual



activities, including Shivkathas, besides devotional songs dedicated to Lord Shiva by renowned singers and local artists.

Mahajan asked JD Tourism Sunaina Sharma, who joined the meeting virtually, to ensure wide publicity of the Shivkhori Shravan Mahotsav, to attract maximum number of devotees and enhance the overall reach and participation in the festival.

The discussion included robust security arrangements, with adequate police deployment and surveillance to ensure safety of the visitors.

The provision of medical camps and emergency response teams was emphasized to handle any health-related issues that may arise during the event. Additionally, strict cleanliness and sanitation measures will be implemented to maintain the sanctity of the shrine and its surroundings.

Local Self-Help Groups (SHGs) will be provided space to put up traditional food stalls, offering a taste of local cuisine to the visitors. Deputy Commissioner Mahajan emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts among all

departments and stakeholders to ensure the festival's success.

The meeting was attended by ADC Kulbushan Khajuria; Executive Officer SSKSB Pardeep Kumar; Xen JPDCL, PWD and Jal Shakti, BMO, BDO HQ, DSP HQ.

President Hotel Association Katra Rakesh Wazir; Vice President Hotel Association Varinder Kesar and Chairman Hotel Association Sham Lal Kesar also attended the meeting. Joint Director Tourism Sunaina Sharma and AD Tourism Katra joined virtually.

## Rs 85800 subsidy on solar rooftop of Rs.1.59 lakh under PM Surya Ghar: KPDCL

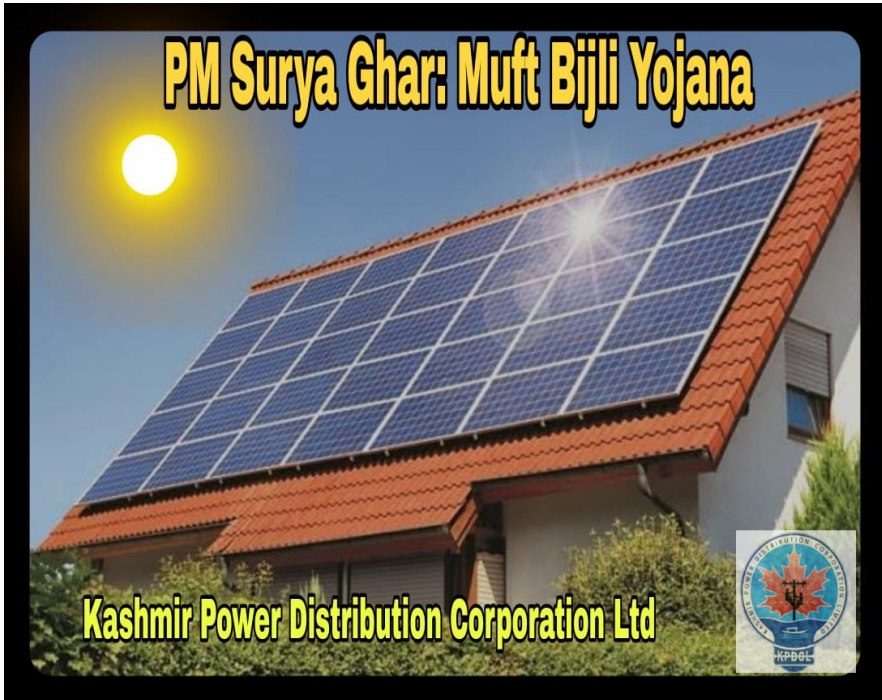
JNEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR, JULY 5

Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) today urged the domestic consumers to immediately apply and register for installation of Solar Rooftop Plants under the Centre's flagship PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana to reap benefits of free solar energy.

It further stated that around 40 empanelled Solar PV Vendors are being onboarded on the National PM Surya Ghar portal, paving way for rolling out the subsidized scheme in Kashmir Division.

In a statement released to the press here today, a KPDCL spokesperson stated that 36,400 solar rooftops shall be installed under the scheme target till March 31, 2027. "A large number of interested consumers have already registered on the national portal and with onboarding of empanelled vendors, installation of solar rooftops shall begin soon," he said, while urging the consumers to submit their formal applications on the designated portal - www.pmsuryaghar.gov.in.

In order to facilitate the beneficiaries, the spokesperson stated that



no Technical Feasibility Report (TFR) is required for a solar plant up to 10 kWp. He, however, clarified that solar panels shall be compulsorily installed on rooftops of the beneficiaries.

Calling upon the consumers to avail benefits of PM Surya Ghar Scheme, the spokesman stated that subsidy for residential rooftop solar is 60% of the system cost up to 2 kW & 40% of additional system cost for systems between 2-3 kW capacity. At current bench-

mark prices, it adds up to Rs.33,000/- subsidy for 1 kWp, Rs.66,000/- for 2 kWp and Rs. 85,800/- for 3 kWp solar rooftop systems or higher for special category UT like Jammu & Kashmir.

The KPDCL spokesperson further said that households availing the scheme, will be able to save on electricity bills.

In order to facilitate the prospective beneficiaries and popularize the solar rooftop scheme, KPDCL has created a hyperlink of PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli

Yojana on its designated website - www.kpdcl.jkpcdd.net. KPDCL urged the consumers to click on the hyperlink so that they are navigated to the national portal for registration and submission of formal applications.

The spokesman further added that Kashmir DISCOM is organising awareness camps and IEC campaigns in all Electric Divisions so that maximum publicity is given to the flagship scheme.

## DLSA Kupwara holds one-day Workshop on BNS, BBBP at HSS Khumriyal



JNEWS SERVICE  
KUPWARA, JULY 5

The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Kupwara in collaboration with Mission Shakti (Sankalp-Hub) Kupwara today organized a One Day Workshop on Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) at Higher Secondary School, Khumriyal Kupwara.

The programme was organised under the supervision of Shazia Tabasum, Chairperson, DLSA (Pr. District & Ses-

sion Judge) Kupwara, and under the immediate guidance of Manzoor Ahmad Khan, Secretary, DLSA/Sub-Judge, Kupwara.

The programme was aimed at creating awareness among the participants regarding key features and changes incorporated in Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

Resource Person, Tawseef Raja (Assistant Legal Aid Defence Counsel Kupwara) deliberated on key features and changes incorporated in Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS),

offences against Women and Children under BNS. He also highlighted the key provision of various Child Legislations like Child Labour Laws, PCPNDT Act and Prohibition of Child Marriage Act.

Shagufta, Gender Specialist SANKALP-Hub Kupwara, highlighted and spread awareness regarding various women centric social welfare schemes (SMAS, BBBP). She also sensitized the female students of the institution regarding menstrual health and hygiene and

demonstrated the working of Sanitary Napkin Vending Machine in presence of female staff and students of the institution. The programme was attended by Principal, Higher Secondary School, Khumriyal, Staff Members of the school and officials from Mission Shakti (SANKALP Hub) Kupwara, students of the said institution and Para Legal Volunteers of DLSA Kupwara.

## 96 SPMR College students complete summer internship at JKEDI

JNEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, JULY 5

In a first of its kind initiative, ninety six (96) students of the Government SPMR College of Commerce Jammu completed their mandatory summer internship from Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) here on Friday.

The undergraduate students of the SPMR College completed their 10 day (60 hours) Summer Internship which started on June 24 here at Bari-Brahmana campus of the institute JKEDI. As per the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, all the undergradu-

ate students have to complete 60 hours of internship program to complete their degree.

The interns were briefed about the role and functioning of various verticals/sections of JKEDI. They were made aware about the various activities undertaken by JKEDI including Entrepreneurship Awareness Programs (EAPs), Entrepreneurship Orientation Programs and Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EOPS and EDPs) to promote entrepreneurship as a career choice among unemployed youth of J&K.

An idea pitching workshop and business simulations were held for the

interns wherein real time exposure of running a successful business venture was provided to them. These activities helped the interns to gain insight with respect to the various challenges faced by an entrepreneur and the ways to overcome the same.

At the valedictory session, Director JKEDI, Rajinder Kumar Sharma, interacted with the interns and discussed the importance of entrepreneurship and innovation. He stressed upon the interns to acquire vocational training skills in order to be job oriented in today's competitive environment. He congratulated the interns on completing

their internship successfully and promised them all possible support and guidance in future.

The internship program was conducted by Centre for New Enterprise Creation (CNEC), a program vertical of JKEDI under the supervision of Dr. Vinod Sharma and Dr. Amit Sharma, faculty at JKEDI.

Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) is dedicated to foster entrepreneurship and self-employment in the region through training, research, and development activities. It aims to create a conducive ecosystem for entrepreneurship and innovation.

## DG Rural Sanitation reviews sanitation arrangements at Baltal, Domail

JNEWS SERVICE  
BAL TAL, JULY 5

Director General Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra, today reviewed the status of sanitation and allied services being extended to the pilgrims of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra at Baltal base camp and Domail. At Domail Waste Management Facility, the DG inspected the arrangements for proper disposal of dry, wet and inert waste.

Anoo Malhotra Malhotra appreciated the sanitation activities while recognizing the critical role of sanitation workers in ensuring a smooth and hygienic pilgrimage experience for thousands of devotees participating in the yatra. "We are proud of our sanitation workers who are professionally managing the waste at Baltal, the largest base camp for pilgrims where around 30, 000 people visit every day since commencement of the annual Yatra," she maintained.



The DG instructed the officers to launch special sanitation drives focused on keeping the yatra axis clean and eco-friendly with regular collection and disposal of waste, maintenance of clean tracks and rest areas besides ensuring decontaminated water sources. She stressed the need for intensifying public awareness campaigns to educate pilgrims on the importance of maintaining cleanliness and mini-

mizing their environmental footprint.

Besides inspecting the yatra route, she visited the "Waste to Wonder" exhibition at the Baltal base camp, being thronged by 2,000 to 3,000 visitors daily. Showcasing innovative ways to manage waste and convert it into useful resources, the exhibition aligns with the department's vision of sustainable practices.

The DG highlighted the administration's commit-

ment to both the spiritual and environmental aspects of the pilgrimage. She encouraged the officers and the public to adopt these innovative practices. By integrating such an exhibition into the yatra experience, the administration not only promotes a cleaner pilgrimage but also spreads awareness about the importance of sustainability by adopting Recycle, Reuse and Refuse strategy, she maintained.





## DDC Bandipora reviews progress under JJM schemes

**JNEWS SERVICE**  
BANDIPORA, JULY 5

The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman on Friday convened a review meeting at Mini Secretariat to assess the progress achieved under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in the District. The Mission Director, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) J&K, Dr. G.N. Itoo also joined the meeting through online mode.

The meeting discussed the status of ongoing projects, physical progress, and challenges being faced during implementation. It was revealed that, out of 120 schemes under JJM, 33 schemes are completed, 36 schemes are nearing completion, in 41 schemes 75 percent work is completed and work is going on in full swing in all other schemes.

It was informed that 85.74 percent households have been provided functional Tap Water Connections (FHHTCs).



