

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 fever above 102°C
- Severe joint and muscle pain
- Severe headache
- Persistent vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Swelling face, legs or other parts of the body
- Redness on the face or chest

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

JINDRAH IMAGES

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Four terrorists, soldier killed in twin Kulgam encounters

JI NEWS SERVICE
KULGAM, JUL 6

Four terrorists and a soldier were killed in twin encounters that broke out between government forces and terrorists in the Modergam and Chinigam areas of south Kashmir's Kulgam district early Saturday.

An official informed the news agency that a joint team of Police, Army's 9 RR and CRPF launched a cordon and search operation based on specific information about the presence of terrorists in Modergam, Kulgam.

He said that as the joint teams of forces approached the suspected



spot, the hiding terrorists fired upon them, which was retaliated, triggering an encounter. "During the exchange of fire, one soldier was injured and evacuated to the hospital, where he succumbed to

his injuries. His identity is being ascertained," the official said, adding that the exchange of fire is ongoing in the area, where two to three terrorists are believed to be trapped.

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Wiping out terrorists in Jammu a matter of time: DGP Swain



JI NEWS SERVICE
DODA, JUL 6

Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) RR Swain Saturday said that with the determination and interoperabil-

ity of the security forces it is only a matter of time when the terrorists will be killed.

He said that with the support of people, J&K police will not allow

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We need to affirm and promote our cultural heritage: Lt Governor

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha inaugurated Musical Harmony event organised by Koshur Raag, in association with J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, at Srinagar today.

In his address, the Lt Governor called upon the people to celebrate diversity in art, culture and literary field, which is the source of India's greatness.

"Art and culture connect and inspire the society. It should be seen as a thread connecting the past with the future," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor impressed upon the artists to affirm and promote the



cultural heritage of Jammu Kashmir. It should be our resolve to make the price-less artistic heritage of J&K prosperous and elevate it to the global stage, he said.

He commended the Koshur Raag for its endeavours to promote Kashmiri cultural heritage through music and other

art forms.

"India's culture is rich and diverse and always guided the society to embrace and celebrate cultural roots to fulfill their dreams and aspirations", the Lt Governor said.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor felicitated

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Woman drowns, three injured as heavy rains lash Jammu



JI NEWS SERVICE
MENDHAR, JAMMU, JUL 6

A woman drowned, and three people were injured in separate incidents as heavy rains lashed parts of Jammu overnight, officials said on Saturday.

The deceased was identified as Rozi Kouser (30), they said.

Kouser's body was recovered from a stream in Keri Kangra in the Gursai area of Mendhar sub-division in Poonch district on Friday night, the officials said.

They said the cause of her death was not known immediately, but the area had witnessed heavy rains, and the woman might have slipped into the fast-flowing stream.

In another incident, three people were injured when their mud-house

collapsed due to heavy rains at village Hansu in the Kotliwala area of Udhampur district, the officials said.

Heavy rains lashed parts of the Jammu region overnight, with Jammu city recording the highest 69.4 mm of rainfall, followed by 57.4 mm in the Udhampur district.

Katra, the base camp for the pilgrims visiting Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, recorded 50.1 mm and Kathua district 53.6 mm of rainfall, the official said. The maximum temperature in Jammu was 30.9 degrees Celsius, which was 4.5 degrees below normal during this part of the season, the MeT spokesman said, adding that the minimum temperature was also 4.2 notches below normal at 21.6 degrees Celsius.

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BJP reviews strategy, plans future programs in J&K: G. Kishan Reddy

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 6

Ahead of the assembly polls, Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy, who is in charge of poll-bound Jammu and Kashmir, said on July 6 that they are conducting a review and will discuss the upcoming programs of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the Union Territory.

The BJP will hold an executive meeting with its Jammu and Kashmir unit on July 6, which will be chaired by Union Minister J.P. Nadda, who will arrive in Jammu city later in the day. The meeting will be held in Jammu.

G. Kishan Reddy, BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh, BJP's J-K election co-incharge



Ashish Sood, and Union Minister Jitendra Singh are among those who will attend the meeting.

Ahead of the meeting, G. Reddy told reporters in Jammu, "We are conducting a review after the Lok Sabha elections. We formed the government for the third time. We will discuss the upcoming programs of the

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

Over 7,500 pilgrims visit Amarnath Cave shrine, total crosses 1.59 lakh

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JUL 6

More than 7,500 pilgrims paid obeisance at the Amarnath cave shrine on Saturday, taking the number of devotees who have had 'darshan' of the naturally formed ice lingam so far to over 1.59 lakh, officials here said.

The Amarnath Yatra began on June 29 from the twin tracks - the traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam route in Anantnag and the 14-km shorter but steeper Baltal route in Ganderbal.

The yatra was temporarily suspended on Saturday morning in the wake of heavy rainfall, but resumed later in the day, they said.

"On Saturday, 7,552 pilgrims performed the yatra and had darshan of

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4



Amarnath Yatra suspended temporarily due to rain

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

Amarnath yatra has been temporarily suspended from both Pahalgam and Baltal routes due to rains on Saturday, officials said.

They said no yatri was allowed to proceed to the cave shrine as a precautionary measure

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Two BSF personnel killed in separate road accidents in J&K

JI NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JUL 6

Two Border Security Force (BSF) personnel, including an assistant sub-inspector, were killed in separate road accidents in Kathua and Udhampur districts

of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, officials said.

ASI Parshotam Singh (58), a resident of Himachal Pradesh, lost his life, while two of his colleagues were rescued when their vehicle skidded off the road and fell into Ujh canal near Rajbagh

in Kathua district, they said.

They said Singh was driving the car when he lost control over the vehicle while moving from Jasrota to Rajbagh.

Rescuers managed to save the lives of two BSF

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10th UT Level NCORD meet

CS for exploring Drug De-addiction IPD facilities in remaining District Hospitals

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, impressed upon the Health Department to explore the possibility of establishing In-Patient Department (IPD) facilities in all the major district hospitals of J&K.

Dulloo, while chairing the 10th UT Level Apex Committee meeting of NCORD, emphasized upon the importance of putting in place a fool-proof mechanism to check illegal selling of psychotropic or scheduled drugs over the counters by the pharmacies. He stressed on ensuring installation of CCTV cameras and Computerized Billing Systems



(CBS) at remaining Pharmacies forthwith. He said that no pharmacy should be allowed to function without such facilities especially in urban areas.

The Chief Secretary asked for formulating district-wise statistics clearly showing the cases registered and the subsequent

actions taken against the convicts. He asked for detailing out actions like detentions, seizures, property attachments made, licences of pharmacies suspended/cancelled, repeated offenders arrested under Public Safety Act (PSA), persons bailed out from courts and those

successfully convicted in the court of law. He also took note of the properties belonging to drug traffickers seized by the police department and asked for ensuring that relevant entries are too made in the revenue records reflecting these attachments.

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Budget session of Parliament to be held from July 22 to August 12, Union Budget to be presented on July 23

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

The budget session of Parliament will be held from July 22 to August 12.

The union budget for 2024-25 will be presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on July 23.

This will be first full session of Parliament after the new members took oath in the first session of 18th Lok Sabha held from June 24 to July 2 following results of general elections.

"Hon'ble President of India, on the

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

PM Modi speaks with new UK Premier Keir Starmer, invites him for early India visit

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday spoke with new UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and congratulated him on assuming charge as prime minister of UK and for his Labour Party's remarkable victory in the UK general elections.

The PM also said that India is committed to deepening the bilateral comprehensive strategic partnership.

Prime Minister Modi also invited the new UK PM Starmer for an early visit to India.

In a post on X, PM Modi said:

"Pleased to speak with @Keir_Starmer.

"Congratulated him on being elected as the Prime Minister of the UK.



We remain committed to deepening Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and robust India-Great Britain economic ties for the progress and prosperity of our peoples and global good."

An official statement said that PM Modi spoke with Keir Starmer, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom today, and congratulated him on assuming charge as Prime Minister of UK and for the remarkable victory of the Labour Party in the UK

general election.

Both leaders recalled the historic relations between the two countries and reaffirmed their commitment to further deepen and advance the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and the UK. The two leaders agreed to work towards early conclusion of a mutually beneficial India-UK Free Trade Agreement, the statement said. Appreciating the positive

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 4

DC Bandipora reviews status of Credit Linked/ Employment Generating schemes

JI NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, JULY 6

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman today chaired a meeting at Mini Secretariat, here to review the progress/performance of credit-linked/employment generating schemes of various departments operational in the district.

The meeting discussed various measures to evaluate the progress and performance of credit linked schemes, especially in the Agriculture and allied sectors.

It was given out that 33673 beneficiaries are active on PM Kissan portal and land seeding of 29189 beneficiaries has been completed as on 5th of July 2024.

It was revealed that under KCC (crop), 33841 cases are active with 250.50 crore sanctioned



loan amount and 4889 cases stand sanctioned under KCC (livestock).

The DC was apprised that 9552 persons have been provided employment under different employment generating schemes of various departments during FY-2023-24.

The meeting was informed that under PMEGP (KVIB), 540 cases amounting to 20.91 crores have been disbursed during FY 2023-24; under PMEGP (DIC), 252 cases amounting to 11.14 crore and under PMEGP (KVIC)

62 cases amounting to 3.09 crore have been sanctioned during FY-2023-24.

The meeting also discussed progress under Mumkin, Tejaswani, Spurring Entrepreneur, REGP (KVIB), PMFME, and other schemes.

Addressing the participants, the DC emphasized extensive awareness regarding credit linked schemes for maximum youth engagement and handholding of youth through different schemes.

He emphasized the

importance of these schemes in promoting agricultural development and enhancing financial inclusion among farmers and entrepreneurs.

The DC directed the officers to ensure the effective implementation of Government initiatives and flagship schemes which play a pivotal role in supporting economic growth and enhancement of means of livelihood.

He also directed all concerned departments to conduct panchayat wise awareness camps on monthly basis to maximize the benefits to eligible beneficiaries. Strict instructions were also issued to concerned departments to ensure zero pendency in KCC.

The meeting was attended by CPO Mohammad Maqbool, GM DIC, CAO, DSHO, CAHO, LDM, ALC and other concerned.

District Administration Samba resolves dispute hampering Construction of drain in Chak Manga

JI NEWS SERVICE
SAMBA, JULY 6

In a proactive response, the district administration Samba has resolved a dispute surrounding an under construction drain in Chak Manga, which has led rain water into the residential houses. Responding to the reports of blockage of the drain and the water entering the local houses in Ward No. 13, Chak Manga, the district administration, led by Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma promptly dispatched a team to the site, including ACR Dr. Kusum Chib, Tehsildar and the EO of Municipality. The team investigated the situation and identified that the blockage was caused intentionally by a few res-



idents who had stopped the ongoing construction work of the drain.

To resolve the issue, a temporary drain was immediately dug to facilitate the flow of water and alleviate the flooding. The swift action taken by the district administration successfully resolved the problem, ensuring the safety and comfort of the affected residents.

The locals expressed gratitude towards the district administration for their quick and effective response in addressing the water drainage issue and resolving the dispute.

Samagra Shiksha, Piramal Foundation conduct BAS of Seasonal Educational Centres across Shopian



JI NEWS SERVICE
SHOPIAN, JUNE 6

Baseline Assessment Survey (BAS) of Seasonal Educational Centers was held today across the district Shopian by Samagra Shiksha in collaboration with Piramal Foundation.

50 Centers were selected for baseline assessment across different Behaks of the district.

The Chief Education Officer Shopian deployed 50 invigilators for one each centre to facilitate the fair assessment. In addition 6 monitoring teams consisting of various officers and officials were deployed for monitoring purposes.

During the survey, 113, 91 and 41 students have

been assessed for Class 3rd, 5th and 7th respectively. After evaluation the remedial methods will be adopted to bring these at par with modern academic disciplines and the efforts will be made to enhance and upgrade the skills of educational volunteers for effective teaching learning process.

The evaluators, monitoring teams and Educational volunteers of various seasonal centers are putting their efforts in making this assessment a grand success.

Chief Education Officer Shopian, M Shabir appreciated the meticulous work of every individual in making this assessment a day of celebration across all seasonal centers.

Dulloo assesses progress on Smart City works, other schemes of H&UDD



JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today held a meeting to review status of different ongoing projects of Smart City Mission (SCM) here in twin cities of Srinagar and Jammu besides assessing other schemes of Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD) under implementation in J&K.

Present in the meeting were Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, VC, LCMA, CEO, JSCL, HoDs besides other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary had a detailed project-wise assessment of smart city works currently under progress in twin cities of Srinagar and Jammu.

Regarding the operation of 100 e-buses by the concerned smart city authorities, the Chief Secretary asked for taking a relook into the distance covered by each bus in a day and its occupancy during each trip. He emphasised optimum utilization of capacity of these buses with minimum coverage of about 200 kms a day.

The Chief Secretary reviewed the plan for cleaning and beautification of Dal and Nigeen Lakes. He asked for accel-

erating the pace of progress on all the works.

Regarding running of water transport, the Chief Secretary asked for choosing routes that are more treaded and economically viable for people.

The Chief Secretary also impressed upon the department to lay added focus on implementation of PMAY-Urban scheme as it provides necessary support to urban poor for constructing their own houses. He asked for making it's traction more amenable for public by making the process attractive for the eligible applicants.

Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, Mandeep Kaur, presented an overview of the works in progress under the Smart City Mission. She detailed out the specific reasons and challenges faced in timely completion of certain works and the renewed deadlines fixed for each project.

She revealed that out of 127 projects, 117 have been completed and 10 are at different stages of completion under Jammu Smart City Limited (JSCL). Similarly, for Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), out of 184 projects, 114 have been completed and rest

are under progress.

Giving details about the JSCL projects under progress, it was informed that these included Tawi River Front development, Street development from Mubarak Mandi to Raghunath Bazar, street development from Canal road to Talab Tillo, Library cum Cafeteria at Mubarak Mandi, Oceanarium at Bagh-i-Bahu, Heritage conservation works, improvement of 23 road junctions besides newly taken-up 'waste to wonder' projects in Jammu.