It was also given out that out of 37 allotted works of Rapid Sand Filtration Plants, 11 stand completed, 22 are nearing completion, and work is going on at full pace in other works.

Out of 151 allotted works of pipe network, 75 works have been completed, and work is in progress in others.

The DDC was apprised, that in PHE Sub Division Sumbal, 100 percent physical progress has been achieved in WSS Zonipora

Asham, WSS Hajin Ghat, WSS Shukurdin Shahgund and Migrant Colony Odina besides 09 water supply schemes are expected to be completed during this month.

Ex. Engineer SSD Gurez informed that out of 25 works in Gurez Sub Division, 12 stands completed, 09 are nearing completion, and work is going on with full pace in others also.

After reviewing the work wise progress of schemes, the DDC asked

the concerned officers of Jal Shakti Department to expedite the completion process of schemes and emphasized the collaborative efforts among all stakeholders to accelerate all JJM works

He directed the executing agency to implement robust monitoring mechanisms to track project progress, address bottlenecks, and ensure timely completion of schemes

Emphasising the role of JJM in enhancing quality of life in rural areas, the DDC asked the concerned agencies and department to redouble efforts and ensure the time-bound execution of the works.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Mohammad Ashraf Bhatt, ACD Irfan Bahadur, CPO, CEO, CMO, DSWO, DIO, Executive Engineers of PHE Bandipora, PHE Sopore, PHE Mechanical North Bla/Bpr, and PO DPMU Bandipora.

Executive Engineer SSD Gurez and other concerned attended the meeting through virtual mode.

## DC Doda engages with Aapda Mitra Volunteers to enhance Emergency Preparedness

**JNEWS SERVICE**  
DODA, JULY 5

Deputy Commissioner Doda Harvinder Singh held a productive meeting with the volunteers of the Aapda Mitra in his office chamber, here today. The primary objective of the meeting was to provide a comprehensive overview of all parameters essential for handling emergency situations. During the session, the feedback from the volunteers was actively sought to improve future response strategies.

The meeting included an in-depth review of important guidelines and directions aimed at combating different emergency scenarios. The initiative is part of the

ongoing efforts to ensure that all stakeholders are well-prepared and equipped to handle disasters efficiently. The discussions focused on optimizing the effectiveness of the emergency response through meticulous planning and coordination.

Additionally, volunteers from the AAPDA MITRA Scheme were provided Emergency Responder Kits, Certificates/I Cards/T Shirts. The distribution of these resources was conducted by Deputy Commissioner Doda Harvinder Singh, emphasizing the commitment to bolstering the capabilities of the volunteers. This move is expected to significantly enhance the readiness and resilience of the local disaster response team.



## Blood Donation Camp organized at GDC for Women Anantnag

**JNEWS SERVICE**  
ANANTNAG, JUNE 5

The Red Ribbon Club of Government Degree College (GDC) for Women Anantnag organized a Blood Donation Camp in collaboration with the Blood Centre (Department of Transfusion Medicine) Govt. Medical College Anantnag.

The event was inaugurated by the Principal, Prof (Dr) Masood Ahmad Malik who, in his address, appreciated the initiative and emphasized upon the critical importance of blood donation in saving lives. He

also remarked that such efforts inculcate a spirit of philanthropy besides providing timely help to those in need.

He thanked the donors who comprised student volunteers, faculty and the staff of the college for their selfless gesture in the service of the entire community. The Principal also lauded the efforts of the medical staff in contributing towards the success of the event. As many as 45 donors participated in the event whose contribution was acknowledged with Certificates of Appreciation from the chair.



## DC Kupwara reviews performance of PM Vishwakarma scheme, PDI



**JNEWS SERVICE**  
KUPWARA, JULY 5

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan, who is Chairperson of Vishwakarma District Implementation Committee, convened a meeting of concerned officers to review the progress made under PM Vishwakarma scheme.

The scheme which is aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and skill development among artisans and craftsmen has facilitated skill development training, provided access to modern tools and technologies and promoted market linkages for artisans in the district. It was informed in the meeting that 15575 applications under the scheme were received under Gram Panchayat and ULB Zone out of which 10292 applications were recommended under Stage 1. Under Stage 2, 4063 applications were recommended out of which 3787 applications were approved under Stage 3.

On the occasion, the DC impressed upon the officers to clear all pendencies to ensure coverage of the targeted beneficiaries under the PM Vishwakarma scheme.

It was also informed in the meeting that 3405 candidates were enrolled for Pre-Skilling out of which basic skilling of 1625 candidates have been completed under PM Vishwakarma scheme by different institutes including Government ITIs, Polytechnic College and Private Institutions.

The DC also reviewed the performance of Panchayat Development Index (PDI) during which the meeting discussed in detail the indicators under Panchayat Development Index, which evaluates the performance of Panchayats based on various development parameters. ACD Kupwara, ACP, LDM, BDOs, Superintendent ITI Kupwara, CSC Manager and other concerned were present in the meeting.

## Truck drivers, Co-drivers, Helpers registered on E-shram portal in Rajouri



**JNEWS SERVICE**  
RAJOURI, JULY 5

Office of the Assistant Labour Commissioner, Rajouri organized three days on spot registration and awareness camps at different locations of district Rajouri for registration of Truck drivers and allied workers on an e-shram portal.

The initiative was taken on the directions of Labour Commissioner, Charandeep Singh and aims at safeguarding the rights and promoting welfare of the truck drivers.

The camps were held on 3, 4 and 5 of July 2024 at Bus stand Salani, ARTO Rajouri and old bus stand Rajouri in compliance with the advisory issued by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

The camp was organized under the overall supervision of Assistant Labour Commissioner,

Rajouri Pradyot Gupta who urged the drivers, cleaners and helpers of commercial vehicles registered in district Rajouri to get registered on e-shram portal either through self registration or through any CSC and take benefits of the registration. He further stressed the drivers that the registration on e-shram portal will facilitate the government in ensuring that unorganized workers including truck drivers can avail benefits of social security schemes such as Pardon Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojna (PM-JJB), Pardon Mantri Surksha Bima Yojna (PM-SYM) etc.

"Truck drivers are a vulnerable section of the labour class and registration under e-shram will provide direct life insurance cover of Rs. 2 lakh and upto Rs. 1 lakh cover for temporary disability to the e-shram card holders as proposed", he added.

## Jindrah club honours Izna with a professional skate



**JNEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JULY 5

Roller Athelte skating club Jindrah honoured Ms Izna sharma, an upcoming and talented roller hockey player with an imported roller hockey skate. Ganesh Dass Sharma handed over the professional hockey skate to

Izna on behalf of the Jindrah club. Earlier Izna had represented Jammu and Kashmir in many nationals and won medals. It is pertinent to mention here that the club had started the program of honouring best skater with the professional skate for the skaters of the club since last year.

## ADC Kathua imposes Rs 3.03 Lakh fine on traders for violation of FSS Act-2006

**JNEWS SERVICE**  
KATHUA, JULY 5

In a decisive action against violation of Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSA) 2006, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kathua Ranjit Singh has imposed Rs 3.03 lakh fine against erring traders.

The punitive measures targeted traders involved in the distribution of substandard and misbranded food items. The offenders (Business Establishments), including

manufacturers, distributors and retailers operate in Kathua, Billawar, Hiranagar and Basohli divisions. The action has been taken in line with the commitment of the Kathua administration to safeguard public health. The erring commercial establishments have been directed to comply with food safety regulations and provide high-quality, standardized products to consumers, thus preserving public trust in the market.

**UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND JAMMU,**  
**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE)**  
**DEPARTMENT JAMMU**  
**B.C. ROAD, BUS STAND, JAMMU**  
TELE: 0191-2544356, 0191-2547586 E-Mail: [phecjmu@gmail.com](mailto:phecjmu@gmail.com)

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
e-NIT No. PHE/JJM/12 of 2024-25 Dated: 03.07.2024

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Chief Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Department, JAMMU invites e-tenders on item rate basis from reputed and resourceful Bidders/ Firms/Companies/Joint Ventures/ Consortiums of all classes, required to be registered with Jal Shakti (PHE) Department of UT of J&K apart from registration with JKPWD/CPWD/Railways or any other State / UT Government for "Construction of 200 mm Dia. Production Bore Wells by ODEX Method for 01 Water Supply Scheme (01 nos. Bore well) of District Reasi of Jammu Province under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)". The bidding process shall be completed online on [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) in two covers viz. Cover 1st consisting of Pre-Qualification Criteria, General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and Cover 2nd shall consist of Financial Bid on item rate basis, in the prescribed BOQ.

Sr.No.	Particulars of the work	Tender fee (in Rs.)	EMD (in Rs.)	Bid Validity	Estimated AMOUNT (in Rs.)	Time of Completion of work (days)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Construction of 200 mm Dia. Production Bore Wells by ODEX Method for 01 Water Supply Scheme (01 nos. Bore well) of District Reasi of Jammu Province under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)	1000/-	35000/-	180 days	As per Appendix "E" of the SBD	As per bid document.

As per tender Documents  
Position of funds: Available Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)  
The tender inviting authority is Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Department Jammu.  
The awarding authority is District Jal Jeevan Mission (DJJM) Reasi

**Critical Dates:**

i	Publish Date	03.07.2024
ii	Document Download/sale start Date	03.07.2024
iii	Date of Pre-bid meeting	05.07.2024 (12:00 Noon)
iv	Bid submission start date	05.07.2024 (4.00 PM onwards)
v	Bid submission end date	15.07.2024 (6:00 PM)
vi	Date and time of Bid opening	16.07.2024 (3:00PM)

- Bid documents can be accessed and downloaded from the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in)**
- The pre-bid meeting shall held in the office chamber of the Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Department, Jammu through virtual/online mode.
- The whole bidding process shall be completed online on tender portal [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in). The intending bidders can download the bid document from the tender portal and can submit their bids by uploading them on the tender portal.
- The valid bids received shall be opened online in the office of the Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Department, Jammu.
- Bids must be accompanied by cost of Tender Document and EMD as specified in column 3 & 4 of the table and shall be payable at Jammu.
  - EMD to be pledged in favour of Chief Accounts Officer (CAO), Jal Shakti PHE Department Jammu. EMD will be in the form of CDR/ FDR/BG of any scheduled Bank and shall be valid for a period of 90 days from the last date of submission of bid.
  - The cost of tender documents should be in form of TR / e-challan / Receipt under Major Head, MH:0215 in favour of CAO, Jal Shakti (PHE) Department Jammu or by online payment via NEFT/RTGS as detailed below:-  
A/c Name : Chief Account Officer, PHE Jammu.  
Bank : J & K Bank Ltd.  
Account No : 0097010100002093  
IFSC : JAKA0TNHALL  
Branch : Town Hall Jammu
- The hard copies of cost of tender document in shape of TR/e-challan/NEFT, Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR/BG and other relevant documents and other relevant documents shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as L1.
- The bid shall remain valid for a period of **180 days** from the last date of submission of bids. If any bidder/tenderer withdraws his bid/tender before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the bid shall be declared non-responsive.
- Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in).
- Queries by email if any, should be made at [phecjmu@gmail.com](mailto:phecjmu@gmail.com).