The ongoing works of SSCL that came up for discussion included Lakefront development from Nishat to Naseembagh, development & beautification of Shalimar Canal, upgradation of Batamaloo Qamarwari Road, upgradation of Batamaloo-Moominabad Road, Traditional Souq market at Batamaloo, phased upgradation of Downtown/Shehr-i-khaas markets, Jhelum waterfront development besides other projects.

It was revealed that most of these projects are at advanced stages of completion and are expected to be dedicated to public by September this year.

Successful Recreational & Awareness program for Senior Citizens held at Ahata-e-Waqar Chanapora, Srinagar



JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar Saturday organized a Recreational cum Awareness Programme for Senior Citizens in collaboration with Social Welfare Department and Department of Health Services Kashmir at Ahata-e-Waqar Chanapora Srinagar.

The programme, held under the guidance of Jawad Ahmed, Chairman DLSA Srinagar (PDJ, Srinagar) commenced with a touching Tilawat of the Quran by Khazer Mohammad Trag followed by a soulful Naat recital by Noor Mohammad.

The objective of the programme was to foster recreational activities and awareness among senior citizens.

The programme was attended by Nazir Ahmed Qureshi, founder of

the Chinar Foundation, renowned for its commitment to educating and providing shelter for orphans, poor children, and youngsters, ensuring a brighter future for them. Farooq Ahmed Bhat, founder of Help Poor Voluntary Trust, also graced the occasion, known for his philanthropic efforts in offering free medical aid services to thousands of underprivileged individuals.

During the event, Nazir Ahmed and Farooq Ahmed delivered inspiring speeches, sharing insights into their organizations' missions, remarkable achievements, and impactful contributions to society.

Their dedication was applauded as a blessing to the community, underscoring the profound impact of their initiatives on vulnerable groups.

Other Speakers includ-

ed Abdul Ganie Parray, Shabir Mujahid, Hakim M Yaseen and Qazi Rasheed, who expressed their views, emphasizing the importance of community support and collaboration in advancing societal welfare.

Additionally, a team from the Mental Health Program, led by Dr. Syed Riyaz presented insightful discussions on their program's objectives and initiatives.

Adil Rasheed, a distinguished psychologist, provided valuable insights into mental health issues, highlighting the significance of awareness and support in addressing these critical concerns.

The event not only aimed to enhance community cohesion but also to raise awareness on pertinent issues and promote holistic well-being among senior citizens and vulnerable populations.

DLSA Srinagar organizes series of Awareness programs

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar today organized a series of awareness programs across the district, under the guidance of Jawad Ahmed, Chairman DLSA Srinagar (PDJ, Srinagar).

On the occasion, DLSA Srinagar launched a door-to-door awareness campaign, where para-legal volunteers visited various localities in the district to educate the general masses about the NALSA (Legal Services to the Workers in the Unorganised Sector) scheme, 2015.



In addition to the door-to-door campaign, the volunteers also engaged with students in different legal literacy clubs and legal aid clinics, sensitizing them about the scheme and its benefits.

The main objective of

this awareness program was to inform and educate the people about their rights and entitlements under the NALSA scheme, 2015, and to encourage them to avail legal services and benefits provided under the.

DC Budgam chairs DLSC meeting

JI NEWS SERVICE
BUDGAM, JULY 6

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Akshay Labroo today chaired the District Level Standing Committee meeting to review the progress on pending litigation related to the encroachment of government departmental land.

The DC issued directions to the concerned district officers to ensure timely, coordinated and collaborative inter-departmental effort on all cases to safeguard state and departmental land from encroachment.

He emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts among different departments



to resolve the issues of encroachments efficiently.

Earlier in the meeting, ACR described the role and importance of the District level standing committee for addressing all issues pertaining to encroachment of state/Departmental land.

Among others, the

meeting was attended by SSP Budgam, District Programme Officer, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Assistant Commissioner Development, Chief Education Officer, CMO, District Litigation Officer and district officers of various line departments.

Legal Awareness programme on POCSO Act-2012 held at Bandipora

JI NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Bandipora in coordination with Tehsil Legal Services Authority Bandipora and in collaboration with Education Department Bandipora Saturday organized Legal Awareness programme on Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012 at Govt Higher Secondary School Puzalpora Bandipora.

The programme was held under the supervision of Chairman DLSA Bandipora, Amit Sharma and guidance of Secretary DLSA Bandipora, Nusrat Ali Hakak. Speaking on the occasion, Advocate Tariq

Ahmad Bhat and Advocate Majid Mushtaq panel lawyers of DLSA Bandipora delivered speeches on the said topic. The aim of the programme was to sensitize children on POCSO related issues as child Sexual Abuse is a major concern, which is increasing day by day and children being most vulnerable section of the society are susceptible to physical and psychological abuse.

Participants were encouraged to stand up for their own safety and security in order to prevent crime against children. The programme was attended by Officers/Officials, Students of the said institution, PLVs and other participants.

Inter-Zone District level Football Tournament held at Ganderbal



JI NEWS SERVICE
GANDERBAL, JULY 6

The Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS) Ganderbal hosted an impressive inter-zone district level football tournament today.

Boys under 17 and under 19 years participated with great enthusiasm, with matches held at MM Stadium Ganderbal and GCOPE Gadoora Ganderbal, respectively.

Teams from all four zones of the district competed, displaying excellent skills and sportsman-

ship. On the occasion, District Youth Services and Sports Officer (DYSSO) Ganderbal visited both the venues and interacted with the players, providing valuable guidance and emphasizing the importance of sports in developing character and values such as brotherhood, discipline, and cooperation.

In the final matches, Zone Ganderbal triumphed in both age categories at both venues, while Zone Tullamulla finished as runners-up. The victorious teams were awarded with trophies.

DLC meeting on HADP- Agriculture held at Kupwara, 860 cases approved

J1 NEWS SERVICE
KUPWARA, JULY 6

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today chaired the District Level Committee (DLC) meeting of Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP) to finalize the selection process of beneficiaries under HADP pertaining to the Agriculture department.

On the occasion, the DC directed the concerned officers to make concerted efforts in harnessing the Agriculture potential of district Kupwara which shall boost the rural economy.

She directed Area Extension Officers to mobilize the farmers by providing them thorough awareness about various schemes of the Agriculture sector which shall increase their livelihood opportunities.

She emphasized upon the officers to make efforts for establishment of more honey villages like Gulgam and put emphasis on credit linked schemes.

The DC stressed upon all district and sectoral officers of Agriculture



and allied departments to speed up the completion of targets assigned to them under the HADP scheme in the district.

After thorough discussion, the Committee approved 860 cases of the applicants who had applied under various components of the HADP scheme. These include establishment of Nursery for Kashmiri Lal Mirchi, Diversification of Niche Crops (Kashmiri Lal Mirchi), Hi-tech Poly green Houses, Low cost Poly green Houses, Bee Colonies, Beekeeping equipment manufacturing, establishment of

facilitation centres for migratory beekeepers, Millet Restaurant, Brush cutter, Battery operated Sprayer, Power Tiller, Maize Sheller, Tractor Mounted sprayer, mushroom sheds, improved crop sheds, vegetable seeds, vermi compost units, Spawn of Mushroom, Beehive with colonies, roof top rain water Harvesting structures, Deep Bore well, Low cost vermicompost units and other components.

Chief Agriculture Officer Kupwara, LDM, CAO, besides other officers of line departments attended the meeting.

5-day open Badminton tournament concludes at Mini Stadium Udhampur



J1 NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, JULY 6

The five-day open 4th edition Badminton Tournament, organized by the District Youth Services & Sports Department Udhampur, in collaboration with Den of Shuttlers Club, concluded here at Mini Stadium.

A total of 195 participants from across the district competed in the tournament. Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai was the chief guest, while Paras Thappa, Commandant ITBP, was the guest of honour at the closing ceremony.

Addressing the gathering, the DC congratulated the organizers for the successful conduct of the tournament. She emphasized that the aim of the event was to spread awareness about the importance of taking necessary steps to curb drug abuse, particularly among the youth.

The DC reiterated that

the District Administration is committed to create a drug-free environment in Udhampur and assured that all necessary measures would be taken to achieve this goal. She encouraged the participants to continue engaging in sports for their physical and mental well-being.

The DC commended the initiative taken by the organizers to boost morale and instill a spirit of sportsmanship in the participants. She expressed hope that such tournaments would significantly attract the youth towards sports.

The DC also interacted with the participants, urging them to actively take part in sports activities for their overall development. She extended her best wishes to all participants for their future endeavors.

Later, the chief guest distributed prizes and certificates to the winners and participants.

J&K thrives in a New Sports Era: Inspiring Youth & Making a Mark on the National Stage

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

The All India Football Federation has once again chosen Kashmir as the venue for the U-17 National team camp prior to their participation in the SAFF and AFC Qualifiers.

For the second consecutive year, 35 players from across the country, along with 7 staff members led by local star and head coach Ishaq Ahmed, will begin their three-month camp starting from 8th July.

In addition, the J&K Sports Council is organizing summer coaching camps in Archery, Rugby, Gymnastics, and Hockey from 8th to 17th July. Interested candidates are encouraged to contact the relevant officials at the JKSC office to join these exciting camps.

In other news, the Kashmir Open Hockey Tournament 2024 is in full swing. Organized by the Kashmir Veterans Hockey Society in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council under the 'My Youth My Pride' initiative, 16 teams from different districts are competing at the J&K Sports Council's Hockey Turf at Polo Ground Srinagar. The



competition is heating up, and tomorrow, the finalists will face off for the ultimate triumph.

Football enthusiasts are also eagerly following the Spring Legacy Knockout Football Tournament at Polo Ground, organized in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council. Since 31st May 2024, 24 teams have been fiercely competing. The finalists, Syed Taj-ud-Din Football Club Natipora and Downtown Heroes Football Club, will vie for the crown on 12th July 2024.

The Secretary of the J&K Sports Council has extended her best wishes

to the finalists of the football and hockey tournaments, saying, Sports pave the way for our youth to showcase their talent and earn laurels for the UT and the country at international events.

"Jammu and Kashmir is turning out to be a hotbed for sports culture, and I am glad that AIFF has chosen Srinagar to host the U-17 National team camp with our local hero as head coach. I am sure the climate, high altitude, and full support will once again help the National football team bring back gold like last year," she added.

Rs.2,118 cr RDSS works set to transform LT Network: KPDCCL

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCCL) today sought public support in execution and time-bound completion of ongoing works under the premier loss reduction scheme of RDSS in the power sector.

All 13 packages in 10 districts of Kashmir Division stand awarded with 05 KPDCCL packages registering close to 40% achievement. In a press statement issued here today, a KPDCCL spokesperson stated that Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) of the Union

Ministry of Power aims to improve the quality, reliability and affordability of power supply to the consumers through an efficient distribution system. "Loss reduction works include installation of Steel Tubular Poles, impregnable LT-AB cable and creation of new DT substations," he added.

The spokesman further stated that all 13 packages worth Rs.2,118 crore stand awarded and work commenced on ground. "While 5 packages of three Divisions of Srinagar and one each of Budgam & Baramulla Districts is being executed by KPDCCL, 4 packages each of North/Central Kashmir (Bandipora, Kupwara, Ganderbal & ED IV Srinagar) & South Kashmir (Pulwama, Anantnag, Kulgam & Shopian) are



being executed by the premier power sector Corporations like NTPC and Powergrid," the spokesman said, adding that timeline for completion of RDSS works has been fixed up to 2025 with sunset date of 2026.

Seeking public support in timely execution of loss reduction works, the KPDCCL spokesman identified hassle-free installation of steel poles and DT substations as key elements for turning around the LT distribution network. "KPDCCL in close coordination with District Administrations resolve issues which crop up while laying of loss reduction network," he said, while urging civil society members to cooperate with Turnkey Contractors working at sites.

To tide over huge

AT&C losses on account of meter bypass by way of hooking on bare conductor and exceeding of sanctioned load, KPDCCL has flagged installation of aerial-bunched insulated cable under the flagship scheme. "With installation of LT-AB cable and smart metering under RDSS, KPDCCL will be able to reliable and uninterrupted electricity supply to its consumers," the spokesman added.

Highlighting the challenges faced by KPDCCL in replacing the existing power infrastructure under the Government's modernization programme, the spokesman stated that close monitoring of its own packages as well as that of NTPC and Powergrid are being monitored on fortnightly basis.

Spot celebration of birth of Girl Child under BBBP held at Lal Ded Hospital, Srinagar



J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

SANKALP- Hub for Empowerment of Women-Mission Shakti Srinagar, Department of Social Welfare as per the proposed activity Planner of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Saturday organized on spot celebration of birth of girl child at maternity hospital, Lal Ded, Wazir Bagh, Srinagar.

The initiative was taken in order to make the parents realise that girls are equal to boys in every way and the birth of a girl child should be welcomed rather than considered her a burden. Every

Parent should realize that having a girl child is a blessing.

The event was attended by District Mission Coordinator, Ruqaya Ashraf along with her staff Specialist in Financial Literacy from Sankalp-Hub for Empowerment of Women- Mission Shakti Srinagar and staff from the said hospital was also present on the occasion.

The event commenced with the spot celebration of birth of girl child by cake cutting through mothers of the new born girl child and later on all the parents of newborns were felicitated with baby kits.

Director SHD reviews implementation of Sheep Husbandry sector schemes in Jammu region

J1 NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 6

A meeting of all District Sheep Husbandry Officers, Assistant Project Officers, Deputy Directors, Assistant Directors of the department was convened by Director Sheep Husbandry Department Jammu, Dr. Syed Moin-ul-Haq to review the achievements of Government farms and implementation of the departmental schemes in the financial year 2024-25 with special focus on Holistic Agriculture Development

Programme, credit linked schemes of the department like KcC, AHIDE, NLM status of Artificial Insemination Programme, Status of construction and non-construction activities under UT Capex, Status of ISDS and government livestock.

The newly appointed Director, in his madain meeting, asked the officers to inform the people about employment generating schemes launched by the Sheep Husbandry Department. He exhorted them to conduct regular

meetings with the breeders of the area to update them on government schemes offering support for promotion of modern farming techniques.

"The department has a major role in development of the small ruminants sector to upgrade the socio-economic status of rural masses of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir," he added. He directed all the officers to work with zeal and enthusiasm for the welfare of the sector.