No: PHE/JJM/1277-89  
Date: 03.07.2024

Sd/-  
Chief Engineer,  
Jal Shakti, (PHE) Department  
Jammu

DIP/J-2404/24  
Date: 5-7-24

## EDITORIAL

## J&amp;K at a political crossroad!

The upcoming Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, as and when to be held, will mark a significant milestone, being the first since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019. As political parties gear up for the polls, the landscape is rife with anticipation, strategy, and the promise of new beginnings. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has already initiated comprehensive preparations. Directed by the high command, the J&K unit is readying itself with region-specific strategies and a mass contact program. Union Ministers are set to tour each constituency, ensuring the party's presence is felt across the Union Territory. This strategic mobilization, discussed in a high-level meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP National President Jagat Prakash Nadda, underscores the party's commitment to securing a significant foothold in J&K's political landscape. The National Conference, another key player, is also in full swing with its preparations. In a recent two-day working committee meeting led by party president Farooq Abdullah and vice president Omar Abdullah, the NC deliberated on the prevailing political situation, organizational strengthening, and election strategies. The party has established a committee to draft its manifesto, aiming to address the core issues and future course of action. This structured approach indicates the NC's resolve to regain its influence and navigate the new political terrain effectively. The Congress party is not far behind in its election readiness. Senior leader Ghulam Nabi Monga mentioned that the party is holding meetings to boost its cadres and gather feedback from grassroots workers. Open to potential alliances, the Congress aims to consolidate its position in the Union Territory. Their collaboration with the NC in the recent Lok Sabha elections suggests a strategy of unity against common adversaries. The People's Democratic Party (PDP), although historically aligned with the BJP, is charting a new course this time. In its political affairs committee meeting, the PDP discussed election preparations and is poised to announce constituency in-charges soon. The party's past experience of forming a coalition government with the BJP, described by former Chief Minister and PDP founder Mufti Mohammed Sayeed as "bringing together the North Pole with South Pole," adds a layer of complexity to its current political stance. As J&K braces for these pivotal elections, the political environment is charged with activity and strategic maneuvering. The 2014 Assembly elections saw the PDP and BJP emerge as the largest parties, leading to an unexpected coalition. This time, however, the dynamics have shifted, with the PDP and NC now part of the Congress-led INDIA bloc, signaling new alliances and potential realignments. The forthcoming elections in J&K are not just about choosing representatives; they symbolize a new chapter in the region's complex political history. The outcomes will undoubtedly shape the future trajectory of governance, development, and regional stability. As political parties rally their forces and engage with the electorate, the stakes are higher than ever, and the eyes of the nation are keenly watching.

## Women suffer in silence as violence against them keeps increasing

KAVITA DHAMEJA

Violence against women remains a critical issue in our society, hindering both their physical development and mental well-being. According to the 2022 annual report by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), crimes against women increased by four per cent in 2022 compared to 2021. Over 5.8 million cases of crime were registered across the country in 2022, with nearly 450,000 involving crimes against women. This translates to an alarming average of around 51 FIRs registered every hour for violence against women. The report highlights that the highest number of cases of violence against women were recorded in Delhi, the capital city, while Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan, was listed as the fourth most unsafe city for women. Rajasthan is the third state with the highest number of cases of violence against

women in 2022.

Notably, Rajasthan had the highest number of recorded rape cases, with over 31,000 incidents reported across the country and 5,399 cases registered in the state. The report also reveals that most incidents of violence or discrimination against women are perpetrated by their husbands or close relatives. Gender-based violence encompasses physical, mental, sexual, and economic abuse, with intimate partner violence being the most widespread form. Women often experience sexual or physical violence from an intimate partner at some point in their lives.

Despite the prevalence of violence, many women do not report these incidents due to several factors. First, the burden of the family's honour is disproportionately placed on women, instilling fear and preventing them from reporting the abuse, even to close family members. Second, many women lack access to support

groups where they can confide and seek help. Third, and perhaps most crucially, there is a widespread unawareness of the support systems and legal frameworks established by the government to aid women affected by violence. However, some women - who are a little aware and have found support groups - raise their voices against the violence they face and report it to the police.

One example of this courage is found in Baba Ramdev Nagar Kachhi Basti in Jaipur, Rajasthan, where gender discrimination and violence are prevalent. Meena Devi (name changed), a 38-year-old resident, shared her experience: "I collect trash, and my husband works as a laborer. We have six children, including four daughters. Our financial situation is dire, and my husband sometimes does not find work.

To contribute to the household income, my two daughters and I collect trash daily, and I had

to stop their schooling." She further revealed, "My husband used to beat me after getting intoxicated, which also affected my daughters.

One day, I gathered the courage to call the police, and since then, he has significantly reduced the violence." This settlement, predominantly inhabited by Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, is located about 10 kilometers from the city in the Gurjar Ki Thadi area.

With a population of over 500 people, many residents engage in occupations such as blacksmithing, scavenging, drumming at weddings, bamboo crafting, and daily wage labour.

Meena mentioned that it is so common for women to be subjected to violence by their husbands that it does not bother anyone in the settlement. Most men indulge in substance abuse and mistreat their wives.

Although several non-government organizations are working in the area to

raise awareness among women to stand up against this violence, the problem has not been completely eradicated. Another woman, who preferred to remain anonymous, recounted her story: "My husband works as a scrap dealer, while I stay busy with household chores." She explained that her husband gets intoxicated every day and abuses her. Her hands bore burn marks, evidence of the physical violence she endured. She said that other women in the settlement often protect her from her husband's violence and have advised her to seek help from the police, but she does not wish to do so. Such control by partners leaves women without access to a safe space to share their experiences and seek advice.

Social worker Akhilesh Mishra, who has been working on the health of women and children in this area explains, "The government has enacted several laws to protect women from gender-

based violence and women can file complaints against the violence they face. Various NGOs are also working here to raise awareness among women about gender discrimination and violence." This effort has started showing results, as women in the settlement have now started to stand up against the violence and seek support from the police. Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach. Cultural norms that place the burden of family honour on women must be challenged and redefined.

Efforts to increase awareness of support groups and governmental resources must be intensified, ensuring that all women have access to the help they need. Only through collective societal effort can we hope to build a capable, equal, and violence-free society for all women.

(The author is a social worker; views expressed are personal. Charkha Features)

## The rise of radical rebels in Pakistan

BHOPINDER SINGH

Clergy has always played a pivotal role in the Pakistani narrative. The indelible impact of the 'Mullahs' has historically cut across institutions of power like the Military 'establishment', political parties, civilian society, academia et al. Each has, in their own way succumbed to puritanical displays and appropriations to posture alignment befitting the "land of the pure" or Pakistan. However, it must be said that many of these institutions have also privately harboured the exact opposite instincts and preferences, from what has been prescribed by the clerical order. These institutions have pandered to religiosity only to tick in the box their own false, and publicly fronted sense of piety to legitimise their relevance, whilst indulging in vices, degeneracies, and excesses. A cursory look at the long list of the Pakistani infamous in the Pandora Papers or Panama List is a veritable who's-who of the Pakistani elites, who posture simplicity, austerity, and god-fearing honesty in the public sphere. This has led to the elites leading notoriously duplicitous lives with ill-gotten properties and excesses across

the world, whilst injecting toxic-religiosity and religious extremism back home.

The bunny of religion is essentially for public consumption to be invoked whenever everything else fails e.g., beseeching Arab Sheikhs or Turkey for life-sustaining aid in the name of a "brotherly muslim nation". The personal lives of the ruling Sharif family and the feudal Bhuttos are hardly the modicum of religious idyls, and the same discomfort applies to the Westernised Generals who are increasingly facing the wrath of the angry, long-bearded, armed, and madrasa-educated tribals. Today, it seems the ability of Pakistan's ruling elite to successfully play the patented double game has run its course. Not only have the radicalized masses (generously fanned by the elites in 'Olive Green' or Servants) refused to take orders, but far worse, they have turned on their begetters! Creations like the 'Taliban' which was a joint project between the wily politicians, amoral Generals, and unhinged clergy, simply refuse to take orders from their progenitor. The product i.e., Taliban, which was made for the export market, is getting unwantedly imported back to its original source.



edly imported back to its original source.

The elite finally realise that it cannot differentiate between "Good Taliban" and "Bad Taliban", for at the end of the day it is "Taliban", an unhinged outcome of affording extra generous space to religion in governance. Terrorism has gripped Pakistan with elements 'within', going rogue. Elites now sense that not only must they take on the terror elements directly (as they have done multiple times, still terrorism worsened), but it must also snuff out the oxygen that breeds and nurtures the terror industry i.e., religious insouciance and outreach, in every sphere of Pakistani reality.

Pakistani dispensation has come up with Operation Azm-i-Istehkam which seeks to eradicate terrorists, and religious extremism, and deradicalize society, in a holistic and comprehensive manner. It is easier said than done, given the deep-rooted grip of religiosity.

This refreshing acceptance (though time will tell if it is sincere or posturing) of religious overload needs to be unloaded.

For starters, it will diminish the role of Islamist political parties like Maulana Fazlur Rehman's Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F), or even the various militias and formations of sectarian denominations who have contributed to

the morass. Such parties have not only imported strains of alien Wahhabism or Salafism but have been instrumental in ensuring that the Pakistani 'establishment' goes slow on anti-terror operations in restive areas.

Caught between offering perfunctory platitudes towards the integrity of Pakistan and the safety of its citizens - they are also simultaneously offering mealy-mouthed suggestions to not partake in militaristic operations. They are truly caught between the devil and the blue sea, for their wishy-washy stand will neither endear them to the frustrated Pakistani Government (which they are no longer a part of the ruling coalition), nor to organisations like Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) who would want them to be bolder and indulge in plain-speak in favour of religious and radical bodies.

Nonetheless, these religious parties are mulling putting together an ostensible 'resistance movement' against Operation Azm-i-Istehkam, and they are unlikely to find too many partners to go along with them. Forces that are key to bailing out Pakistan economically from sure 'failed-state' status e.g., China, international

multilateral agencies (IMF, World Bank etc), Western Powers or even Arab Sheikhdoms are pitted against the agendas and outcomes of religious parties.

The so-called 'iron brother' Chinese have invested over \$62 billion in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridors (CPEC) and they cannot allow the religio-extremist Baluch insurgents to attack Chinese interests as part of their 'sacred' duties. Middle Eastern countries too have had their own trust with the likes of the Muslim Brotherhood and their offshoots from Egypt, Jordan, and Kuwait to Saudi Arabia, and have clamped down on the same. Now with the Taliban Government in Kabul thawing relations with outsiders and no longer surviving on Pakistani doles, Afghans also cock a snook at historical equations and madrasa-fed ranks from Pakistan. All this diminishes the relevance of religious parties in Pakistan and if the Pakistanis grasp the opportunity, they may just be able to overcome their history and instincts.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

## Balancing motivation and misuse in India's research landscape

BIJU DHARMAPALAN

A higher academic degree like a PhD is often considered a symbol of quality. PhD training emphasizes innovation and the ability to tackle complex problems. Graduates are expected to think independently, identify gaps in existing knowledge, and propose novel solutions, making them valuable assets in both academic and industry settings. The more PhD holders a country produces, the more productive a country will be. Countries with more PhD holders tend to produce more scientific publications and patents. This intellectual output can lead to technological advancements and improvements in various industries, driving innovation and economic growth.

Despite having the advantages of higher enrolments for the nation, the current system of regis-

tering for PhD as an escapism will not reap any benefits for the student or the country. Many students register for PhD as a stop-gap arrangement before their marriage, a permanent government job, or as a fashion to be called 'Dr.'. They never assess their motivation for pursuing a PhD degree. Are they passionate about the research topic? Or Have they reflected on their career goals? If the alignment is strong, it might justify pursuing a research degree that is highly demanding and time-consuming. The most successful PhD candidates are often driven by intrinsic motivations such as intellectual curiosity, passion for their field of study, and a desire to contribute new knowledge. These motivations sustain them through the challenges of research work. Recently, it has been observed that many scholars registering for PhD through national-



level competitive fellowships like CSIR, UGC etc, try to prolong their study for the sake of fellowship amount.

In many colleges in Tamil Nadu, college teachers work for a salary as low as Rs. 4000- 8000 per month. Qualifying for

a national test will at least provide a scholar with a decent salary for 3 to 5 years. The sole motive of the scholar is financial support. For some, the academic environment may provide a refuge from societal expectations of marriage, family responsibili-

ties, and other traditional roles. Unfortunately, even today, female students are not provided the freedom to make decisions. Our society gives a girl's marriage more importance than acquiring knowledge.

Earning a doctorate requires extensive study, self-sufficiency, and intellectual development, which are priceless assets to the community. Even in a highly literate society like Kerala, many women, even after getting a PhD degree, are forced to stick to societal norms and move away from active research. Many students with PhD degrees ultimately land in job sectors where their research has no role, like clerical jobs in government sectors, banks, or even as a school teacher, to cite a few.

To change people's minds, we must keep fighting for equal rights for women, spreading the word that education

should be accessible to everyone and dispelling myths about women's abilities and goals. It's essential for prospective PhD candidates to carefully consider their motivations and the potential impact of their research. Pursuing a PhD solely for recognition or prestige, without a genuine commitment to contribute meaningful research or knowledge, offers little benefit to society or the nation. People who do research for name sake are involved in many unethical practices, like outsourcing the work and outsourcing their thesis writing and paper writing to other agencies. Unfortunately, these people reach higher positions through their influence, overtaking genuine researchers who have toiled their lives for research.

(The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies; views are personal)

# Ultra-processed food ads misleading; fuelling obesity & diabetes in India: Report

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 5

Advertisements of unhealthy food products with high salt (HFSS) food products, or ultra-processed food (UPF) are misleading and are "seductive, luring, manipulative or deceptive" people to buy and in turn increasing the incidences of obesity and diabetes, according to a new report on Friday.

The report '50 Shades of Food Advertising', by the Nutrition Advocacy in Public Interest (NAPI), is based on an observational study of the appeal in 50 advertisements of food products that have appeared in popular English and Hindi newspapers available in Delhi and also

took note of some of the ads that appeared in TV commercials during cricket games or few on social media.

It calls upon the government to amend existing regulations to end these misleading ads.

The report comes as India is facing persistent undernutrition among children under five, and a rising trend of obesity and diabetes among grown-ups.

The recent ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition (NIN)'s dietary guidelines for Indians reveals that more than 10 per cent of 5-19-year-olds are pre-diabetic. This is when the government has set a target to halt the rise of obesity and diabetes



among Indians by 2025.

The report provides evidence that food and drink products under the category of unhealthy/HFSS or UPFs "are being advertised by using different appeals

such as evoking emotional feelings, manipulating the use of experts, appropriating benefits of real fruits, using celebrities to add value to the brand, projecting as healthy, etc".

It noted that these advertisements mislead on many counts; and also provide information on the gaps in the existing legislations, such as the FSS Act of 2006, the Cable TV Networks Regulation Act, 1994 and Rules, the Consumer Protection Act of 2019, and the Norms of Journalistic Conduct 2022.

Arun Gupta, a pediatrician and NAPI convenor, called on the government to implement measures for "each advertisement to disclose in bold letters the amount of nutrient of concern per 100 gram/ml".

It would be in the best interest of the people's health that a public health 'Bill' is proposed in the Parliament to halt obesity.

If we fail to halt the rising trend, it will only increase the disease and economic burden, year by year on the individual family and the health system as a whole," he added.

NAPI also recommends stopping any food advertisements if the food product is HFSS and UPF.

The report also provides an objective method of identifying what is misleading food advertising to help authorities like the FSSAI make a quick decision to stop it, said Nupur Bidla, a member of NAPI and a social scientist, adding that the delay in banning the ads helps "companies to enjoy the 'freedom' to advertise and make money while public health may suffer".

## NITI Aayog launches 'Sampoornata Abhiyan' focused on health, nutrition, agriculture

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 5

The NITI Aayog on Thursday launched the 'Sampoornata Abhiyan' with a focus on themes such as health, nutrition, agriculture, social development, and education. This comprehensive three-month campaign, running from July 4 to September 30, aims to achieve 100 per cent saturation of 12 key social sector indicators across all Aspirational Districts and Blocks.

As part of the 3-month long campaign, district and block officials, along with elected people's representatives, will organise awareness activities like Gram Sabhas, Nukkad Natak, Paushtik Aahar Mela, Health camps, ICDS camps, Awareness Marches and Rallies, Exhibitions,

Poster making and Poem competitions around 12 themes identified for 100 per cent saturation across all Aspirational Blocks and Districts.

NITI Aayog said that the officials and Young Professionals are "participating in the launch events in person across 300 districts to guide and support local governance in organising and executing the campaign effectively". It also mentioned that the collaboration with relevant Central Ministries and Departments, and state and Union Territory governments will not only bolster efforts to achieve the campaign's objectives but also "strengthen the spirit of Competitive and Cooperative Federalism in ensuring socio-economic development in the hinterland".

## Study shows how cancer evades chemotherapy, finds mechanism to reverse

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 5

An international team of researchers from the UK and China has shown how cancer builds up resistance to chemotherapy -- one of the biggest challenges in the treatment of the deadly disease.

Using a mice study, the early-stage research, led by The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR), London, and Sun Yat-sen University, China showed that Stiripentol -- a drug currently used to treat epilepsy -- can help reverse cancer's resistance to chemotherapy, which will help shrink tumours and prolong survival.

In the study, the team zeroed in on lactate -- the product that builds up as cancer cells convert nutrients to energy -- which was found to be most abundant in chemotherapy-resistant



cancer tissues.

For the study, published in the journal Nature, the researchers examined tissue from 24 patients with stomach cancer, where 15 of the cancers were resistant to chemotherapy and the tumours had continued to grow.

Stiripentol and chemotherapy reduced the

size of tumours -- for four weeks after treatment -- in mice with stomach cancer. These also survived for longer -- for more than 70 days.

In comparison, tumours in mice treated with chemotherapy alone shrunk for one week and started to grow again. With only chemotherapy, no mice survived for longer than

40 days after treatment.

Further, lactate was also found responsible for altering the structure of a key protein involved in DNA repair, called NBS1, and affecting its efficiency.

The researchers believe that lactate may be behind chemotherapy resistance in other cancers such as "pancreatic, lung and ovarian cancers".

"This extremely promising research has uncovered a likely mechanism for how cancer evades chemotherapy," said Professor Axel Behrens, Professor of Stem Cell Biology at The Institute of Cancer Research.

"In our early-stage study, we've seen that you can prevent the build-up of lactate and make a tumour that was resistant to chemotherapy sensitive again -- the treatment continues to work," Axel added.

## Elderly Uzbekistan man undergoes robot-assisted surgery for rare colonic tumour

AGENCIES  
FARIDABAD, JULY 5

A 67-year-old man from Uzbekistan has been given a new lease of life after being successfully treated for his rare colonic tumour via robot-assisted surgery.

"This marks the world's first robot-assisted surgery for the condition," according to a statement from Amrita Hospital, Faridabad.

The patient was presented to doctors with a special condition where his liver and colon were positioned differently (situs inversus partial), and he had a malignant tumour in this mispositioned colon. Situs inversus partial is quite rare, with overall incidence (including both totalis and partial) being approximately one in 10,000 people.

The tumour was found



to be a rare variant of colonic malignancy. The tumour was obstructing the patient's large intestine, preventing him from eating solid foods and posing a risk of spread and complications. His symptoms included vomiting, inability to eat, weight loss, anaemia, and abdominal distension.

"Robot-assisted surgery

significantly enhances precision and accuracy during procedures through its advanced features. The operation was conducted using a console that provides a magnified, high-resolution 3D view of the surgical site, offering superior depth perception and detailed anatomical visuals," said Abhishek Agrawal, Robotic GI

Oncosurgery Consultant, Department of Gastrointestinal Surgery, Amrita Hospital, Faridabad, who led the six-hours long surgery.

By the third day, the patient was able to resume a normal diet and was discharged just a week after the procedure, the hospital said.

"Based on the final biopsy report, the patient will need to undergo chemotherapy. After completing the treatment, he will only require routine blood tests and imaging for surveillance to detect any early recurrence and receive timely treatment. They can continue with their normal life without the need for long-term medications or restrictions," said Saleem Naik, Senior Consultant, GI Surgery, Amrita Hospital, Faridabad.

## Zika Virus: Reports of 41 samples of pregnant women awaited, PMC to meet with hospitals on Monday

AGENCIES  
PUNE, JULY 5

Even as no new cases of Zika virus infection were reported by the Pune Municipal Corporation's health department today, officials said they were awaiting results of a total of 41 samples of pregnant women that have been collected from areas where the Zika virus infection cases were detected. These have now been sent to the National Institute of Virology. So far two pregnant women have tested positive for the infection and are asymptomatic. A total of six cases have been reported so far by civic health authorities.

"We have also conducted surveillance activities at more than 10-12 large hospitals in Karve Nagar,



Warje, Hadapsar and Mundhwa areas to check for mosquito breeding sites and planned a meeting with doctors of major hospitals on Monday," Dr Kalpana Baliwani, Acting chief medical officer, Pune Municipal Corporation said. "As Zika is associated with microcephaly and neurological consequences in the foetus of the affected pregnant lady, we want to alert the clinicians for

close monitoring", Dr Baliwani added. In their advisory the centre has directed states to instruct the health facilities in the affected areas or those catering to cases from affected areas to screen the pregnant women for Zika virus infection and monitor the growth of the foetus of expecting mothers who have tested positive for Zika.