AMARNATH YATRA SPECIAL TRAIN-2024

In order to clear extra rush of pilgrims during Amarnath Yatra, Railways will run the following Special Train between Jabalpur & Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra as per details given below:-

01707/01708 Jabalpur - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - 08 Trips					
Train No.: 01707		STATIONS		Train No.: 01708	
ARR.	DEP.			ARR.	DEP.
----	06:00	Jabalpur		23:25	----
22:50	22:52	Hazrat Nizamuddin		06:21	06:23
23:15	23:30	New Delhi		05:55	06:10
12:15	----	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra		----	18:10

DATE OF RUN: 01707 from Jabalpur on every Monday from 15.07.2024 to 05.08.2024 and 01708 from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra on every Tuesday from 16.07.2024 to 06.08.2024.

STOPPAGE: Katni Murwara, Damoh, Saugor, Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi, Gwalior, Morena, Agra Cantt., Mathura Jn., Faridabad, Shakur Basti, Rohtak Jn., Jind Jn., Jakhhal Jn., Ludhiana Jn., Jalandhar Cantt., Pathankot Cantt., Jammu Tawi & Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan stations.

ACCOMMODATION: 1st AC, AC-2 Tier, AC-3 Tier, Sleeper & General.

For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table and stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website https://enquiry.indianrailways.gov.in or NTES App.

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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. DEN/HQ/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date 29.07.2024 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through online payment modes available on www.ireps.gov.in portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information logon to www.ireps.gov.in

Tender Type	Open	Tendering Section	Works	Bidding System	Single Bid System
Date of Uploading Tenders	04.07.2024	Bid Starting Date	15.07.2024	Bid Closing Date/Time	29.07.2024 at 15:00 Hrs.

Sr.No.	Tender No.	Details of Tender	Advertised Value	Earnest Money	Validity of offer	Period of Completion
1.	121-2024-25-ADEN-1-FZR	Taking longitudinal section & plan, cross section, index section, taking gradients etc. on BTH-FZR section in the jurisdiction of SSE/W/KKP under ADEN-1/FZR	₹3,91,660.08	₹7,800/-	60 Days	02 Months
Similar Nature of work: Nil						
2.	131-2024-25-ADEN-2-FZR	Dewatering work in LHS in the section of SSE/W/LNK under ADEN-2/FZR	₹29,78,187.77	₹59,600/-	60 Days	04 Months
Similar Nature of work: Nil						
3.	132-2024-25-ADEN-2-FZR	Dewatering work in LHS in the section of SSE/W/JBD under ADEN-2/FZR	₹29,69,749.85	₹59,400/-	60 Days	04 Months
Similar Nature of work: Nil						
4.	134-2024-25-ADEN-1-FZR	Dewatering work in LHS in the section of SSE/W/JGN under ADEN-1/FZR	₹19,91,753.99	₹39,800/-	60 Days	04 Months
Similar Nature of work: Nil						
5.	135-2024-25-ADEN-1-FZR	Dewatering work in LHS in the section of SSE/W/KKP under ADEN-1/FZR	₹29,86,310.52	₹59,700/-	60 Days	04 Months
Similar Nature of work: Nil						
6.	136-2024-25-ADEN-1-FZR	Dewatering work in LHS in the section of SSE/W/FZR under ADEN-1/FZR	₹9,99,736.12	₹20,000/-	60 Days	04 Months
Similar Nature of work: Nil						

Note: 1. Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender.
Tender No:- 121, 134, 135 & 136-2024-25-ADEN-1-FZR & 131 & 132-2024-25-ADEN-2-FZR Dated 05.07.2024 2061/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Srinagar Admin made elaborate arrangements to facilitate people during holy month of Muharram

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

In order to ensure smooth observance of Muharram and facilitate the mourner's, the District Administration Srinagar has made elaborate arrangements across the District.

In this regard, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat along with other senior Officers of the District Administration has conducted several visits to different Imambaras including Hasanabad, Shams ud din Iraqi, Zaidal and other areas in Srinagar District.

During the visits the Deputy Commissioner held interaction sessions with the prominent Shia leaders and religious scholars to discuss the



arrangements required regarding holy month of Muharram ul Harram.

The DC has passed directions to the all line Departments for ensuring all required arrangements to facilitate the mourner's.

In addition, several meetings were held in the DC Office Complex with concerned Officers and other stakeholders.

Pertinent to mention that as of now, various

immediate interventions have been taken by the Srinagar Administration

During the current financial year 2024-25, around 11 macadamized works have been approved at an estimated cost of Rs. 3.21 Crore against which 10 works have been executed.

For better drinking water supply around 23 works are being/have been taken up for execution at an estimated cost of Rs. 34.00 lacs in different Shia dominating area of district Srinagar.

With regard to power supply, the existing curtailment schedule of 4.5 hours to 6 hours has been reduced to 3 hours only. Moreover, no curtailment is being witnessed during sunset to sunrise. Besides,

during the main holy days of Muharram, uninterrupted power supply shall be provided.

With regard to sanitation, all the necessary steps viz full grass cutting/fumigation/desilting of surface drains/have been started and other men and machinery round the clock are working tirelessly to provide better sanitation facility to the mourners during the Muharram.

Similarly, directions have already been passed to the health Department to ensure Health facilities viz adequate availability of medicines, ambulances and other necessary arrangements be made during the month.

In addition to above, around Rs 507.32 lakh have been taken up for execution for 71 works in Shia dominated areas.

Dr Karwani reviews construction of transit accommodations for PM package employees in South Kashmir

J1 NEWS SERVICE
ANANTNAG, JULY 6

Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (M), Dr Arvind Karwani, today inspected transit accommodations for PM package employees under construction in South Kashmir.

Dr Karwani, while interacting with the site engineers, exhorted upon them to ensure timely completion of the buildings so that the quarters can be allotted to the eligible employees at the earliest. He also enjoined upon them to ensure that all quality parameters are maintained while executing these vital works.

He also interacted with the PM package employees, listening to their demands, particularly



related to the allotment of quarters. They were assured that all their genuine issues will be redressed.

Later, Dr Karwani visited the Swami Vivekananda Nagdandi Ashram, Achabal, Anantnag. He had an exclusive round of the Ashram, enquiring about functioning of the utility from BL Bhat, Chairman, Administrative Committee and other members. He was apprised of the

Yoga activities being held on national level besides spiritual retreats, group meets and symposia organised at the Ashram, as part of the annual calendar.

Dr Karwani highly appreciated the social and spiritual work being done by the Ashram. He specially admired the role of the Nagdandi Ashram in successful conduct of Mata Kheerbhawani Yatra this year.

Udhampur Admin provides instant relief to rain affected family in Kotli Bala

J1 NEWS SERVICE
UDHAMPUR, JULY 06

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Saloni Rai, a team from the Revenue Department, headed by Tehsildar Udhampur Jai Singh, provided immediate relief to a family affected by torrential rains in Kotli Bala, Udhampur. The Kaccha house of Satpal, a resident of Kotli Bala, was severely damaged due to heavy rainfall yesterday.

Tehsildar Udhampur reached the spot and delivered essential relief materials to the affected family. The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of community support during such critical times and assured that the administration is committed to providing the necessary assistance to those in need.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE...

Four terrorists...

The official added, "Based on specific input about the presence of a group of terrorists, a joint team of Police, Army's 1st RR, and CRPF launched a cordon and search operation in Chinigam, Frisal, Kulgam."

As the joint teams of forces approached the suspected spot, the hiding terrorists fired upon them, which was retaliated, triggering another encounter, he said, adding, "During the exchange of fire, four terrorists were killed while one soldier was injured and hospitalised. The operation is ongoing, and one more terrorist is believed to be trapped inside."

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, V K Birdi, talking to reporters near the encounter spot in Kulgam, said four bodies have been sighted at the encounter spot in Chinigam, while firing is still ongoing. "The exact number of terrorists killed or trapped, along with their identities, can only be ascertained once the encounter concludes, but as of now, the fire is ongoing," he said.

The IGP confirmed that there are fatalities and injuries on the side of the security forces, but the encounters are still in progress. "Both encounters are far from the national highway and security forces keep tracking terrorist movements," he said.

Birdi added that the killing of four terrorists is a significant achievement for all security forces and that further details will be shared once the operations conclude.

As per the details available with the KNO, there were a total of 23 local terrorists active in Kashmir, with around 10 in Kulgam alone, where the two encounters are ongoing.

Wiping out terrorists...

terrorists to create an atmosphere of fear, and will defeat them.

Talking to media person here at district police lines on the sidelines of a function to felicitate Special Police Officers (SPOs) and other officials of J&K police who eliminated three hardcore foreign terrorists during an operation in Gundoh area of district Doda, the DGP, as per the news agency, said that it is a matter of time when the terrorists will be eliminated.

"An adversary has given us a challenge and they think that through borders they can send foreign terrorists to make the situation volatile again like what was in the past. They are not much in numbers and we are determined to defeat them with the help of the people," he said.

"It has been observed recently that terrorists took away sheep of locals without paying them the money and through this they want to terrorize the people like what happened in the past but we will not allow this to happen," the DGP said.

Replying to a question as to what is the way forward for security forces to eliminate the terrorists in Jammu region, the police chief said, "The tactics and the strategy can't be discussed in an open forum like this as how will you go."

The DGP expressed happiness on the announcement of five Shaurya Chakras to J&K Police personnel and said, "When we heard that five Shaurya Chakras have been awarded to J&K police personnel, and that too to one Cargo unit of Kashmir for their independent operations, every officer and everyone else is proud of this honour."

"J&K police is such a fighting unit, such an instrument of anti-terror machine, whose story and contribution the country is coming to know slowly for the last four to five years. I hope that the spirit will continue after getting such recognition from the Indian army and it will take our officers and Jawans to work more in the future and will take the anti-terror war to its logical conclusion," he added.

Meanwhile, the DGP accompanied by ADGP Law and Order Vijay Kumar and ADGP Jammu zone Anand Jain, was welcomed by DIG Doda-Kishtwar-Ramban range Shridhar Patil, DC Doda Harvinder Singh, SSP Doda Javed Iqbal and others.

The DIG and SSP Doda appraised the DGP about the overall situation of the district, achievement on militancy front and success story of personnel who have recently achieved a major achievement in neutralizing three terrorists in Gandoh area.

The DGP handed over an absorption letter to seven SPOs as constables in J&K police in front of their

families, relatives and others and hoped that this will motivate them to work more.

We need to affirm and...

the artists for making significant contribution in their respective fields.

He also highlighted the important role of the artists in spreading the message of unity, harmony and peace in the society.

The musical evening witnessed the soulful performances by maestros like Pandit Abhay Rustum Sopori, Sh Munir Ahmad Mir, Ms Sunayana Kachroo and other legendary and young artists from Jammu Kashmir.

Sh Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Sh Suresh Kumar Gupta, Principal Secretary, Culture Department; Sh Arvind Mattoo, Founder, Koshur Raag; senior officials, members of Koshur Raag and eminent artists from Jammu Kashmir were present on the occasion.

Padma Shri Dr SP Varma; Dr Farooq Abdullah, former Member of Parliament and prominent citizens from different walks of life were also present.

Woman drowns, three...

Authorities have issued an advisory in the Jammu region, asking people to avoid water bodies given the wet weather forecast by the Met Department till July 10.

BJP reviews strategy...

BJP in Jammu and Kashmir." "The National President, J.P. Nadda, will come and prepare a roadmap for the upcoming 3-4 months... We will also take feedback from the party workers," Reddy added.

The BJP leader claimed that there was a positive environment in Jammu and Kashmir following the abrogation of Article 370.

"After the abrogation of Article 370, there is a positive environment and peace here. Because of this, we are sure that support for the BJP will increase in the coming time," Reddy said.

Tarun Chugh said, "State Working Committee meetings are happening all over the country. BJP National President J.P. Nadda is going to attend the meeting here. It is because of the party workers that the BJP has formed the government for the third time."

On the Assembly elections likely to be held in Jammu and Kashmir by the end of September as per the timeline fixed by the Supreme Court, Chugh said, "It is the Election Commission's job to announce the elections. The BJP has always guarded democracy. The BJP is a worker-based party; we discuss and move forward together."

J-K is likely to see its first Assembly election in September this year, according to the timeline fixed by the Supreme Court after the erstwhile state's special status was scrapped in 2019. The last Assembly election in the erstwhile state was held in 2014.

The BJP-led government scrapped Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019 and bifurcated the state into two union territories. There have been demands from political parties for early assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir and the restoration of statehood. Earlier, the Supreme Court had asked the Election Commission of India and the Centre to conduct polls by September. (Agencies)

Over 7,500 pilgrims...

Baba Bholenath on the eighth day of the annual yatra," officials said.

They said 5,019 male pilgrims, 1,406 female pilgrims, 118 sadhus and three sadhis were among those who paid obeisance at the cave shrine. Also, 869 security personnel, three transgender persons and 134 children performed the pilgrimage, they said.

With this, the number of pilgrims who have visited the 3,800-metre-high cave shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas has now reached 1,59,498, officials added.

Deaths of two devotees – a sevadar from Haryana and a pilgrim from Jharkhand – have been reported during this year's yatra so far. Both of them suffered

a cardiac arrest on the Baltal route in June, according to the officials.

The 52-day pilgrimage will conclude on August 19. More than 4.5 lakh pilgrims paid obeisance at the cave shrine last year. (Agencies)

Amarnath Yatra suspended...

due to inclement weather. "The yatra has been temporarily suspended to ensure the safety of pilgrims", they said.

Several parts of south Kashmir received rains during the last 24 hours. According to reports, Pahalgam received 18 and Baltal 7.5 mm of rain till this morning.

The 52-day Amarnath Yatra began last Saturday from the twin tracks of Nunwan-Pahalgam route in Anantnag district and the Baltal route in Ganderbal district.

Officials said so far over 1.5 lakh pilgrims have paid obeisance at the cave shrine which houses the naturally formed ice-lingam.

The Yatra will end on August 19. Last year, 4.5 lakh pilgrims visited the holy shrine and this year the authorities are expecting numbers to go up.

Two BSF personnel...

personnel but Singh was swept away by a strong current and later he was found in a critical condition and sent to a hospital where he was declared brought dead by doctors, the officials said.

In another accident, BSF jawan Amit Kumar Shukla (30) died when a cab turned turtle inside Chenani-Nashri tunnel in Udhampur district.