As per the Central Government Guidelines,

states have been instructed to advise health facilities/hospitals to identify a nodal officer to monitor and act to keep the premises Aedes mosquito-free. "Accordingly, we have stepped up surveillance activities across Zones 3 and 4 that include areas of Warje, Karve Nagar, Sinhadgad road and Hadapsar, Wanowrie, Mudhwa and others," Dr Rajesh Dighe, Assistant chief medical officer, PMC said. Earlier this week, as part of the surveillance activities, breeding sites were detected at some hospitals and large cooperative housing societies. "We have issued notices," Dr Dighe added. According to senior officials with PMC, the surveillance activity includes a thorough check of the hospitals from terrace to

basement.

"At many places, hospitals have appointed an agency to undertake pre-monsoon work, hence only a few mosquito breeding sites were found," the officials said. On Friday, the insect control team of PMC conducted surveillance activities across 7791 homes at Erandwane- Warje, Mundhwa-Hadapsar, Dahanukar colony- Kothrud . "PMC health teams identified mosquito breeding sites at 246 homes and at least 82 notices have been issued. A fine of Rs 66,800 has been levied from the defaulters.

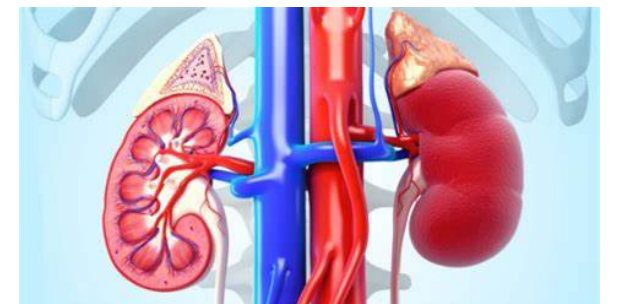
Dr Dighe has appealed citizens to empty water containers, air coolers and ensure that there are no mosquito breeding sites within their homes.

## 4.9 per cent Indian kids, adolescents suffer from impaired kidney function: Study

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 5

About 4.9 per cent of children and adolescents in India suffer from impaired kidney function, according to the first nationwide survey released on Thursday. Impaired kidney function causes kidney damage to worsen over several months or years -- chronic kidney disease (CKD). It is a significant public health problem, and its burden in children and adolescents in India is not well described.

The new study by researchers from All India Institute of Medical Sciences - Bathinda and Vijaypur, and The George Institute for Global Health India, is based on the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS) of 24,690 children and adolescents aged 5-19 years between 2016 and 18. The results



showed 4.9 per cent of children and adolescents, which amounts to around 49,000 cases per million population suffer from impaired kidney function.

The "key predictors include age, rural residence, lower maternal education, and stunting. Addressing these factors is crucial for improving child health outcomes", said Prof. Vivekanand Jha, Executive Director, The George Institute for Global Health, India, in a post on X. The prevalence of impaired kidney func-

tion was found more in males and rural areas.

Further, Andhra Pradesh, followed by Telangana and West Bengal showed the highest cases, while the prevalence was lowest in Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, and Kerala.

"The high prevalence of impaired kidney function among Indian children and adolescents underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions and policies to address this growing public health issue.

## Novel method to counter chemotherapy resistance in pancreatic cancer developed

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 5

Stanford researchers have developed a new method to reverse pancreatic cancer's resistance to chemotherapy, an advance that may pave the way for new treatments.

Pancreatic cancer is often aggressive and difficult to treat and also has a poor survival rate, marred by a lack of distinct symp-

toms and screening tools needed to detect the disease in its initial stages.

In the study, published in the journal Nature Materials, the researchers revealed that the resistance is related to both the physical stiffness of the tissue around the cancerous cells.

"We found that stiffer tissue can cause pancreatic cancer cells to become resistant to chemothera-

py, while softer tissue made the cancer cells more responsive to chemotherapy," said Sarah Heilshorn, Professor of Materials Science and Engineering at Stanford University.

The finding may lead to "future drug development to help overcome chemoresistance, which is a major clinical challenge in pancreatic cancer",



she added.

The team focused their efforts on pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma -- a cancer that starts in the cells lining the ducts of the pancreas and accounts for 90 per cent of pancreatic cancer cases.

In these cancers, the network of materials between the cells, known as the extracellular matrix, becomes

notably stiffer. This stiff material acts as a physical block, stopping chemotherapy drugs from reaching cancerous cells, said researchers, noting treatments based on this idea have not been effective in humans.

In the study, the team developed a designer matrix system -- where three-dimensional materials mimicked the biochemical and mechanical prop-

erties of both pancreatic tumours and healthy pancreas tissues. Using their new system, the researchers selectively activated certain types of receptors in the cancerous cells and adjusted the chemical and physical properties of their designer matrix.

In addition to a physically stiff extracellular matrix, the team found that high amounts of hyaluronic acid -- a polymer

that stiffens the extracellular matrix and interacts with cells through a receptor called CD44 -- make pancreatic cancer resistant to chemotherapy. The researchers found that they could reverse this development by moving the cells to a softer matrix (even if it was still high in hyaluronic acid) or blocking the CD44 receptor (even if the matrix was still stiff).







# India sees 501 deals worth \$21.4 bn in April-June quarter, political stability a booster

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 5

India saw 501 deals valued at \$21.4 billion in the April-June period -- highest quarterly volumes since Q2 2022 -- as an anticipated policy clarity from the upcoming budget and political stability is expected to boost investor confidence and drive deal activity in the next six months, a report showed on Friday. Mergers and acquisitions (M&A) and private equity (PE) deals together stood at 467, valued at \$14.9 billion which is a 9 per cent increase in volumes, according to the Grant Thornton Bharat

Dealtracker. This surge was largely due to four high-value deals by the Adani Group in the industrial materials and ports sectors, which accounted for 52 per cent of the total M&A values for the quarter. The second quarter of FY25 featured one billion-dollar deal and 30 high-value deals (over \$100 million), marking a 58 per cent increase in high-value deals compared to the previous quarter, which had only 19 high-value deals including three billion-dollar deals. "The quarter witnessed robust private equity activity and large domestic



Traditional sectors like pharma and manufacturing also saw strong deal flows, collectively contributing nearly half of the deal values. "With the government entering its third term after the recent elections,

the industry anticipates policy continuity, which should positively drive the deal activity," Vijetha added. Indian corporates are increasingly investing domestically, reflecting strong confidence in the local investment climate. M&A activity in Q2 2024 saw 132 deals worth \$6.2 billion, marking a slight increase in volumes. In Q2 2024, the PE landscape saw significant growth, recording 335 deals totaling \$8.7 billion, marking a 9 per cent increase in volume and a notable 55 per cent increase in value since Q1 2024.

There were 20 qualified institutional placements (QIPs) at \$2.3 billion, showing an increase in both values and volumes over the previous quarter, with volumes marking the second highest since Q4 2017, the report mentioned. As for IPOs, there were 14 IPOs worth \$4.2 billion in Q2 2024, representing the highest quarterly IPO size since Q2 2022. Retail and consumer sector emerged as a dominant force in deal activity despite a 7 per cent decrease in volumes, showcasing an 18 per cent increase in values over Q1 2024.

## Securitisation volumes in India reach Rs 45,000 crore in Q1 FY25: Report

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 5

The overall securitisation volumes stood at Rs 45,000 crore in the first quarter of the current fiscal (FY25), down 20 per cent from the same period last year, largely due to the exit of a large housing finance company (HFC) in 2023, a report showed on Friday. Excluding the HFC, the securitisation volumes remained largely flat on a year-on-year (YoY) basis, according to the ICRA. It estimated securitisation volumes to pick up in the subsequent quarters and cross Rs 2 trillion for FY2025. Securitisation is a process whereby one lender bunches up a loan or a

set of loans and passes on the future receivables to another financier against an upfront payment. "The securitisation market volumes have not seen a major uptick in Q1 as overall disbursement growth in the NBFC sector has moderated, especially in the unsecured lending space, following the cautionary advice of the Reserve Bank of India," said Abhishek Dafra, SVP and Group Head, Structured Finance Ratings, at ICRA. However, the securitisation market continues to widen with new originators, even from the banking sector, raising funds through this route in the quarter, which bodes well for the industry's long-term growth.

# India prepares for 5G/6G technology; to host Hackathon in September

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 5

Taking a lead to usher in the next generation of telecom services, India will host the "5G/6G and Emerging Technologies Hackathon" in September alongside the "WTA24 (World Telecommunication Standardisation Assembly) Outreach Sessions".



The initiative aims to bring together innovators, industry leaders, and academics to explore the frontiers of next-generation telecom technologies, an official statement said. The prestigious WTA2024 will be held in New Delhi from 15th - 24th Oct 2024, marking a significant step towards the advancements of 5G and 6G networks. It also marks the country's growing importance in the global technology landscape. The WTA is a quadrennial event and serves as the governing conference of the ITU (International Telecommunication Union) Stan-

dardisation Sector (ITU-T). It is one of the three world conferences organized by the International Telecommunication Union, an entity within the United Nations system. This event plays a pivotal role in setting global telecommunication standards, making India's hosting of the WTA a significant milestone. The WTA 2024, will be accompanied by other related initiatives such as the ITU Kaleidoscope conference, ITU exhibitions, Network of Women and AI for Good in October this year to enrich the discourse and promote inclu-

sivity in the sector. Also, a Hackathon prior to the event will further provide a platform to developers to showcase different solutions. Additionally, the DoT will organize the Indian Mobile Congress (IMC 2024), scheduled from October 15 to 19, 2024. This year, the focus will be on Artificial Intelligence, Quantum technology and Circular Economy along with spotlight on 6G, 5G use-case showcase, cloud and edge computing, IoT, semiconductors, cybersecurity, green tech, satcom and electronics manufacturing, the DoT said in the

statement. Aligned with the Asia's largest technology forum, the Indian Mobile Congress (IMC) 2024, the hackathon will serve as a hub for cutting-edge innovation in telecommunications. Focused on advancing technologies like 5G and 6G, the event will attract participants from industry, academia, and startups, all aiming to showcase pioneering solutions. During the 30-hour event, held in dedicated 5G labs in Delhi, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru, participants will collaborate in a dynamic environment to develop their ideas. The hackathon aims to foster creativity and teamwork, culminating in the selection of winners who will present their innovations at IMC 2024. The Telecom Center of Excellence (TCoE) has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) aimed at soliciting applications for organising "5G/6G Hackathon" and "WTA Awareness Sessions", the DoT stated.

# Mobile tariff hike: Cong blames govt for Rs 34,824 cr burden on public

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 5

The Congress on Friday accused the government for allowing private telecom operators - Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea, to increase mobile tariffs within days after the general elections were over, a move that would put a financial burden of whopping Rs 34,824 crore per annum on the general public. Two things stand out - Firstly, the date of announcement of increase of tariffs, appears to be clearly in consultation with each other by the three Private Cell Phone Companies. Secondly, the date of effective implementation of increased tariffs is the same, Congress General Secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala said addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters here. Effective 03.07.2024, the three private cellphone companies have increased their tariffs by an average of 15 per cent.