Shukla, who was posted in J-K, was on way to his home in Jharkhand on leave, officials said. (Agencies)

CS for exploring...

He enjoined upon the need for carrying out quality investigations to improve the conviction rates. He stressed on the departments like Police, School Education, RDD, Urban Development, Health and Excise to run regular campaigns creating awareness among the people especially youth about this menace.

The Chief Secretary emphasized upon the Excise Department to furnish details of Agricultural lands used for diverse crops that were earlier used to grow illicit crops like hemp or poppy. He made out that such claims should be corroborated by the Agriculture Department for its acceptability.

On the occasion, a presentation made by the SDG Crime, provided the overall scenario of drug menace in J&K besides highlighting the success with which it is being tackled by the administration. He also gave brief about the status of actions taken by the concerned over the directives given during previous meeting.

It was revealed that the five newly approved NDPS courts would be made fully functional within a month's time. Besides, the IPD facilities have been established by the Health Department in all the seven Medical Colleges of the UT besides having De-addiction centres in all the 20 districts. It was added that these centres are manned by trained Psychiatrists with necessary SoPs framed by the Department for both kinds of facilities.

Giving details about the enforcement measures taken by the Police and other departments, the meeting was apprised that 5 licences have been cancelled and 169 suspended by the Drug Controller for violating the norms. It was further informed that the police has arrested 1187 persons, so far, in this year registering 837 cases. It was also given out that during this period 25 kg of Heroin, 24 kg of B.Sugar, 187 kg Charas, 1.5 kg of opium, 106 kg Fukki, 1701 kg poppy straw, 190 kg Bhang, 52 kg Ganja, 59,979 Tablets/capsules, 89 injections and 2830 syrup bottles of psychotropic substances were seized by the department during this year.

Regarding rehabilitation of addicts, it was informed that 1,37,329 persons have visited the OPD facilities of Health, 1441 the Police Drug De-addiction facilities, 1000 Social Welfare sponsored ones and 533 have visited those De-addiction facilities established in private sector, the meeting was apprised.

Among others the meeting was attended by ACS,

Forest, Principal Secretary, Home, SDG, Crime, ADGP, HQ, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, ADGP, Jammu, Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, Secretary, RDD, Secretary, Health, Secretary, Law; DG prosecution, representatives from BSF, SIA and other senior civil and police officers while Deputy Commissioners, SSPs and outstation officers participated virtually.

Budget session of...

recommendation of Government of India, has approved the proposal for summoning of both the Houses of Parliament for the Budget Session, 2024 from 22nd July, 2024 to 12 August, 2024 (Subject to exigencies of Parliamentary Business). Union Budget 2024-25 will be presented in Lok Sabha on 23 July, 2024," Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju said in a post on X on Saturday.

The first budget of the BJP-led government NDA in its fresh term would be significant with Prime Minister Narendra Modi having stated earlier that the third term will be used to write new chapters of bold decisions.

The first session of Parliament after the formation of 18th Lok Sabha was stormy with the opposition and government clashing on a range of issues including NEET-UG examination row.

President Droupadi Murmu addressed the joint sitting of two Houses on June 27 and both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha adopted motion of thanks on the President's address.

PM Modi replied to the debate on the motion of thanks in the two Houses of Parliament.

BJP-led National Democratic Alliance returned to power for the third successive term in the general elections. (Agencies)

PM Modi speaks with...

contributions of the Indian community in the social, economic and political development of the UK, the two sides agreed to continue to promote close people to people ties.

Prime Minister extended invitation to Prime Minister Starmer for an early visit to India.

Both leaders agreed to remain in touch, it said.

A UK readout of the phone conversation said that the two leaders "exchanged congratulations on their respective election wins, and reflected on the strength of the relationship between the UK and India".

"Prime Minister Starmer said he looked forward to further deepening the strong and respectful relationship between both countries, and welcomed Prime Minister Modi's leadership on key global challenges, such as climate change and economic growth.

"Discussing the importance of the living bridge between the UK and India, and the 2030 roadmap, the leaders agreed there was a wide range of areas across defence and security, critical and emerging technology, and climate change, for the two countries to deepen cooperation on.

"Discussing the Free Trade Agreement, Prime Minister Starmer said he stood ready to conclude a deal that worked for both sides."

"The leaders hoped to meet at the earliest opportunity," it added.

On Friday, PM Modi had in a post on X congratulated Labour Party leader Keir Starmer on his party's landslide victory in the UK parliamentary elections and becoming the new prime minister of UK.

In a post on X, PM Modi also thanked ex-PM Rishi Sunak for his active contribution to deepening the bilateral ties between India and the UK during his term in office.

Labour won 412 seats in the 650-seat House of Commons. The Conservatives had only 121 – down from 365 seats in 2019. The drubbing surpassed even the 1906 election in which they won just 156 seats.

The Tory reign was marked by Britain's messy divorce from the European Union, followed by the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, all of which battered the economy.

When Sunak took over in October 2022, he was the third prime minister in less than two months and set out to bring stability to a party in crisis.

DC Srinagar reviews irrigation and encroachment efforts; emphasizes timely completion of projects

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat on Saturday, held a meeting with the Officers of Irrigation & Flood Control Department to review and expedite ongoing and approved irrigation projects.

The DC also took stock of the measures undertaken to address the encroachments along the water bodies and irrigation canals.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of timely completion of irrigation projects to ensure efficient water management and support agricultural activities in the District.

He stressed the need for strict action against encroachments to safe-



guard water bodies and irrigation channels. He added that an effective irrigation management is crucial for the agricultural prosperity of the district, and all projects must be completed on time without any encroachments hindering the flow of water.

DC Srinagar urged the Irrigation and Flood Control Department to work closely with the Revenue Department to conduct a fresh assessment within the stipulated time. He

also highlighted the necessity of adhering to the CPWRS guidelines regarding dredging activities.

The DC instructed the departments to maintain transparency in their operations and ensure that all utilization certificates are up to date and submitted as required by the authorities.

Earlier, during the meeting, the DC was informed about the encroachments removed, including 518 Kucha Pucca structures, 103 boundary walls, and

5,180 trees in different parts of the District.

Regarding dredging, the DC was informed that dredging of the entire Jhelum River was completed under FMP Phase I, and no further dredging is permissible under CPWRS guidelines. The utilization certificate for Rs 413 crore has been submitted and will be resubmitted if required by the Court, the chair informed.

A fresh assessment is to be carried out by the Irrigation and Flood Control (I&FC) Department in coordination with the Revenue Department within 10 to 15 days, the chair was informed.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Srinagar, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Officers of the Irrigation and Flood Control Department, Concerned Tehsildars and other Officers.

DDC Bandipora chairs Task Force Committee meeting under DAY-NULM

J1 NEWS SERVICE
BANDIPORA, JULY 6

The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman today chaired a meeting at Mini Secretariat, here to review the progress of the Task Force Committee under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana, National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM). The meeting focused on assessing the ongoing initiatives and approving new cases proposed under the programme. Project Officer DUDA briefed the DDC about the role of District Urban Development Agency in promotion of livelihood for urban poor.

It was given out that during this financial year, 50 applications have been received against the target of 75 cases.

The Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana aims to uplift



urban poor and create sustainable livelihood opportunities for vulnerable sections of society. The Task Force Committee plays a crucial role in ensuring effective implementation and monitoring of these initiatives at the district level.

The DDC said that the administration is committed to enhancing the impact of DAY-NULM in Bandipora by closely monitoring the progress and ensuring timely approvals for proposed cases.

The meeting was attended by Chief Plan-

ning Officer, Mohammad Maqbool, Executive Officer MC Bandipora Ajaz Ahmad, Project Officer DUDA, Lead District Manager and other concerned officers and stakeholders involved in the implementation of DAY-NULM in Bandipora district.

NABARD conducts Zonal Sensitization/review meet on RIDF

J1 NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

State Projects Department NABARD, J&K regional office today organized one-day zonal level sensitization cum review meeting on Rural Infrastructure Fund (RIDF). The meeting was chaired by Ashok Khokar, Chief Engineer R&B South Kashmir and Surinder Singh DGM, NABARD Srinagar Cell in the presence of AGM NABARD, Sanjeev Sharma and DDM NABARD, Rouf Zargar. The Superintendent Engineers, Executive Engineers and AEEs from R&B department from Anantnag, Kulgam, Pulwama and Shopian attended the meet.

DDM NABARD, Rouf Zargar informed the meet-

ing that there are currently 158 ongoing projects in South Kashmir which have been sanctioned to R&B by NABARD with a total sanctioned amount of Rs.692 Cr. Out of the total sanctioned amount, an amount of Rs.310 Cr has been disbursed till date.

Speaking on the occasion, DGM NABARD indicated that NABARD has been providing financial support to the State Governments and Union Territories for strengthening of rural infrastructure under RIDF. He stated that RIDF which started as a 'last mile approach' to facilitate completion of ongoing irrigation, flood protection & watershed management projects since 1995-96, has become more broad based over the years and as on

date covers as many as 39 eligible activities.

He highlighted that the disbursement against utilization certificates during the current financial year needs to be enhanced.

Chief Engineer advised all the Executive Engineers to expedite submission of Utilization Certificates (UCs) for works completed. He emphasized on early grounding of projects, quarterly submission of UCs and submission of PCC/PCR after completion of projects.

Sanjeev Sharma and Shubham Suyal from State Projects Department NABARD answered various queries of the house about the RIDF sanction and disbursement process.

They gave a detailed

presentation on the operational issues involving DPR formulation, submission of Utilization Certificates, Projects Yet to be Grounded (PYGs), Slow Moving Projects, submission of Project Completion Reports (PCRs) etc. Thereafter, department wise review of ongoing projects of all the districts of Kashmir division was undertaken. The implementing departments were advised to quicken the pace of implementation of projects.

Chief Engineer in his concluding remarks assured that the implementing department will extend all the possible support to remove the bottlenecks in smooth implementation of NABARD RIDF projects.

Plantation drive held at PM SHRI GHSS Bhalra Zone Bhandarwah

J1 NEWS SERVICE
DODA, JULY 6

National Cadets Corps wing of PM SHRI School Government Higher Secondary School Bhalra Bhandarwah, under 2 J&K (I) Coy NCC Bhandarwah, organised a tree plantation drive as part of 'Van Mahotsav-2024' and 'One Cadet-One Tree campaign 2024'.

The aim of the drive was to create awareness regarding the need to

preserve and conserve the environment and to tackle the challenges of climate change by setting an example to others.

Staff members, NCC cadets (JD/SD/SW), Ex-cadets and students of the Institution took part in the drive.

A total of 40 saplings of Conifers i.e. Cedrus deodara and Pine and other trees having medicinal importance were planted with an aim to spread awareness amongst people

about the importance of a green world for mankind.

The said programme was coordinated by Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Koul, Associate NCC Officer/Zonal Cultural & Counseling Incharge, Bhandarwah and assisted by Om Parkash (Sr. Lect.) and Neeraj Kotwal (Teacher) under the guidance of Pradeep Singh Billawria (Principal of the Institution).

The NCC cadets of the school promised to protect and restore the green

cover of the planet earth. It was a successful day and the students went back home feeling happy that they have performed their share of duty to keep the earth 'Green'.

The programme was organised under the supervision of District Development Commissioner, Harvinder Singh and Chief Education Officer, P.L. Thapa.

The program concluded with reciting of the NCC slogans and NCC song.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL & HOSPITAL DIVISION JAMMU

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (Short Term)

MHDJ/e-NIT 58 of 2024-25

Dated: 03.07.2024
Due : 10.07.2024

On behalf of the President of India, e-tenders in two cover system on turnkey basis are invited from registered/reputed firms having sufficient relevant experience for the work mentioned below:

S. No	Description of work	Project Authority	Estt	AAA/TS	Earnest Money Deposit	Cost of tender document	Time of completion	Eligibility Criterion of Bidder
1	Replacement of existing/worn out PVC Water Tank by Providing and Fitting of 01 No. new Water Tank of 2000 ltrs Capacity along with all other allied works on roof top at Govt. Psychiatric Diseases Hospital, Jammu.	Medical Superintendent Hospital Jammu	0.16 LACS	ACCORDED	Rs.400.00 in the Shape of CDR/FDR/TDR valid for 12 months pledged to the Executive Engineer MH Division Jammu	Rs 200.00 in the shape of Challan through J&K Govt. Treasury indicating Treasury Voucher No. & date and also indicating the name of work duly credited to 0059-PWD (Revenue) and uploading a copy of treasury challan / receipt on e-tendering portal.	10 days	Registered & Reputed firms having sufficient experience as per Annexure "C" similar nature of work

THE NIT CONSISTING OF Qualifying INFORMATION, ELGIBILITY CRITERIA, BILL OF QUANTITIES (BOQ) SETS OF TERMS & CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT & OTHER DETAILS CAN BE VIEWED / DOWNLOADED FROM THE WEBSITE www.iktenders.gov.in.

SD/-

Executive Engineer
Mechanical & Hospital Division
Jammu

DIP/J-2500/24
Date: 6-7-24

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Mech. Division North Jammu

e-mail: xennorth@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDER e-NIT No. 99 of 2024-25

For and on behalf of Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Jammu, Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Mech. Division North Jammu, invites tenders by e-tendering mode from the reputed/registered firms/Sole Prop. for the below mentioned work:-

S. No.	Name of work	Estimated cost (in ₹)	Cost of document/tender fee (in ₹)	Earnest money (in ₹)	Validity of Rates	Bid validity
1.	Providing, Installation, testing and commissioning of 150000 GPH x 150 M head HC pump set of Manda unit no. 11 and allied works at CPS Sitlee under UT Capex Budget.	60,00,000/-	500/-	1,80,000/- in the shape of CDR / FDR	180 days	180 days

Position of AAA: Accorded
Position of TS: Sanctioned

Date of Publishing : 05-07-2024 (02.00 pm).

- Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 05-07-2024 (02.00 pm).
- The Bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 10-07-2024 (02.00 pm) to 24-07-2024 (02.00 pm).
- The complete bidding process will be online <http://jktenders.gov.in>. A pre-bid meeting shall be held in the office of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Mech. Division North Jammu on 08-07-2024 (1:00 pm) for any clarification and other information required by the bidders who intend to participate in the tender.
- The Technical bids received shall be opened online on 25-07-2024 (02.00 pm) or any other subsequent date in the office of Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mech. Division North Jammu.
- The Financial bid of the bidders shall be opened online after scrutinizing the technical bid in the office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Mech. Division North Jammu in presence of the bidders who wish to attend. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
- The bidder should make payment for cost of bidding document in shape of single window challan of JMC / online payment through the JMC website link <http://www.jmcjammu.org/online-payment.html> in the name of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Mech. Division North Jammu.
- The original instruments in respect of cost of document, EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR and other relevant document of L₁ bidder will be required to be submitted to the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Mech. Division North Jammu after opening of financial bids on line. No separate intimation about opening of financial bids will be sent by this office / by the tender opening authority. In case the original documents are not submitted by the L₁ bidder opening of financial bid, the tender will be cancelled and the bidder will not be allowed to participate in any further / future tendering process in the division for a period of one year.

No. JSMDNJ/1582-84

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti Mech. Division North
Jammu

Dated: 04-07-2024

DIP/J-2507/24
Date: 6-7-24

EDITORIAL

PRIs lack infra, enhance their planning capabilities

The Centre and the UT administration have been making tall claims about the strengthening and empowering Panchayati Raj Institutions in Jammu and Kashmir by extending various provisions of 73rd Amendment of Indian Constitution and providing liberal funding for the development of Panchayats. The lack of infrastructure in Panchayats, which are rural local self-government bodies, can mainly be attributed to several factors. Infrastructure refers to the basic physical and organizational structures and facilities needed for the operation of a society, such as transportation, communication, water supply, sanitation, and education. The recent data shows that over 1,500 Panchayats of Jammu and Kashmir are functioning either in rented accommodations or under open sky as they don't have their own buildings. Moreover, only 300 Panchayats in the Union Territory don't have computers—a claim strongly contested by Panchayat representatives. Jammu and Kashmir has a total of 4,291 Gram Panchayats out of which over 1500 Panchayats don't have Panchayat Bhawans, notwithstanding the fact that the Central government had been providing liberal funding for raising infrastructure in Panchayats of Jammu and Kashmir. What is quite interesting is that a total of 19 National Panchayat Awards (NPA) have been conferred on Jammu and Kashmir from 2020-2021 to 2022-2023 despite the fact that Panchayats in the Union Territory still face the major problem of infrastructure shortage. It is the duty of the state or UT administration to mobilise funds for construction of Panchayat Buildings from various sources. However, under the revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) scheme approved for implementation from 2022-23 to 2025-2026, the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj supplements the efforts of States and UTs towards supporting the functioning of GPs by providing Panchayat Bhawan as proposed by States and UTs in their Annual Action Plan and approved by Central Empowered Committee on a limited scale. Panchayats often have limited financial resources. They heavily depend on funds allocated by higher levels of government, and these funds may not be sufficient to meet the diverse infrastructure needs of the local community. Panchayats in geographically challenging areas, such as hilly or remote regions, may face additional hurdles in providing infrastructure. Construction and maintenance can be more difficult and costly in such areas. In contrast to all these factors, the UT has been provided an amount of over Rs 180 crore under Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan from the year 2018-19 to the current financial year 2023-24 for the development of Panchayats in Jammu and Kashmir. The funds have been provided with the primary objective of strengthening PRIs by way of capacity building and training of the elected representatives and the functionaries of the PRIs, providing infrastructural support. The Government of India has provided a whopping amount of Rs 1,858 crore to Jammu and Kashmir from 2015-16 to 2018-19 for the welfare of Panchayats including improvement of infrastructure under 14th Finance Commission. "After 2019 when the erstwhile state was converted into UT, Jammu and Kashmir has not received any grant under 14th and 15th Finance Commission (2021-22 to 2025-26). Addressing the lack of infrastructure in Panchayats requires a multi-faceted approach, including improved governance, increased funding, community engagement, and capacity building at the local level. Efforts should be made to empower Panchayats, enhance their planning capabilities, and ensure that resources are allocated and utilized efficiently for sustainable development.

VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

The 18th Lok Sabha has been ushered in with customary procedural formalities on the 25th of June, 2024. Certain rituals convert the reality of Lok Sabha into the sanctified existence of a group of people meant to lead this country through such vicissitudes as it may face. This is, as it should be, an extraordinary phenomenon. The nation can be legitimately proud of this event. Yet in certain ways, it's different from some of the preceding Lok Sabhas because this time there was no consensus on the identification of a Speaker for the Lok Sabha. It is not as if in each of the preceding Lok Sabhas, the selection of the speaker was unanimous. There were instances when the Speaker was chosen by ballot and the Lok Sabha still, functioned with a fair degree of cohesiveness. The unique situation in the 18th Lok Sabha included a demand by the opposi-

tion to promise it a Deputy Speaker's position. In the preceding Lok Sabhas, it did not seem to matter to many people. An assurance here and 'now seemed to be the demand. The matter seems to have would have been settled. The crux of the situation seems to be putting up the Deputy Speaker's position as a factor in negotiation. In the preceding Lok Sabhas, a consensus was built around these issues, which this time around did not seem to bother many people. This is a settled and yet important proposition about the style of conduct of affairs. An illustration may help to establish the point with better clarity. In one of the preceding Lok Sabhas, at a time when Jawahar Lal Nehru dominated the scene in Indian politics, there was a bye-election schedule from Muzaffarpur Constituency in Bihar. Then socialist parties sought to put up Acharya Narendra Dev as their candidate for election from this constitu-

ency. Jawahar Lal Nehru, who was one of the tallest figures in the political scene, seized this situation to make a point. He felt that even if Acharya Narendra Dev was a candidate for the opposition, yet there was no bitterness that Congress as a party had towards him. Ordinarily, Congress was expected to win this election of the parliamentary seat to the Lok Sabha, yet Jawahar Lal Nehru felt that the Lok Sabha should have more different types of people, and therefore Congress would not contest for the Lok Sabha seat from Muzaffarpur against Acharya Narendra Dev. Those times were different. There was a predominantly universal sentiment for merit and goodwill, and Narendra Dev sailed home well on that argument. As stated, with the main opposition and Congress working together for Narendra Dev, it was not difficult for him to get elected to the Lok Sabha. Those times were

different, and those times still resonate with many people as to what good traditions in the parliamentary system are all about. It's remarkable that during the arguments for Deputy Speakership, no one in public even recalled this episode from the perspective of parliamentary history. It is indeed a case for a two-tiered split on which way the parliamentary traditions could be heading. One can only hope that over time, the good sense and goodwill of parliamentarians will prevail and matters take their course in a more enlightened way. Be that as it may, one is not quite sure what the adamancy of a prior commitment about the Deputy Speaker's position being given to the opposition has been all about. In any case, the convention has been for the Deputy Speaker's position to be given to the opposition, so ultimately, the contention was only about the timing of the formalization of this kind of prior agree-

ment. It is indeed a small matter, but if the loftiness of parliamentary traditions were to be seen in its due weightage in the conduct of affairs, it is important. Running a parliament cannot and should not be solely about positions, it has also to be about patterns, graces, decency, and above all, dignified conduct in electoral and consensual politics. The people show their class through their representatives, behaviours, and the way arguments are made or not made. This becomes the algorithm for the conduct of public affairs. Every parliament loses at least 20 to 40% of its members who fail to return for various reasons or who may only serve for one term. Therefore, being a member of parliament, especially the Lok Sabha, carries a huge moral weight that goes beyond simple political votes. Parliamentary traditions are important, and it may well be that the

18th Lok Sabha will have some daring challenges to its method of work, to which both the ruling party and the opposition, led by some old veterans, will need to adapt and take responsibility. < This is a simplified version of what happens, as the method of working is nearly as critical as the methods of resolving differences. All said and done, even parliament has to operate within the bandwidth of rules, regulations, bylaws, practices, and more. It is best done through goodwill and grace. Senior members in the Lok Sabha need to conduct affairs with statesmanship and dignity. The Prime Minister has done well to emphasize that for a nation to work well, all must work together, not just the majority. (The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)

Paper leak: Call for fair and a political resolution

GOURAV VALLABH

The recent NEET paper leak has caused a stir in the nation. Paper leaks are a serious issue that must be addressed sensitively and apolitically. No government can condone such malpractices, and addressing them must prioritize fairness over political gain. This issue needs to be handled sensitively and free from political agendas. Addressing the root causes and implementing robust measures are essential to ensure the integrity of the examination process and restore trust among students and their families. Paper leaks aren't new and have happened before. It's crucial to take this issue seriously and work on solutions. Understanding why parents and students are influenced by leaked papers and addressing these root causes will help maintain exam integrity and ensure a fair process. Instances of paper leaks have undermined trust in the examination system, leading to the temptation for guaranteed selection through illicit means. It is essential to stop this practice, implement stringent security measures, enforce strict penalties for malpractices, and ensure transparent and fair examination

processes to restore trust and uphold the principle of merit-based success. We must remember that the National Testing Agency (NTA) was established as a premier, specialist, autonomous, and self-sustained testing organization to conduct entrance examinations for higher educational institutions. The NTA is governed by a body consisting of esteemed members such as former UPSC Chairmen, Directors of IITs, NITs, IIMs, and Vice Chancellors of JNU and IGNOU, whose integrity should not be doubted. However, the issues lie at both the policy and execution levels, and solutions are needed at both levels. Here are some proposed solutions: For examinations with over 500,000 students, a two-tier filtering system should be used, including preliminary and main exams. If the number of candidates exceeds 2,000,000, a more rigorous three-tier system should be adopted: preliminary, main stage 1, and main stage 2 exams. The final merit list should be based on the average marks obtained in main stage 1 and stage 2. This approach ensures a comprehensive evaluation process, maintaining fairness and integrity by filtering candidates through multiple stages. Imple-



menting this system would address the challenges of managing large numbers of candidates and reduce the malpractice risk, leading to a more reliable and credible examination process. It is important to designate certain cities or centres as sensitive or extremely sensitive, similar to how polling booths are identified by the Election Commission. These centres should be under constant CCTV surveillance to maintain the integrity of the examination process, deter malpractice, and ensure fairness and transparency. This proactive approach will help restore confidence in the examination system and mitigate the risk of irregularities. The distinction between the Examination of Selection and the Examination of Rejection must be clearly defined and resolved. High-stakes exams like NEET and JEE are designed to be rejection-based, aiming to filter

out unqualified candidates. This means the primary goal is to eliminate those not meeting the necessary standards. To achieve this, paper setters need specialized training to craft exams that effectively serve this purpose. Each question should act as a hurdle designed to bifurcate and challenge candidates and comprehensively test their knowledge and skills. This approach ensures that only the most capable and prepared students succeed. A strong question bank, online testing, and AI-based proctoring can enhance the credibility of exams. Involving all teachers in contributing to the question bank and testing items for difficulty promotes participation. Implementing global standard cybersecurity protocols is essential to maintain the integrity of the examination process. Implementing biometric verification for handling question papers can prevent incidents like the NEET 2024 leak. Technological measures like constant surveillance, digital encryption, and secure transmission methods are crucial for ensuring fairness and security. The recent government notification of the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act on June 21 is a significant move to ensure the integrity of India's examination system. This Act introduces stringent penalties, including jail sentences of up to 10 years and fines of up to Rs 1 crore, for those involved in organized paper leaks and examination malpractices. It aims to combat examination fraud and restore public confidence in the examination process, clearly conveying that cheating and corruption will not be tolerated. This legislation deserves widespread support as it seeks to protect honest students' hard work and aspirations, ensuring a fair and transparent system for all. The grace marks system should be eliminated as it relies on subjective measures like answering speed and accuracy, leading to inconsistency and unfair advantage. Examination bodies should avoid awarding grace marks to ensure a level playing field for all candidates, maintaining the credibility and fairness of the examination system. The government's prompt action in conducting NEET again for 1,563 students in seven centres

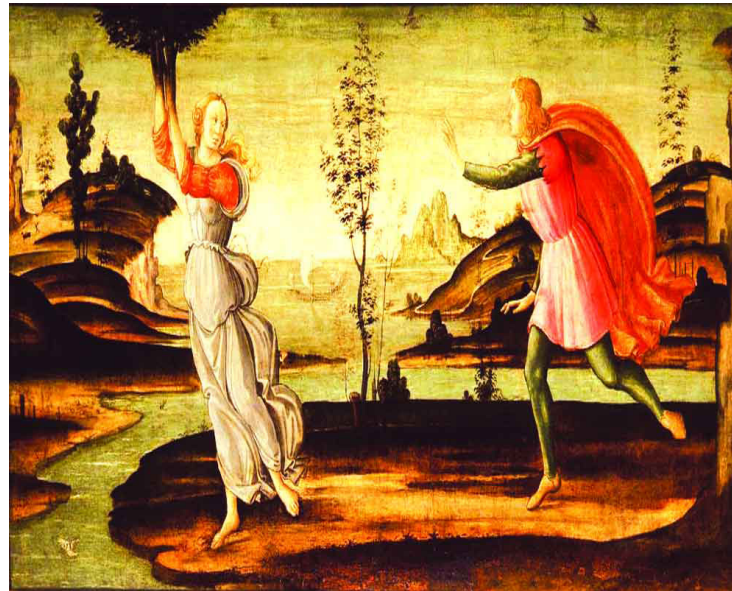
is commendable. Recently, the CBI was appointed to investigate NEET irregularities and has been rigorously probing the entire examination fraud, leading to the arrest of numerous brokers, teachers, principals, and others involved in the wrongdoing. This swift response demonstrates the government's commitment to maintaining the integrity of the examination process and ensuring a fair opportunity for all students. The collaborative effort between the government and investigative agencies like the CBI is essential in addressing such malpractices and restoring trust in the examination system. Focusing on creating and enforcing fair exam policies is essential rather than engaging in political finger-pointing. Opposition parties should provide helpful solutions for issues such as exam leaks and fraud, and we need to come together to solve these problems proactively. We must prioritize students' well-being and create a secure, transparent exam environment to support their academic and career goals, positively impacting the country's future. (The writer is a professor and a BJP leader; views are personal)