These three private cellphone companies have a market share of 91.6 per cent, or 109 Crore cellphone users out of a total of 119 Crore cellphone users as on 31.12.2023, he added. Accusing the Government of pursuing the same "Crony Capitalism" the Congress said that the Modi government must answer that how can private cellphone companies be permitted to "unilaterally increase" Cellphone tariffs by Rs 34,824 crore annually without any oversight and regulation by the Government. "Has the Modi Government and TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of

India) abdicated their duty and responsibility towards 109 Crore Cellphone users?" Surjewala said. Last week the mobile tariffs were increased by an average of 15 per cent first by Jio, followed by Airtel and Vodafone Idea. The government or TRAI should have conducted a study on need of CAPEX or impact on profitability by purchase of spectrum through auction after taking into account the previous set of concessions on AGR payable under Telecom Policy, 1999 or deferring of "Spectrum Auction Installments" by Modi 2.0 on 20.11.2019 or other related

factors, he said. Cell phone market in India is an 'Oligopoly' with Reliance Jio having maximum 48 Crore Users, Airtel 39 Crore Users and Vodafone Idea has 22.37 Crore. Out of these, Jio and Airtel have a customer base of 87 Crore making them a virtual "Duopoly". Effective 3rd July 2024 (announced on 27th June, 2024), Reliance Jio has increased the tariff ranging from 12 per cent to 27 per cent (its most popular and affordable plan was increased by 22 per cent i.e. Rs. 155 to Rs. 189 per month) The average increase is 20 per cent. Similarly, effective 3rd July 2024 (announced on 28th June, 2024) Airtel has increased its charges from 11 per cent to 21 per cent. The average increase is 15 per cent. Following them, effective 4th July 2024 (announced on 29th June, 2024), Vodafone Idea also increased tariffs from 10 per cent to 24 per cent. The average increase is 16 per cent.

# Conformity to BIS Mandatory for Stainless Steel & Aluminium Utensils

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JUL 5

In a move that would enhance kitchen safety and quality while using stainless steel and aluminium utensils, the Government has mandated conformity to the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for these utensils. According to the Quality Control Order issued by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in March this year, the ISI mark would be compulsory for such utensils. Non-compliance is "punishable", emphasising the government's

commitment to consumer safety and product integrity, an official statement said. The BIS's stringent standards for stainless steel and aluminium utensils represent a significant step towards ensuring that kitchenware used in homes and professional settings across India meets the highest safety and quality criteria. By implementing rigorous testing and certification processes, the BIS helps protect consumers from substandard products and ensures that utensils are both safe to use and built to last. Recently, the BIS has developed a range of

standards covering essential kitchen items. These standards reflect the BIS's commitment to ensuring that all kitchen utensils meet stringent criteria and adhere to the quality and safety benchmarks. By introducing these standards, the BIS aims to uphold cultural diversity in culinary practices while promoting superior product performance and consumer safety. Stainless steel utensils have long been favoured in kitchens worldwide for their durability, versatility, and sleek appearance. Comprising an alloy of steel with chromium and other metals such as nickel, molybdenum,



and manganese, stainless steel is renowned for its enhanced corrosion resistance and robust mechanical properties. The BIS has codified these attributes in the Indian Standard IS 14756:2022, which specifies the requirements for

various types of utensils used in cooking, serving, dining, and storage. The IS 14756:2022 standard encompasses -- Ensuring the safe composition of materials used in manufacturing; Providing uniformity and practicality in utensil design; Mandat-

ing high-quality craftsmanship and aesthetic appeal; Including tests like the staining test, mechanical shock test, thermal shock test, dry heat test, coating thickness test, nominal capacity test, flame stability test, and specific tests for utensils with tempered glass lids. Whereas for the aluminium utensils, which are another cornerstone of both household and professional kitchens, valued for their lightweight nature, excellent heat conductivity, affordability, and durability. The BIS has developed the Indian Standard IS 1660:2024, which outlines the specifications for

wrought and cast aluminium utensils up to 30 litres in capacity including hard anodized and non-stick unreinforced plastic coating. This standard ensures that aluminium utensils meet the highest material quality and performance standards. Similar to stainless steel utensils, aluminium utensils are also subjected to the mandatory certification as per the Quality Control Order dated of March this year. This ensures that no person can manufacture, import, sell, distribute, store, hire, lease, or exhibit for sale any aluminium utensils that do not meet the BIS standards and bear the BIS

Standard Mark. Violations of this mandate are subject to legal penalties, reinforcing the importance of compliance in safeguarding public health and maintaining trust in kitchenware products. These measures enhance consumer confidence and encourage manufacturers to adhere to best practices in production, leading to overall improvements in the industry. The BIS Standard Mark serves as a reliable indicator of quality, guiding consumers in making informed choices and fostering a culture of excellence and safety in kitchenware, the statement said.

## Women entrepreneurs get shot in the arm with more avenues for finance

AGENCIES  
Mumbai, July 5

Financing Women Collaborative (FWC), an initiative of Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) on Friday announced new collaborations to support women entrepreneurs by strengthening their access to finance at a workshop held here. As part of the workshop, Anna Roy, Mission Director, WEP and Principal Economic Adviser, NITI Aayog, launched several initiatives. Key highlights included the announcement of a partnership between MAVIM and MSC under

FWC to improve access to finance through alternative credit rating mechanisms and work with banks to offer more tailored products for women entrepreneurs in Maharashtra. An MoU exchange between WEP and GroW Network founded by AfD, SIDBI, and Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation; launch of the "Seher" program by TU CIBIL and launch of the Shine program in partnership with CreditEnable to strengthen the credit readiness of women-led enterprises were other initiatives announced to benefit women entrepreneurs. Additionally, SEWA Bank's commitment to reaching out

to more women entrepreneurs as a member of FWC was also announced. The event included an engaging session exploring "Perspectives on encouraging banks to finance women beyond SHG groups" and a panel discussion titled "Accelerating women's access to finance: Unlocking the potential of the women-led economy for achieving Vision 2047." The meeting was organised by WEP in partnership with TransUnion CIBIL (TU CIBIL) and MicroSave Consulting (MSC). Key dignitaries included senior officials from NITI Aayog, RBI, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of MSME, SIDBI, public-sector

banks, private-sector financial institutions, CSOs/NGOs, and women entrepreneurs who attended the workshop. WEP, incubated in NITI Aayog in 2018 as an aggregator platform, transitioned into a public-private partnership in 2022. WEP aims to strengthen India's women entrepreneurship ecosystem. It provides a forum for all ecosystem stakeholders across government, business, philanthropy, and civil society to collaborate, converge, and align their initiatives towards scalable, sustainable and effective programs, enabling a larger impact for women entrepreneurs.

## Centre notifies new Telecommunications Act provisions, focuses on spectrum utilisation

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, JULY 7

The government on Friday notified another set of sections of the Telecommunications Act 2023, that came into effect with immediate effect. One major aspect that is being covered in the latest notification is the focus of the Central government on increasing efficiency in spectrum utilisation and various modes of achieving the same like second-

ary assignment, sharing/trading etc, the Ministry of Communications said in a statement. The government issued a notification for enforcing Sections 6-8, 48 and 59(b) of the Telecommunications Act. 2023 with immediate effect. The salient features of the sections that have been brought into force include optimal utilisation of spectrum. "The Act provides a legal framework for effi-

cient utilisation of scarce spectrum through processes such as secondary assignment, sharing, trading, leasing and surrender of spectrum," the ministry said. It also enables the utilisation of spectrum in a flexible, liberalised and technologically neutral manner, along with empowering the government to establish an enforcement and monitoring mechanism for the purpose.

Enter gen-next: New look India start their journey without Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma against Zimbabwe

AGENCIES HARARE, JULY 5 A new-look Indian T20 team would embark on a journey of self-discovery without their constant talismans, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, hoping to unearth their mainstays for the future in a five-match series against Zimbabwe starting here on Saturday.

Two young men, who are lined for debut could be Punjab's Abhishek Sharma, who had a stupendous IPL for Sunrisers Hyderabad and the young Assamese lad Rryan Parag, who has given ample demonstration of his capabilities as a competent T20 batter. Both of them tick all the boxes for this format.

Zimbabwe certainly isn't the most formidable opposition but in T20 format, the gulf between sides is comparatively lesser than the other two traditional forms of the game. The hosts, led by the gutsy Sikandar Raza, who played for Punjab Kings in the IPL recently, could prove to be a handful on nippy afternoons at the Harare Sports Club where the ball will jag around during the afternoon starts.



There won't be too many vacancies in the playing eleven. From now till the 2026 T20 World Cup in India, the national team will play 34 games in the shortest format. While skipper Gill is expected to open, one needs to see whether his best friend Abhishek gets his maiden India cap or the seasoned CSK skipper and captain of the Asian Games

gold medal-winning team Ruturaj Gaikwad ends up being the chosen one. In case Abhishek opens, Gaikwad could come in at number three or swap positions with the Punjab southpaw. Parag's chances of a debut are brighter compared to Abhishek as he can bat at num in the first match, a slot he made his own for the Royals. Rinku Singh, the designated finisher of the Indian T20 team for years to come, is expected to arrive at number five in this new look line-up while one among Jitesh Sharma or Dhruv Jurel will bat at number six while donning the big gloves. If one looks at selection pattern, Jurel has been the second keeper behind

Sanju Samson for this series and Jitesh was a late entrant because of the unavailability of the World Cup squad members. Hence Jurel, who made an impressive Test debut against England is likely play in the first two games before Samson arrives. In the bowling department, Avesh Khan and Khaleel Ahmed, the two standbys during the T20 World Cup are certainties and Mukesh Kumar, who is a very steady death bowler could be the third seamer pipping Harshit Rana, who is a better slogger with the willow. Washington Sundar with his all-round abilities will hold his place till Dube arrives while leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi is expected to play all games.

Squads India (first 2 games): Shubman Gill ©, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Abhishek Sharma, Rinku Singh, Dhruv Jurel (wk), Rryan Parag, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Avesh Khan, Khaleel Ahmed, Mukesh Kumar, Tushar Deshpande, Sai Sudharan, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Harshit Rana. Zimbabwe: Sikandar Raza (captain), Faraz Akram, Brian Bennett, Johnathan Campbell, Tendai Chatara, Luke Jongwe, Innocent Kaia, Clive Madande, Wessly Madhevere, Tadiwanashe Marumani, Wellington Masakadza, Brandon Mavuta, Blessing Muzarabani, Dion Myers, Antum Naqvi, Richard Ngarava, Milton Shumba.

Jr Women, Men North Zone Hockey: Haryana, Delhi win their matches on Day 5

AGENCIES JHANSI (UTTAR PRADESH), JULY 5 Hockey Haryana and Delhi Hockey in their respective women's fixtures while Hockey Haryana emerged victorious in the men's fixtures on Day 5 of the 2nd Hockey India Junior Women and Men North Zone Championship 2024 held here on Friday.



Delhi beat Uttarakhand The second women's fixture of the day saw Delhi Hockey defeat Hockey Uttarakhand 6-3. Despite trailing early in the first quarter, Delhi secured the victory with goals from Nisha (33', 50'), Nishu Rana (7'), Subham (15'), Sunaina (27'), and Anshika (36'). Raeen Kehkasha Ali (4', 57') and Aarti (48') were the scorers for Hockey Uttarakhand. Hockey Haryana down Delhi Hockey In a crucial men's quarter, Hockey Haryana defeated Delhi Hockey

8-3. Sunil (17', 21', 45') and Vinay (7', 44') led the attack for Haryana along with goals from Rohit (16'), Kuldeep (41') and Happy (51'). Delhi Hockey's late thrust saw goals from Rahul (51'), Naitik Rana (5') and Captain Afridi (59'). In a late evening encounter on Thursday, Hockey Chandigarh routed Hockey Punjab 2-0. Gurjeet Singh (18') gave Hockey Punjab the lead in the second quarter, and Misbah Khan (44') doubled it soon after to complete the victory.

Atiqa Mir, 9, only Asian karter shortlisted for Iron Dames new Young Talents Initiative

AGENCIES NEW DELHI, JULY 5



Atiqa Mir, the 9-year-old racing sensation who is the fastest Indian girl on four-wheels, has been shortlisted for the first-ever selection process of the cult Switzerland-based all-women motorsports team Iron Dames's new Young Talents initiative. The initiative aims to identify and develop young female kart racers between the ages of eight and 13, who dream of a career in motorsport. The date for the first selection round has been fixed for July 29-30 in Franciacorta, Italy. Atiqa is the only Asian karter and also the youngest to be shortlisted among 11 girls from all around the world. The Iron Dames achieved historic victories and breakthroughs at the pinnacle of World Endurance Racing, including becoming the first all-female team to win a race in the FIA World Endur-

ance Championship in 2023. The Young Talents initiative will represent the next generation of female racing stars from their stables. "I'm truly honoured to be shortlisted for the Iron Dames Young Talent selection process. It motivates me further to perform

and improve my skills as a driver. I will work hard and prepare myself better than ever to come out on top in the selections and make India proud," said Atiqa. Atiqa was selected from a long list of applicants from all over the world who were shortlisted

based on various parameters. Each entry was meticulously reviewed by the Iron Dames detection cell, which assessed the candidates based on their passion, determination, motorsport background, and the strength of their career aspirations. The selected participants represent a diverse range of nationalities, reflecting the global reach and inclusive spirit of the Iron Dames project. All the shortlisted candidates will be evaluated through rigorous scouting events, which include parameters like their driving skills, commitment, work ethic, and ability to reflect the Iron Dames' values and attitude. "Atiqa is a regular participant in our MECO FMSCI National Karting Championship -- Rotax Max. We congratulate her on this achievement and wish her the very best for the selection rounds," said V.S. Shrikant, Deputy Sec-

retary General of the Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India. The evaluation will be conducted with the support of experts from the Italy-based PREMA Racing motorsport team. Exceptional talents discovered through this process will have the opportunity to join the Iron Dames family, benefiting from personalized development programmes, mentorship from seasoned motorsport professionals, and access to top-tier training facilities. Atiqa is the reigning IAME UAE National Vice-Champion and also has multiple victories and titles to her name in different parts of the world. Atiqa recently competed in the MECO RMC Indian National Karting Championship and finished Runner-up in Round 1. Atiqa will be in India again this weekend driving for MSPORT in Round 2 at MECO Kartopia Track in Bengaluru.

1st T20I: Jemimah's unbeaten fifty goes in vain as India Women lose to South Africa by 12 runs

AGENCIES CHENNAI, JULY 5

After dominating the ODI series and one-off Test, the Indian women's cricket team went down to South Africa by 12 runs in the first T20I of the three-match series at the M.A Chidambaram Stadium here on Friday. In a low-scoring encounter, South Africa rode on half-centuries by Tazmin Brits (81 off 56 balls) and Marizanne Kapp (57 off 33 balls) to post 189/4 in 20 overs. The Indian women tried to stem the run flow with twin-wicket hauls each by Pooja Vastrakar (2-23) and Radha Yadav (2-40). However, chasing 190, the Indians fell short narrowly despite Jemimah Rodrigues hammering 53 not out off 30 balls towards the end of the innings. India Women could manage only 177/4 in 20 overs to fall short by 12 runs. Electing to field first, the Indian team struggled for the first breakthrough as South Africa skipper Laura Wolvaardt (33, 22b, 4x3, 6x2) and Tazmin Brits raised 50 runs for the opening wicket partnership. Radha Yadav broke the partnership when she



got a slower one through the defenses of Wolvaardt, who played across the line and had her stumps disturbed. Brits and Kapp then came together for a 96-run partnership for the second wicket, taking the score

into three figures. They were also helped by the Indians dropping a few chances. Brits completed her half-century off 40 balls, hitting seven boundaries and one six. Kapp also followed suit soon, complet-

ing her fifty off 30 balls, studded with eight boundaries and one six. Kapp was the next to fall, claimed by Radha Yadav when she had the former South Africa captain slicing one to Asha Sobhana at short-third. Chloe Tryon (12) and Brits added 38 runs for the third wicket as South Africa posted a challenging 189/4. In reply, the Indians got off to a good start with the in-form Shafali Verma and Smriti Mandhana raising 56 runs for the first wicket in the Power-play. Shafali (18 off 14 balls) was out in the last over of the Power-play, caught by keeper Jafta off Ayabonga Khaka. Mandhana scored 46 off 30 balls (4x7, 6x2) while skipper Harmanpreet struck 35 off 29 balls after Dayalan Hemalatha could manage only 14 off 17 balls as the Indian team struggled to keep pace with the mounting run rate. Jemimah Rodrigues blasted seven boundaries and one six as she shored up the scoring rate, completing her half-century off 29 balls. She and Harmanpreet added 90 runs for the fourth wicket partnership, but that did not prove enough in the end. The

Indians needed 38 runs from the last 12 deliveries and Jemimah struck Khaka for successive boundaries off the first two balls. She took a single off the next ball as Khaka sprays it wide and Harmanpreet also could score a single off the next delivery. A double followed by a six by Jemimah reduced the target to 21 off the last six balls, as 16 came off the penultimate over. Harmanpreet struck a four off the first ball by Nonkululeko Mlaba but the Indians could manage only eight runs off the over as their skipper got stumped off the final delivery of the match. Both teams combined produced 366 runs in this match, making it the highest match aggregate involving India vs South Africa women's T20Is. Brief scores: South Africa Women 189/4 in 20 overs (Tazmin Brits 81, Marizanne Kapp 57, Laura Wolvaardt 33; Pooja Vastrakar 2-23, Radha Yadav 2-40) beat India Women 177/4 in 20 overs (Jemimah Rodrigues 53 not out, Smriti Mandhana 46, Harmanpreet Kaur 35; Chloe Tryon 1-32, Nonkululeko Mlaba 1-32) by 12 runs.

Football: Punjab FC announce signing of midfielder Vinit Rai, goalkeeper Muheet

AGENCIES MOHALI, JULY 5



Punjab FC have announced the signing of midfielder Vinit Rai and goalkeeper Muheet Shabir ahead of the upcoming 2024-25 season. The Indian international Vinit Rai last played for Indian Super League (ISL) Cup winners Mumbai City FC while Muheet played for I-League side Real Kashmir FC. The 26-year-old Assam-born Vinit graduated from the Tata Football Academy before signing for Dempo FC in Goa. He was signed by Kerala Blasters ahead of the 2016-17 ISL season and then joined Odisha FC in 2017. He made 68 appearances for the team, scoring once and captaining the side. He later joined Mumbai City FC on loan in the 2022 season and was signed permanently in the next season. Vinit also has 11 caps for the National side, making his debut in 2018. Vinit will be instrumental in linking the play between the defense and the forward lines and possesses a wide range of passing. His experience will be vital for the Club's performance in their

second season in the ISL. Punjab FC became the first team to get promoted to the ISL from I-League. Muheet Shabir made 23 appearances for Real Kashmir in the I-League, keeping 12 clean sheets, the highest in the league. The 22-year-old from Srinagar started his career with the J&K Sports Council Football Academy and later signed for Kerala Blasters. He played for Downton Heroes FC in the 2023 Durand Cup and later for Real Kashmir in

the I-League. Speaking about the signing of a Technical Director of Punjab FC, Nikolaos Topoliatzis said, "We are happy to have signed both Vinit and Muheet to our side for the upcoming season. Vinit is a vastly experienced and dynamic midfielder who will add weight to the side. Muheet is an exciting young goalkeeper who will be a great asset to the team. Both players will have a vital role to play in the upcoming season."

# J&K Leading the Charge in Electricity Sector Reforms

## Addressing Challenges in Unmetered Areas

**JNEWS SERVICE**  
SRINAGAR, JULY 5

Jammu and Kashmir has emerged as a trailblazer in reforming its electricity sector, addressing long-standing legacy issues to a large extent to ensure enhanced service delivery to consumers. A significant milestone has been achieved through the modernization initiative, replacing obsolete meters with state-of-the-art smart meters.

These advanced technologies promise error-free billing, eliminating human errors and outdated manual systems. They also empower consumers by providing better control over electricity usage and budget management, alongside other benefits like streamlined billing and payment processes.

According to the latest data from the National Power Portal (NPP) managed by the Government of India, J&K has secured a place among the top seven states/UTs with over 500,000 smart meters successfully installed in consumer residences. Other states leading in smart meter installations according to the NPP include Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Assam. J&K has set a definitive plan to achieve 100% smart metering by 2026, with contracts already awarded. The UT has also excelled in deploying technologies such as AB cabling and HVDS systems, enhancing system reliability and ensuring public safety.

In the initial phase of reforms, 4,500 circuit kilometers (Ckm) of old wires in congested urban areas have been replaced with modern, fully insulated cables. Additionally,

under the ongoing RDSS scheme, approximately 30,000 Ckm of AB cable is being provided. Further, about 10,000 small HVDS transformers close to consumer installations have been installed in planned colonies, ensuring better voltage regulation and reducing the risk of electricity theft. An additional 20,000 HVDS transformers are scheduled to be added under the RDSS scheme in next fifteen months as per the feasibility. These initiatives have collectively improved system reliability and significantly enhanced consumer satisfaction.

Efforts to ensure affordable electricity tariffs for consumers have been equally prioritized, with substantial subsidies being provided by the government on the full cost tariff evaluated based on the current price of power procurement and other actual discom expenses approved by the JERC. Notably, J&K refrained from increasing electricity tariffs during the current financial year (2024-25). In the previous year (2023-24), while metered consumers faced a 15% tariff hike, the government offset this increase by withdrawing the 15% Electricity Duty on energy charges, resulting in no net rise in consumer bills.