A Tale of Deceit, Desire and Devastation

RAVI VALLURI

Those who are infatuated fall back into the swirling current (of samsara) like a spider on its self-spun web," said Buddha. Aeon ago lived an old farmer whose wife was young and alluring. The prepossessing woman was not satisfied physically by her aged husband and fantasized about young men. She hardly attended to the household chores and was perpetually looking for the company of youngsters to fulfil her carnal desires. A trickster came to know about the quandary of the winsome one and seeing her alone went up to her uttering, "I am a widower. The moment I saw you I was ensnared by your voluptuous body. I beseech you to give me the pleasure of your company. However, I have very little wealth at my disposal." Delighted at the

offer, the woman blurted, "O handsome one, my husband has plenty of lucre. He is old and infirm. I will embezzle the mammon and jewellery at our house and let us scoot from this place to some far away place where we can spend rest of our lives." The stripling trickster possessing a chiselled frame became excited and asked the damsel to bring the loot and gold to a place where he would be waiting for her. "We will then leave the place as it darkens," he informed her. The farmer's wife waited till it was dark and when her husband fell asleep robbed the money and gold and left the house in the cover of darkness to meet her lover. The



mountebank took the bag full of money and gold on the pretext that he would carry it and they began their journey. After travelling some distance, they halted as there was a river to cross. The hoodwinker pondered, "What do I do with this libidinous woman? If someone were

to set his eyes on her, he would perforce have to protect her. Let me scoot with the loot," he decided. His mind was cannonaded with all these thoughts, "Look, my dear, it would be arduous to cross the river. Let me first ferry the money bag to the other side of the river. I will

for the deluder to return. Suddenly a jackal with a piece of meat in his mouth happened to pass by. The jackal happened to see a fish that emerged from the water and in attempting to grab it dropped the piece of meat and ran towards it. However, the fish, seeing the rushing jackal, jumped

back into the water. Disappointed, the jackal went back to pick up the piece of meat. Unexpectedly a kite swooped and took it away before the jackal could reach it. The naked woman laughed at the jackal that had lost the fish and also the piece of meat. Hurt by the woman's behaviour, the jackal said, "You may be twice as intelligent as I am. But what is the use? You have lost your husband, your lover and your wealth too. The distraught woman realized her folly and entered a temple to pray for her sins as the priest draped her nudity and uttered, "Cover your nudity with the cloak of purity. Lust is ephemeral, Godliness is permanent." (The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views expressed are personal)

Facing unexplainable mood disorders? You may be low on Vitamin B 12: Doctors

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

Vitamin B-12 plays a key role in producing brain chemicals that affect mood and other brain functions, said doctors on Saturday.

Vitamin B-12 (also known as cobalamin) plays a crucial role in the formation of red blood cells, cell metabolism, nerve function, and the production of DNA. Some common symptoms of Vitamin B12 deficiency include strange sensations, numbness, or tingling in the hands, legs, or feet, difficulty walking (staggering, balance prob-

lems), anaemia, difficulty thinking and reasoning (cognitive difficulties), memory loss, weakness, or fatigue.

"Vitamin B-12 and other B vitamins play a crucial role in producing brain chemicals that affect mood and other brain functions. Low levels of B-12, as well as other B vitamins like vitamin B-6 and folate, may be linked to depression," Dr Anshu Rohtagi, Senior Consultant, Department of Neurology, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, told IANS. "The deficiencies can result from poor diet or difficulties in absorbing

the vitamins consumed. So, maintaining adequate B-12 level is essential for overall well-being, including mood regulation," she added.

Vitamin B-12 is majorly found in poultry, meat, fish, and dairy products. It is available as an oral supplement, as injections, or nasal spray.

People who consume a vegetarian or vegan diet may be more prone to deficiency as plant foods do not contain vitamin B-12. The elderly and people with digestive tract conditions that affect the absorption of nutrients



also are susceptible to vitamin B-12 deficiency.

"Vitamin B12 plays a crucial role in producing brain chemicals like serotonin, which helps

regulate mood. When B12 levels dip, these chemicals can become imbalanced, potentially leading to symptoms like mood swings, irritability, and

even depression," Dr Guruprasad Hosurkar, Additional Director - Neurology, Fortis Hospital, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru, told IANS.

Importantly, the doctor explained that the "connection is not gender-specific. Both men and women can experience mood changes due to B12 deficiency".

While research is ongoing, studies suggest a link between low B12 and depression, with some showing improvement in mood with B12 supplementation.

However, it's important

to note that mood swings can have many causes, and a doctor should be consulted to rule out other factors and determine if a B12 deficiency is present, Dr Guruprasad said.

"Vitamin B12 deficiency causes several neurological symptoms such as tingling, numbness & burning of feet, imbalance, memory impairment, mood disorders, psychosis, seizures, and Parkinsonism," explained Dr Sudhir Kumar, from Indra-prashta Apollo Hospitals, Hyderabad in a post on social media platform X.

"In a patient presenting

with neurological or psychiatric symptoms, suspect vitamin B12 deficiency as a cause (especially if there is no obvious cause identified). Early diagnosis and prompt initiation of treatment rapidly improves patient's symptoms," he added.

The doctors also stressed the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle and advised key behaviours such as managing high blood pressure, and blood sugar, quitting smoking, and alcohol, staying physically active, getting adequate sleep, and managing stress.

Cut down smoking to avoid cognitive ageing: Study

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

Want to maintain sharp memory skills and cognitive function as you age? Cutting down on smoking suggests a large study that found it to be a key lifestyle factor linked to cognitive decline.

The study, published in Nature Communications, is based on a 10-year survey of 32,000 adults aged 50 or over from 14 countries in Europe.

The team led by researchers from the University College London, UK showed that cognitive decline was faster for lifestyles that included smoking.

People who smoked had cognitive scores that



declined up to 85 per cent more over 10 years than those who did not.

Lead author Mikaela Bloomberg (UCL Behavioural Science & Health)

said the study "is observational; it cannot defini-

tively establish cause and effect, but it suggests smoking might be a particularly important factor influencing the rate of cognitive ageing".

As per previous studies, people who engaged

in more healthy behaviours like regular exercise, and moderate alcohol intake have slower cognitive decline. However, it did not specify whether all behaviours contributed equally to cognitive decline.

However, the new study showed that among the healthy behaviours, "not smoking may be the most important in terms of maintaining cognitive function".

Among those unable to stop smoking, the study suggests engaging in other healthy behaviours such as regular exercise, moderate alcohol consumption, and remaining socially active "to offset adverse cognitive effects", Mikaela said.

BMI alone not sufficient, waist-to-height ratio more effective in diagnosing obesity: Researchers

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

Obesity can no longer be just defined by body mass index (BMI) and rather should be about how body fat is distributed throughout one's body, researchers said while launching a new framework for diagnosing and managing obesity.

Published in the journal Nature Medicine, the framework looks specifically at fat accumulated in the abdomen, measured as 'waist-to-height ratio'—an increased value of which is related to a higher risk of developing cardiometabolic complications, according to the



researchers.

An "important novelty" of the framework is including a waist-to-height ratio higher than 0.5, along with a BMI of 25-30, for diagnosing obesity, the authors, representing the European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO), said.

"The choice of introducing waist-to-height ratio, instead of waist circumference, in the diagnostic process is due to its superiority as a cardiometabolic disease risk marker," they wrote.

Accumulation of abdominal fat is a more reliable predictor of health

deterioration, compared to BMI, even for individuals not meeting the current standard cut-off value for obesity diagnosis, which is a BMI of 30, the authors said.

They said that the current guidelines are based on evidence from studies in which participants meeting cut-off values were included for analysis, rather than on a "complete clinical evaluation".

"The basis for this change is the recognition that BMI alone is insufficient as a diagnostic criterion, and that body fat distribution has a substantial effect on health," they wrote.

FSSAI approves proposal for bolder labelling of sugar, salt & saturated fat on packaged food items

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

In a historic move, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has approved a proposal to make a bolder and bigger display of nutritional information regarding total sugar, salt and saturated fat on packaged food items, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) said on Saturday.

The proposal calls for packaged food items to carry the amount of total sugar, salt and saturated fat "in bold letters and relatively increased font size."

The Ministry noted that "the information regard-



ing per serve percentage contribution to Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDAs) would be given in bold letters for total sugar, total saturated fat and sodium content."

The decision which will amend the Food Safety and Standards (Labelling

and Display) Regulations, 2020 was taken in the 44th meeting of the Food Authority.

Regulation 2 (v) and 5(3) specify requirements to mention serving size and nutritional information on the food product label, respectively.

"The amendment aims to empower consumers to better understand the nutritional value of the product they are consuming and make healthier decisions," the MoHFW said.

Healthcare and nutritional experts have been calling out the need to curb the intake of packaged food items, rich in sugar, salt and saturated fats — a major reason for the rising incidences of non-communicable Diseases (NCDs).

The proposal will enable "people to make healthier choices as well as contribute towards efforts to combat NCDs and promote public health and well-being."

The FSSAI is also expected to share the draft notification for the said amendment in the public domain for inviting suggestions and objections.

Further, FSSAI has been issuing advisories from time to time to prevent false and misleading claims such as 'Health Drink', '100% fruit juices', the use of the term wheat flour/ refined wheat flour, the advertisement and marketing of ORS along with prefix or suffix, nutrient function claim for multi-source edible vegetable oils etc.

These advisories and directives are issued to prevent misleading claims by FBOs, MoHFW said.

Mice with functional humanised immune system shows promise

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

A first-of-its-kind mice model with a fully functional human immune system and a human-like gut microbiome has shown promise of mounting specific antibody responses.

To date, researchers have not developed a fully functional human immune system, but only those with a brief lifespan that do not mount efficient immune responses, making them unsuitable for the development of in vivo human immunotherapies, human disease modelling, or human vaccine development. Developed by scientists at The University of Texas in the US, the new model will overcome limi-

tations of currently available in vivo human models and is a breakthrough for biomedical research and promises new insight into immunotherapy development and disease modelling.

Detailed in the journal Nature Immunology, the new humanised mice, called TruHuX (for truly human, or THX), possess a fully developed and fully functional human immune system, including lymph nodes, germinal centres, thymus human epithelial cells, human T and B lymphocytes, memory B lymphocytes, and plasma cells making highly specific antibody and autoantibodies identical to those of humans.

THX mice mount mature neutralising antibody responses to Salmonella Typhimurium and SARS-CoV-2 virus Spike S1 RBD after vaccination with Salmonella flagellin and the Pfizer Covid-19 mRNA vaccine, respectively.

It is also amenable to developing full-fledged systemic lupus autoimmunity after an injection of pristane — an oil that triggers an inflammatory response. "THX mice provide a platform for human immune system studies, development of human vaccines, and testing of therapeutics," said Paolo Casali, Professor at the University of Texas School of Medicine in San Antonio, US.

PULSUS to set up Rs 300cr AI based pharma healthcare IT Hub in Telangana

AGENCIES
HYDERABAD, JULY 6

Hyderabad headquartered PULSUS Group on Friday announced to set up Rs 300cr AI Based Pharma Healthcare IT Hub in Ameenpur (Sangareddy district) of Telangana.

This project will catalyse the healthcare and IT landscape, generating a significant economic impact by creating around 50,000 jobs, the company said in a release here.

This was announced by PULSUS Group CEO and Managing Director Dr. Srinubabu Gedela on the sidelines of the 73 IPC Congress, an annual event of Pharmacists which began here today.

Early estimates suggest the hub to generate 10,000 direct positions within the hub itself and an estimated 40,000 indirect jobs through

supporting industries and services.

Dr Srinubabu emphasized the transformative potential of AI, stating, "This AI-powered hub will be aligned with IPC congress theme 'Role of Indian Pharma: For Global Well-being'".

By integrating the most advanced artificial intelligence, we aim to streamline processes, enhance precision in drug development, and improve patient outcomes.

This positions Telangana at the forefront of healthcare innovation in India."

The key features of the project include innovative AI to enrich all aspects of pharma, from research and development to healthcare delivery and generate a sizable number of jobs, providing substantial employment opportunities for local residents, he

said.

Located within the designated IT/ITeS Zone in Ameenpur, the hub benefits from exceptional infrastructure and connectivity; the project enjoys dedicated support from the Telangana government and the Software Technology Parks of India, highlighting its strategic importance, he added.

The Pharma Industry in Hyderabad contributes more than 40 per cent bulk drug production in the country and is named as "Bulk Drug Capital of India" and "Vaccine Capital of the World".

The Innovation, Infrastructure and Inclusive growth of Hyderabad is paying rich dividends, and the state is second in manufacturing as per innovation index rankings 2022 and leading the country with highest per-capita income in 2022-23.

3 more pregnant women test positive for Zika virus, Pune tally now at 9

AGENCIES
PUNE, JULY 6

The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) on Saturday identified three more pregnant women with the Zika virus infection. This takes the count of infected pregnant women to five, while the total number of cases in the city is 9.

"We have stepped up our surveillance activities. Samples have been sent to the National Institute of Virology as part of screening pregnant women from areas where Zika cases were detected. Over all, 68 samples from pregnant women have been sent to the apex laboratory," Dr Rajesh Dighe, assistant chief medical officer, PMC, said

The civic health department has levied a fine of Rs 10,000 on the builder of a society in Mundhwa after a mosquito breeding site was located in a duct.

"A 33-year-old woman who is 8 weeks pregnant stays in this society and while she is asymptomatic, our team has visited the family and counselled them," Dr Dighe said.

"We have advised the woman to get a nuchal translucency (NT) scan, which is an ultrasound that measures the amount of fluid behind the baby's neck in the first trimester of pregnancy. She has been asked to consult her doctor, take folic acid tablets as directed and undergo the NT screening test to check whether the baby is at risk of any congenital conditions and if further tests are required," Dr Dighe told The Indian Express.

A 27-year-old woman from Ambegaon Bk, Sinhadga road, who is in her 12th week of pregnancy, and a 28 year old woman from Pashan/Aundh were detected to have Zika virus infections. The 28-year-old woman, who

had a fever and rash, was admitted to a private hospital while the woman from Ambegaon had symptoms like headache.

All nine patients who were detected with Zika virus infection are stable, health officials said. Since Zika is associated with microcephaly and neurological consequences in the foetus of the affected pregnant woman, doctors have been urged to ensure close monitoring. Health officials have yet again appealed to citizens to empty water containers, air coolers and ensure that there are mosquito breeding sites within their homes.

The civic health department has collected fines to the tune of Rs 84,800 from societies and under construction sites where mosquito breeding sites have been identified.

As many as 92 notices have been issued against the defaulters.

Centre directs states to be alert about Zika spread

AGENCIES
PANAJI, JULY 6

The health department on Friday sent the Union health ministry's Zika advisory to all health centres, including those in the interiors. An Aedes-mosquito-borne viral disease like dengue and chikungunya, Zika is not fatal but is associated with microcephaly (reduced head size) of babies born to affected pregnant women, making it a major concern.

"Health centres have been instructed to ramp up the vector surveillance that they're already doing to tackle dengue, which is spread by the same mosquito."

They have to be more vigilant to ensure there's no breeding of the Aedes-mosquito. If breeding sites of the mosquito are reduced, chances of the disease spreading are lesser," deputy director of health services in charge

of the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme, Dr Kalpana Mahatme, told TOI.

Goa has not reported any suspected Zika cases.

In case any pregnant woman reports symptoms of Zika, health centres have been asked to send samples to National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, and closely monitor foetal growth as Zika is associated with neurological consequences in the foetus of the affected woman.

The advisory, however, also goes on to say that although Zika is reported to be associated with microcephaly, there is no report of such case in India since 2016.

States have been urged to promote awareness on social media and other platforms to reduce any panic among the community as Zika is like any other viral infection with most cases being asymptomatic and mild.

Pandit Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das had Pan-India Vision: President

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 6

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday said that people should take inspiration from Utkalmani Pandit Gopabandhu Das, who had a pan-India vision and was dedicated to Odia pride as well as Indian nationalism.

Addressing the 96th Death Anniversary of Utkalmani Pandit Gopabandhu Das here this evening, the President said that Pandit Gopabandhu wrote, "Wherever I am in India, I should believe that I am at home."

"We should take inspiration from this pan-India vision of Gopabandhu ji," she stated.

The President said it doesn't matter how long a person lives; rather, what is important is the kind of life they live. The reputation of a person is evaluated based on their contribution to society and the country.

She noted that it is amazing to think about the number of good deeds Pandit Gopabandhu Das accomplished in his short lifespan.

Paying her tributes to Pandit Gopabandhu Das,



the President said his contributions to social service, literature, education, and journalism are unforgettable. She mentioned that Pandit Gopabandhu Das knew very well that no society or nation can progress without proper education.

The Mukதாகash School, also known as Van Vidyalaya, at Satyabadi in Puri district, was established by Pandit Gopabandhu Das, who emphasized the holistic development of students through Van Vidyalaya.

In his view, education does not mean only bookish knowledge; rather, it should develop students physically, mentally, intellectually, and spiritually as well, the President said.

In 1919, Pandit Gop-

abandhu Das spread the message of freedom in Odisha through the publication of the Samaj newspaper.

He also raised the problems of the people through this newspaper. His editorials in the Samaj have enriched Odia literature.

The President said that Pandit Gopabandhu Das believed in nationalism and democratic values. His poetry and prose convey messages of patriotism and the welfare of the world.

Murmu arrived here on a four-day visit to Odisha to attend several programs in the state, including participation in the Puri Rath Yatra.

On her arrival at the Biju Patnaik International

Airport, she proceeded directly to Jayadev Bhawan to grace the 96th death anniversary of Pandit Gopabandhu Das, a prominent social worker, reformer, political activist, journalist, poet, and essayist.

She will stay the night at Raj Bhawan, visit Puri on Sunday morning to participate in the Rath Yatra, and stay the night at Puri Raj Bhawan.

The President will go for a morning walk on Puri Beach on the morning of July 8, after which she will return to Bhubaneswar to visit the Khandagiri Udayagiri caves.

The President will then proceed to Bibhuti Kanungo College of Arts and Crafts, where she will interact with the students of the institute.

On the afternoon of July 8, President Murmu will attend a program at the Divine Retreat Centre at Mendhasal Haridamada on the outskirts of the capital city.

On July 9, the President will attend the 13th graduation ceremony of the National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER) at Jatni before leaving for Delhi in the afternoon.

Hyd: High-level discussions between AP-Telangana CMs over bifurcation pending issues begin

AGENCIES

HYDERABAD, JULY 6

Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh N. Chandrababu Naidu and Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy held a high-level discussion on Saturday at Mahatma Jyoti Rao Phule Praja Bhavan to resolve pending disputes and issues related to the AP State Reorganisation Act.

The meeting aims to resolve the disputes and other issues arising from the AP State Reorganisation Act.

Telangana came into existence on June 2, 2014, following the division of undivided Andhra Pradesh.

Though ten years after separation, several issues, such as bifurcation of assets, state-run institutions, power bill dues, and the and the transfer of leftover employees to their respective states, are still unresolved between the two Telugu states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Hyderabad ceased to be the common capital for both states on June 2, this year, as per the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014.



The metropolis is now the capital city of Telangana only.

Sharing of river waters and irrigation projects by them, re-merger of villages from AP to Telangana, and power dues and institutions listed in Schedule IX and Schedule X of the AP State Reorganisation Act are among the issues that will be discussed in the meeting of CMs.

According to sources, the Telangana government is likely to seek a share of the 1,000-km coastline, revenues of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTDF), and a portion of Krishnapatnam, Machilipatnam, and Gangavaram ports located in Andhra Pradesh.

The Congress government in Telangana also seeks the remerge of seven mandals with Telangana that were allocated to AP

for the Polavaram project and Rs 24,000 crore in energy dues from the neighbour.

However, AP CM had earlier said the seven mandals were crucial for the execution of the Polavaram project.

A few ministers and officials from both states, including Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Bhatt Vikramarkha, also participated in the crucial meeting.

Taking the initiative for the talks, Naidu wrote a letter to the Telangana Chief Minister last week, proposing a face-to-face meeting on July 6 to address unresolved bifurcation issues.

Revanth Reddy, who welcomed Naidu's proposal, invited him for the same on July 6.

AP CM Naidu, who arrived in the city on

Friday evening to participate in the meeting, was accorded a grand welcome by TDP activists.

So far, about 30 meetings have been held between the officials of the two states, with not much solution in sight.

Out of 142 institutions in Schedule X, there are still disputes over the distribution of 30 institutions like Telugu Academy, Telugu University, and Ambedkar University.

The Telangana CM had earlier requested Union Home Minister Amit Shah's cooperation in resolving long-pending issues related to the Andhra Pradesh-Telangana Reorganisation Act.

Revath Reddy urged Amit Shah for a harmonious resolution of disputes related to the distribution of government buildings and corporations listed under Schedule 9 (as per Sections 53, 68, and 71 of the Act) and the institutions listed under Schedule 10 (as per Section 75 of the Act).

The CM emphasised the need for justice for Telangana in claims made by Andhra Pradesh over assets and institutions not mentioned in the Reorganisation Act.

Dalai Lama's 89th birthday celebrated at Dharamshala

AGENCIES

DHARAMSHALA, JULY 6

On the occasion of the 89th birthday anniversary of the Tibetan spiritual leader on Saturday, his Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tibetans led by the Central Tibetan Administration gathered at the Tsuglagkhang courtyard to commemorate the biggest celebration of the Tibetan community.

The presence of the Chief Guest, the Chief Minister of Sikkim, Prem Singh Tamang, and other distinguished guests graced the event.

These included the Speaker of Sikkim Legislative Assembly, Mingma Norbu Sherpa, Sri Tapir Gao, a member of Lok Sabha representing the Arunachal East constituency, and several other dignitary officials and ministers of Sikkim.

Additionally, the event was attended by Bhutla Karpoche, Deputy Speaker of the Ontario Legislative Assembly, Canada, and Namgyal Gangshontsang, Mayor of Oetwil am See, a municipality in the district of Meilen in the canton of Zürich in Switzerland.

Following Sikyong



Penpa Tsering and Speaker Sonam Tenphel's delivery of the statements of the Kashag and Tibetan Parliament, respectively, the guests extended their best wishes to the Dalai Lama on his 89th birthday, first by Namgyal Gangshontsang, Mayor of Oetwil am See. In his remarks, he conveyed greetings and gratitude on behalf of the community.

He further highlighted the profound impact of His Holiness's lifelong dedication to the Tibetan cause and global humanitarian efforts, while also recognising the collaborative efforts of the Central Tibetan Administration in achieving these goals.

The Chief Guest initiated his speech by conveying his sincere appreciation

for the invitation extended by the Central Tibetan Administration and recognising the worldwide observance of His Holiness's birthday on July 6. He commended Dharamshala, especially McLeod Ganj, as a symbol of compassion and wisdom fostered under His Holiness's guidance.

In acknowledging His Holiness's challenging upbringing and subsequent global influence, he underscored the universal teachings of Buddhism, peace, and compassion espoused by His Holiness. The esteemed guest warmly regarded His Holiness's well-being and longevity, noting Sikkim's pride in hosting His Holiness and reaping the benefits of his visits.

The chief minister emphasised the transformative influence of His Holiness's teachings in promoting harmony and sustainability, pledging unwavering support and disseminating His Holiness's principles for a peaceful world.

Furthermore, the special guest, Bhutla Karpoche, in her address, reflected upon the tireless hard work of His Holiness for Tibetans and expressed gratitude, especially praising His Holiness's visionary leadership since his exile from Tibet at age 24. She emphasised His Holiness's global stature as a revered spiritual leader. She highlighted recent commendations, including His Holiness' designation as the preeminent Bud-

dhist leader by the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace and his honorary Canadian citizenship. She called upon individuals to uphold His Holiness's principles of peace, harmony, and unity as a tribute while conveying heartfelt wishes for his enduring health and longevity and ending with her address.

In his address, Sri Tapir Gao expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity to celebrate the life and teachings of His Holiness. He highlighted the global impact of His Holiness's peace, compassion, and understanding principles. Reflecting on His Holiness's remarkable journey, Sri Tapir Gao emphasised the historic significance of His Holiness's arrival in India, symbolising a deep bond of friendship and solidarity between India and Tibet.

The event saw lively cultural performances from Tibetan schools, regional Tibetan associations in Dharamshala, and the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA). It also saw the honouring of the chief guests and the guests with a memento by the Tibetan Parliament in Exile and Kashag.

Strong foundation of cooperation will be laid in next 5 years: Amit Shah

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, JULY 6

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah on Saturday said that in the next five years a strong foundation of cooperation will be laid so that it impacts every village and household for the next 125 years.

Addressing the 'Sahkar se Samridhhi' (Prosperity through Cooperation) programme organised on the occasion of 102nd International Day of Cooperatives in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, Shah said, "Today we are at an important juncture and the 125 years old cooperative movement is making a big contribution in various areas of the country".

He said that the cooperative sector is contributing 20 percent in the distribution of agricultural loans, 35 percent in the distribution of fertilizers, 21 percent in production, 31 percent in sugar production, 13 percent in the purchase of wheat and 20 percent in the purchase of paddy, an official statement said here.

The cooperative sector



is making a very important contribution in the rural and agricultural economy, Shah added.

The Minister said the only objective behind the mantra of 'Sahkar se Samridhhi' given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is to bring confidence, happiness and prosperity in the lives of 30-crore people who are backward even after 75 years of independence.

Amit Shah said that the Modi government has come up with two new schemes through cooperatives and the government has taken important steps to promote Ethanol and for the prosperity of the farmers producing Maize.

The government have

made arrangements that two big cooperative institutions of the government will buy Maize produced by the farmers online at the minimum support price (MSP) and Ethanol will be made from it, he asserted.

Adding that this will not only make the farmers prosperous but will also help in increasing the country's foreign exchange reserves by reducing the import of Petrol.

Shah said that similarly, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) and consumer cooperative institutions will also procure four types of pulses at 100 percent MSP.

K'taka: farmers' delegation meets Guv, demands probe into MUDA land scam

AGENCIES

BENGALURU, JULY 6

A delegation of State Farmer Organisations Federation and State Sugarcane Growers Association met Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot on Saturday and submitted a memorandum demanding a probe into the MUDA land scam allegedly involving Chief Minister Siddaramaiah by a high court justice.

Kuruburu Shanthakumar, the president of the federation said that the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) land scam runs into thousands of crores and influential political leaders are involved in it. Hence, the probe needs to be conducted by a High Court judge.

Documents and files went missing mysteriously from the MUDA office one year ago. The organization had then protested before the



office and demanded a probe. If the government had taken action then, the handing over of government property worth thousands of crores to influential people would have been avoided, Shanthakumar pointed out.

"Today, those in real estate are representatives' of the people and

they are systematically cheating the farmers and public. While acquiring land from farmers, they are adopting arm-twisting tactics and giving paltry compensation to farmers," he charged.

Both the ruling as well as opposition party leaders are involved, he stated.

Our youth must have access to education in cutting-edge technologies: Yogi

AGENCIES

GORAKHPUR, JULY 6

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday emphasised the importance of embracing advanced technology to progress with the times and said that To achieve this, it is crucial to educate youth in new-age technical courses so that they remain at the forefront of modern advancements.

Addressing the public after inaugurating the residential and non-residential buildings of Government Polytechnic in Hardi of Sahjanwa, the CM mentioned that the construction of these buildings amounted to Rs 21.02 crore.

He highlighted that



today, some youth are wasting both their money and time by falling prey to various online fraudulent companies. He emphasised that cyber security has become a significant global concern.

Yogi said, "By implementing degree or diploma programs in cyber security, trained youth can be prepared to tackle various cyber-related challenges and secure employment opportunities in this

field."

He emphasised the importance of ensuring that today's youth have access to education in cutting-edge technologies like Internet of Things, Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence. He stressed the need to advance this initiative at the grassroots level to empower local communities.

The CM highlighted that employed youth would significantly contribute to the development of Gorakhpur, the state and the nation, enhancing their own prosperity in the process.

Highlighting the secure environment in UP, he said, "Due to stringent security measures, an excellent industrial atmo-

sphere has flourished today."

Yogi underscored ongoing efforts to develop a skilled workforce through numerous degree and diploma programs. He also mentioned the presence of three technical universities in UP including Lucknow, Kanpur, and Madan Mohan Malaviya University of Technology in Gorakhpur, dedicated to nurturing talent and driving technological advancement in the state.