However, with these initiatives government bears a huge burden in maintaining the financial stability of the sector, which is crucial for securing grants from the central government to upgrade power infrastructure. In monetary terms, it is estimated that for every unit sold to metered residential consumers, the government bears a loss of approximately Rs. 3.75, by providing subsidy.

At the same time, there is grave concern over the high number of unmetered areas still prevalent in Kashmir. These areas contribute to substantial energy losses, exacerbated by the fact that only 32% (318605 no.) of residential consumers are metered and are being billed as per actual metered consumption against the total residential consumer base of 982125. The remaining 68% of residential consumers (663520 no.) are charged on a flat-rate (fixed charges) basis.

The flat-rate bills have not accurately reflected actual usage, even during the era of electro-mechanical meters. In today's digital age, where energy measurements are precise from generation to consumption, ensuring accurate metering at the consumer end is paramount. It's noteworthy that Jammu and Kashmir remains the only Union Territory where consumers still receive electricity without meters.

DISCOMs in J&K are actively participating in the Government of India's RDSS scheme to improve power supply quality and reliability by strengthening supply infrastructure. Conditional financial assistance is provided under this scheme based on achieving specific targets to reduce Aggregate Technical & Commercial (AT&C) losses and bridge the gap between Average Cost of Supply (ACS) and Average Revenue Realized (ARR).

In addition to technological interventions, Distribution Companies (Discoms) have intensified enforcement activities to curb electricity theft and enforce regulations under the Electricity Act-2003. These efforts have significantly reduced Aggregate Technical & Commercial (AT&C) losses from 63% in 2021-22 to 41% in 2023-24. Progress has also been made in narrowing the gap between Aggregate Cost of Supply (ACS) and Aggregate Revenue Requirement (ARR).

To enhance efficiency and reduce losses in unmetered (Flat Rate) areas, several measures have been implemented. Distribution Companies (Discoms) are conducting calibrated load rationalization based on actual electricity usage and connected loads, ensuring compliance with Electricity Supply Code regulations to prevent inflated bills. Additionally, the Jammu and Kashmir Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC) has introduced flat-rate tariffs to encourage consumers to transition to metered billing.

This initiative aims to accurately reflect actual electricity consumption, thereby promoting fairness in billing practices. Furthermore, consumers in unmetered areas are receiving counseling and encouragement to opt for metered billing if they perceive flat-rate charges as disproportionate to their actual consumption. This approach empowers consumers to make informed decisions regarding their electricity usage, fostering transparency and efficiency in the billing process.

These initiatives underscore Jammu and Kashmir's commitment to enhancing the reliability, affordability, and transparency of its electricity supply. The government remains dedicated to modernizing infrastructure, reducing losses, and ensuring consumer satisfaction in the electricity sector.

# Department of School Education Poonch felicitates 36 meritorious students, 6 schools

**JNEWS SERVICE**  
POONCH, JULY 5

The Department of School Education Poonch felicitated the meritorious students of Class 10th and 12th of Government schools in a grand ceremony themed "Kabiliyat, Koshish, aur Kaamyabi" (Talent, Effort, and Achievement) held here. DDC Chairperson, Tazeem Akhter graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, while Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Yasin M Choudhary attended as Guest of Honor.

Joint Director School Education Mohammad Ashraf; Principal GDC Poonch Prof. Jasbir Singh and District Social Welfare Officer Vaqil Bhat were also in attendance.

The ceremony began with the lighting of the traditional lamp by the Chief Guest and Guest of Honor. Thirty-six meritorious students, one Principle and 5 Headmasters were felicitated for their outstanding performance in the board exams.

Students who secured the first position in the district were awarded laptops, while those who secured the second and third positions were given tabs. All other meritorious students received trophies



and certificates. In her address, the DDC Chairperson said, "I am thrilled to see so many talented students here. Your achievements are a testament to your hard work and dedication. Keep shining and make your district proud! Education is the key to unlocking the potential of our youth and we are committed to provide the best possible opportunities for their growth and development."

The DC congratulated the students on their outstanding performance, saying, "Your success is a reflection of the efforts of the teachers, parents, and the entire education system. We will continue

to work tirelessly to provide quality education and infrastructure to our students, empowering them to achieve their dreams."

Joint Director School Education Mohd Ashraf, in his address, said, "I am delighted to see the talented students of Poonch district being felicitated for their outstanding performance in the board exams. This ceremony is a testimony to the hard work and dedication of our students, teachers, and parents. We are committed to providing quality education and infrastructure to our students, and we will continue to support and encourage them to reach new heights. I

congratulate the students, teachers, and parents on this achievement and wish them all the best for their future endeavors."

Earlier, Chief Education Officer Bishambar Dass, in his welcome address, highlighted the achievements of the Education Department in the District. "We are committed to provide quality education and infrastructure to our students, to enable them to achieve their dreams", he said.

Narinder Mohan Suri presented the vote of thanks. Renowned singer, Ehsan Asgar, enthralled the audience with his mesmerizing songs.

The parents of the students were also present, beaming with pride, as their children received the awards.

Six schools, including one Higher Secondary School and five High Schools, also received certificates of appreciation and trophies for achieving 100% results in the board exams.

The Principals, ZEOs, and Headmasters of these schools were also present on the occasion.

The proceedings of the ceremony were conducted by Manjeet Kumar senior Lecturer.

# Internship program in Physics (NEP-2020) commences at Govt Polytechnic for Women Jammu



**JNEWS SERVICE**  
JAMMU, JULY 5

A 10 day and 60 hour internship Program for the students of Government College for Women Gandhi Nagar started here today in Government Polytechnic for Women Jammu.

The students undergoing B.Sc.(Hons) course under NEP 2020 in Physics in Government college for Women, Gandhi Nagar have enrolled for the program that focuses on skill enhancement based on Basic Electricity and Elec-

tronics, Electrical Wiring and Domestic appliances, Electrical Machine and switches etc. It will be conducted in 3 modules of 20 hrs. each (Total 60 hrs.)

The inaugural function was held today in the Conference hall of the institution. Er. Suket Gupta, Principal of the institution was the chief guest on the occasion. During an interaction, he welcomed the students and faculty for Govt College for Women, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu and exhorted upon the interns to work in coordination with the instructors/ faculty

to achieve the objectives of the internship as it will bridge the gap between the actual world of work and academics as envisaged in NEP 2020.

Er. Naresh Gupta, HOD&C and coordinator of the program, while interacting, deliberated upon conduct of such programs so as to bring the academia and skill development institution on platform for holistic development of the competencies of the students.

Prof. Prabhjeet Kour, HOD Physics Government College for Women

Gandhi Nagar, while interacting, thanked Principal Govt. Polytechnic for Women, Jammu for promptly agreeing to conduct the program for the benefit of the students.

Among those present on the occasion included Dr. Rawan Kumar, Associate Prof. Govt. College for Women, Dr. Iqbal Quasim Assistant Prof. Govt. College for Women, Prof. Rajinder Kumar, Assistant Prof Govt. College for women, faculty and staff of Department of Electronics & Communication Engineering.

# Day-long Camp for Specially-abled Citizens held at Chadoora, Budgam

**JNEWS SERVICE**  
BUDGAM, JULY 5

In a collaborative effort, the District Administration Budgam, Social Welfare Department, in collaboration with Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) today organised a daylong camp for specially-abled citizens at Chadoora, Budgam to streamline access and empower individuals with special abilities.

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Akshay Labroo, distributed hearing aids, wheelchairs, tricycles and other prosthetics among the eligible beneficiaries of the Sub-division Chadoora.

Speaking at the event, the DC emphasised the camp's objective towards empowering persons with special abilities.



The DC said this initiative aims to enhance mobility, improve the quality of life and foster independence among differently-abled individuals in the region.

During the distribution event, the DC emphasized the administration's commitment to ensuring the welfare and inclusion of all specially-abled members of society.

The DC said that the District Administration remains dedicated to orga-

nizing similar events in the future, ensuring the well-being and empowerment of Budgam's specially-abled community.

He further highlighted the ongoing efforts to identify and support more individuals requiring assistance and ensure that they receive the necessary prosthetics and aids to enhance their daily lives

On the occasion, District Social Welfare Officer Budgam said that these aids would empower

specially-abled citizens to access various government benefits more easily

The distribution of these aids is part of a broader initiative to promote social welfare and inclusivity of these people.

In the said camp, total 131 Aids & Assistive devices of different categories like Motorized Tricycle - 11, Wheelchair - 19, Hearing Aids - 60, Smart Phone-01, Sugamya Cane - 01, Braille kit - 05, ADL kit - 01, Crutches - 06, Walking stick - 09, CP Chair-08, Rollator-02 were distributed amongst 103 Beneficiaries.

Besides SDM chadoora, Principal Hr. Secondary school Chadoora, DSWO, (Junior Manager- Marketing) & (P&O) coordinator from ALIMCO and other concerned officials were also present on the occasion.

# DDC Pulwama visits CSIR-IIIM, Field Station Pulwama



**JNEWS SERVICE**  
PULWAMA, JULY 5

The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom today visited the Field Station Bonera, Pulwama of the CSIR - Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine and conducted a comprehensive review of the various activities and societal outreach programs being implemented at the station.

During his visit, Dr. Basharat interacted with the scientific and technological staff and toured different sectors of the station.

Dr. Shahid Rasool, Senior Scientist and Incharge of the Field Station, informed the DDC

that the station, spread over more than 200 acres, focuses on research, development, and technology development for region-specific medicinal, aromatic, nutraceutical and floricultural crops. These efforts aim at commercial-scale production, processing, post-harvest management, and value addition.

Known for its extensive fields of high-value aromatic crops such as Lavender, Rose, Rosemary, and Rose Scented Geranium, the station actively promotes their expansion across the region through various farmer-oriented and societal outreach initiatives under the Ministry of Science and Technology. Dr. Basharat emphasized the significant role

of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in shaping the developmental landscape of the country through its scientific and technological capabilities. He commended the scientists at CSIR-IIIM field station Pulwama for their contributions to regional development and affirmed his support for the successful execution of the station's programs and projects.

During his tour, the DDC visited the apiculture unit and distillation facility, where farmers' Lavender harvests were being processed for Lavender oil extraction. The Lavender production initiative provides employment opportunities for local women. The station distributes

Lavender to local farmers in the district and across the Union Territory. Currently, it offers training and capacity building to farmers, self-help groups, agri-entrepreneurs, researchers, and students in scientific methodologies through science and technology-led innovative industrial farming and processing practices.

Efforts also include the propagation of Tulip bulbs, aiming to achieve indigenous Tulip bulb availability and reduce dependence on imports.

The station focuses on training farmers and developing unique products like Lavender Honey, with efforts to secure a Geographical Indication (GI) tag for the honey.