He further highlighted that various government engineering colleges, polytechnics, ITI colleges, and private engineering institutions are advancing technical education in the state.

China's public security ministry directs local rescue after dike breach

AGENCIES
BEIJING, JULY 6

China's Ministry of Public Security has directed the public security authorities in central China's Hunan Province to take swift action to carry out rescue and relief work after a dike breach in Dongting Lake in the province that occurred Friday afternoon, the ministry said on Saturday.

Public security authorities in Hunan were asked to work in collaboration with relevant departments to carry out disaster relief and rescue work, relocate affected residents, manage traffic and maintain order, ensuring the overall stability of society and the safety of people's lives and property.

A batch of flood prevention equipment and supplies was urgently dispatched to the front line, according to the ministry, reported Xinhua news agency.

The ministry demanded all-out efforts to search for affected residents, ensure their relocation and provide them with adequate living supplies.

After the dike breach, public security authorities in Hunan promptly deployed police to the affected area to engage in disaster relief work and reinforced security patrols in important locations such as settlement sites and storage places for rescue supplies.

The dike breach that occurred in the Dongting Lake was initially about 10 meters wide but expanded afterwards. The affected area near Tuanbei Village covers approximately 50 square km. This area experienced a dike breach in 1996.

Since June 16, Hunan has seen its heaviest rainfall of the year, breaking historical records in some regions.

Leakage occurs in central China dam, over 1000 residents relocated

AGENCIES
CHANGSHA (CHINA), JULY 6

Over 1,000 residents have been relocated after a leakage occurred in a dam at the Jiufeng reservoir in Pingjiang County, central China's Hunan Province, local authorities said Saturday.

If the leakage continues to develop, about 21,000 people downstream may be affected, according to a preliminary investigation, reports Xinhua news agency.

Rescue efforts, including the relocation of residents living near the dam and pumping water out of the reservoir, are underway.

So far, the water level on the reservoir has dropped to 125 meters and the leakage has been effectively controlled. The large-scale relocation of residents has not been prepared for the moment, said experts at the site.

Since June 16, Hunan has seen its heaviest rainfall of the year, breaking historical records in some regions.

Singapore Police arrest 309 suspects for scams

AGENCIES
SINGAPORE, JULY 6

Singaporean police arrested 309 suspects for scam offenses from June 21 to July 4, according to a statement issued by the police Saturday.

The suspects were involved in over 1,300 cases, including love scams, e-commerce scams, friend impersonation scams, investment scams and job scams. The police said victims lost over 10 million Singapore dollars (7.4 million U.S. dollars), reports Xinhua news agency.

The suspects were under investigation for cheating, money laundering, or providing payment services without a license.

Construction of 17 school buildings launched in Afghanistan's Paktika

AGENCIES
KABUL, JULY 6

The Afghan caretaker government's Education Ministry has begun the construction work of 17 school buildings in the eastern Paktika province, state media reported on Saturday. The buildings will be built at a cost of 167 million afghanis (about \$2.36 million) on the outskirts of the province's 15 districts, Bakhtar news agency reported. The report also said that the Afghan government will construct a township for poor and homeless families in Daman district in the southern Kandahar province, reported Xinhua news agency. The Afghan caretaker government has launched a series of infrastructure projects, including building water canals, highways, and solar power systems across the war-ravaged country to create job opportunities and alleviate poverty.

Sri Lanka earns over \$1.5 bn from tourism in first half of year

AGENCIES
COLOMBO, JULY 6

Sri Lanka's earnings from tourism rose to more than \$1.5 billion in the first six months of 2024, a 77.9-per cent increase year-on-year, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) said in its latest weekly report. Tourist arrivals in the first half were 1.01 million, up 61.7 per cent from the same period in 2023. Tourism earnings in June hit \$113.4 million, compared to \$100.3 million a year ago, reported Xinhua news agency.

Masoud Pezeshkian wins Iran's 14th presidential elections

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

Masoud Pezeshkian, a reformist and former Health Minister of Iran, on Saturday, won the 14th presidential election by beating his rival, Saeed Jalili, local media reported.

Masoud Pezeshkian got 16,384,402 of the total 30,573,931 votes in the runoff, reports Iran International News.

The voter turnout, however, stood at 49.8 per cent, relatively lower than the first phase of the elections, as over 50 per cent of the eligible voters boycotted the elections.

Voting for the Iran presidential runoff commenced on Friday morning, with two top contenders, Masoud Pezeshkian and Saeed Jalili, a princi-



plist and the former chief negotiator in the nuclear talks between Tehran and world powers, in the run.

Iran went to polls on June 28, and the next day, Spokesman of Iran's Election Headquarters Mohsen Eslami announced the results for the first phase, in which Pezeshkian garnered 42.6 per cent of the total votes, while Jalili got 38.8 per cent.

Despite leading the race, none of the candidates were able to cross the 50 per cent mark required to win the presidential race.

Iran's 14th presidential election, which had initially been set for 2025, was rescheduled following the unexpected death of President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash on May 19.

UN warns of 'risk of full-scale' war on Israel-Lebanon border where Indian peacekeepers are posted

AGENCIES
UNITED NATIONS, JULY 6

The world organisation has warned of a "heightened risk of a full-scale war" along the Lebanon-Israel border where 901 Indian peacekeepers are deployed.

"The UN is deeply concerned at the increase in the intensity of exchanges of fire across the Blue Line yesterday, which heightens the risk of a full-scale war", Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's spokesperson's office said on Friday.

"Escalation can and must be avoided. We reiterate that the danger of miscalculation leading to a sudden and wider conflagration is real," it added.

After an Israeli drone killed a senior commander of the Hezbollah in South-

ern Lebanon on Wednesday, the militia responded by sending a barrage of 100 rockets into Israel.

The well-entrenched Hezbollah, which has the backing of Iran has threatened to continue attacks on Israel in solidarity with Hamas under Israeli assault in Gaza.

The decades-long tensions in the area have intensified since October 7 when Hamas attacked Israel, which launched a retribution on Gaza that it controls.

In solidarity with Hamas, Hezbollah said attacks on Israel till there is a ceasefire in Gaza, raising fears of a wider regional conflict.

Civilians have suffered the most from the volley of attacks between Hezbollah and Israel.

About 60,000 Lebanese have reportedly been dis-



placed, and, according to United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken, about 20,000 Israelis have also been forced to flee the border areas because of the attacks.

"Israel has effectively lost its sovereignty in the northern quadrant of its country because people don't safe to go to their homes," he said on Monday underscoring the risk of war.

Botswana launches art exhibition to promote creative industry

AGENCIES
GABORONE, JULY 6

The 16th National Art, Basket and Craft Exhibition was launched in Gaborone, Botswana's capital.

Held under the theme "The Creative Industry: Botswana's Economic Future Redefined," the exhibition features about 70 paintings, sculptures and baskets, the country's most famous traditional craft product.

The exhibition will run until the end of August.

As part of this year's National Arts Festival, the exhibition provides a platform for Botswanan artists to showcase their talent, creativity and the rich cultural diversity of the country through fine art and crafts.

"Botswana is supporting the creative industry to become an important driver of the economy through the National Arts Festival, as part of its goal



of transitioning from a resource-based to a knowledge-based economy," said Bridget John, permanent secretary of the Ministry of Youth, Gender, Sport and Culture, during her remarks at the exhibition, reports Xinhua news agency.

John said that the National Arts Council of Botswana, established in 2020, aims to support and grow the creative industry by creating new opportunities in collaboration with the government and artists.

Monica Selelo, head of visual arts at the Ministry, said more than 14,000 artists participated this year in the festival from across the country, which promotes both visual arts (fashion, pottery, painting, graphic design, photography, and sculpting) and performing arts.

Selelo added that some of the artists have turned professional after participating in the event and are now able to sustain themselves and their families through their art and craft.

NATO summit to discuss with Indo-Pacific partners resilience, cybersecurity: US official

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON, JULY 6

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and its Indo-Pacific partners, including South Korea, plan to discuss resilience, support for Ukraine, disinformation, cybersecurity and emerging technologies during their summit in Washington next week, a senior US administration official said.

The NATO summit is set to take place in the US capital from Tuesday to Thursday. The leaders of the alliance's four Indo-Pacific partners (IP4) - South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and Japan have been invited to the summit that marks the 75th anniversary of NATO's founding, reported Yonhap news agency.

"We are bringing together some of our closest non-NATO partners to have a discussion around issues like resilience, cyber, disinformation, and technology," the official said in a virtual briefing.

He added, "This particular grouping of IP4 as we call them in NATO lingo -- Australia, Japan, New Zealand and ROK (Republic

of Korea) ,these are some of our closest partners that we work with in the region".

The NATO summit involving Indo-Pacific partners is set to take place on Thursday.

The official did not elaborate on the issue of resilience. In a NATO context, resilience refers to the capacity to prepare for, resist, respond to and quickly recover from shocks and disruptions across the full spectrum of threats, according to an article on NATO's Allied Command Transformation website.

At the NATO gathering, there will be a "strong" demonstration of U.S. and allies' support for Ukraine, the official said, highlighting Washington's plan to announce new steps to strengthen Ukraine's air defences and military capabilities.

"Together, the Washington summit will send a strong signal to Putin that if he thinks he can outlast the coalition of countries supporting Ukraine, he's dead wrong," he said.

"We are also sending an important message to the rest of the world, including through our partner-

ships in the Indo-Pacific, as we stand together united and in support of democratic values," he added.

The summit comes amid growing concerns about Biden's mental health and physical fitness, which was called into question again following a poor debate performance last week.

Observers said that Biden is likely to capitalise on the summit to highlight that he is up for the job and capable of leading the nation for another four year term.

"Foreign leaders have seen Joe Biden up close and personal for the last three years. They know who they are dealing with and they know how effective he's been," the official said.

"What the president has done over the last three years is to reinvigorate the NATO alliance, including expanding it, making it more capable. He has stood up to President Putin's unprecedented aggression against Ukraine by mobilising a coalition of a minimum of 50 allies and partners to provide capabilities to Ukraine."

Japan's Kawasaki Heavy, Maritime Self-Defence force face bribery scandal

AGENCIES
TOKYO, JULY 6

Japan's Kawasaki Heavy Industries has been implicated in a scandal for allegedly using slush funds to purchase goods for the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF) submarine crew members, according to local media reports.

The company, responsible for constructing and maintaining parts of the JMSDF submarine fleet, allegedly manipulated subcontractors to fabricate false transactions, securing billions of yen in secret funds used to bribe submarine crew members, reports Xinhua news agency on Friday.

Kawasaki Heavy Industries has admitted to the Osaka Regional Taxation Bureau that its Kobe Shipyard's maintenance division has been directing subcontractors to create fictitious transactions for the past 20 years.

The funds obtained were transferred to subcontractor accounts as secret funds, used to pur-



chase personal items for submarine crew members or for entertainment expenses. JMSDF submarines submitted lists of needed items to Kawasaki Heavy Industries' maintenance division, Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun reported, noting that the maintenance division then instructed subcontractors to use the secret funds to buy the items, which were subsequently handed over to the respective submarine personnel.

The Osaka Regional Taxation Bureau is investigating Kawasaki Heavy Industries.

Japan's Defence Min-

ister Minoru Kihara on Friday announced that a special investigation into the matter has been launched, besides the current investigation conducted by the Osaka Regional Taxation Bureau.

Tetsuo Maeda, a local commentator, criticised the use of taxpayer money, which was meant for enhancing defence capabilities, being misappropriated by the JMSDF.

"The misuse of funds, originating from the Defence Ministry and submarine construction and maintenance budgets, is intolerable for taxpayers," Maeda said.

India records 15 pc jump in electricity generation for May amid scorching heat wave

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

India's electricity production went up by a robust 15.06 per cent to 167.55 billion units in May this year compared to 145.61 billion in the same month last year, as demand surged amid the scorching heat wave, according to the monthly report of Central Electricity Authority.

Thermal power, generated mainly from coal-and gas-based plants, contributed 127.87 billion units which represented a 14.67 per cent increase over the same month last year.

The demand for electricity peaked at a record high of 250GW on May 30 as an extended heat wave across North India



kept electricity demand elevated in May and most of June.

The peak power demand is projected to go up to 260GW in 2024-25.

With the monsoon gathering pace to cover the entire country ahead of schedule and temperatures coming down in the northern states, the peak

demand is currently at around 200GW.

Hydropower generation is expected to increase with the reservoirs getting replenished during the monsoon. In May, electricity generation from large hydro projects rose 9.92 per cent to 11.62 billion units. Renewable energy proj-

ects, excluding hydro, generated 22.50 billion units, 18.34 per cent more than the year-ago period.

The power ministry has directed domestic coal-based plants to blend 6 per cent imported coal till September in order to ensure that sufficient electricity is generated to meet demand.

With India clocking an economic growth of 8.2 per cent, the highest among the major economies, the demand for power has also shot up due to the increased economic activity.

The Government is also considering taking a relook at the power demand projections in order to plan for creating more generation capacity in the next five years.

Mobile tariff hike: Centre responds to misleading claims

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

The government has responded to misleading claims regarding recent mobile services tariff hike, saying with three private and one public sector player, the current mobile services market operates through the market forces of demand and supply.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) said the rates of telecommunication services are decided by market forces, within the regulatory framework notified by the independent regulator.

"The government does not intervene in the free market decisions as the functionality is under the domain of TRAI and tariffs are under forbearance," said the regulator.

The TRAI said the telecom service providers (TSPs) have increased the prices of mobile services after more than two years.

"In the last two years, some of the TSPs have invested heavily in rolling out the 5G services across the country. This has resulted into a sig-



nificant increase in median mobile speed to the level of 100 Mbps and jump in India's international rank from 111, in October 2022, to 15 today," the TRAI explained.

While protecting the interests of subscribers, for the orderly growth of the telecommunication sector, which includes investments in latest technologies like 5G, 6G, IoT/ M2M for Industry 4.0 etc., "the financial viability of the sector is important,"

said the TRAI. Before last 10 years, the telecommunication sector was mired in controversies, lack of transparency and therefore, growth of mobile services was stagnant.

"During the last 10 years, due to progressive policies of the government, the rates of telecommunication services be it voice or data, have fallen exponentially," said the telecom regulatory body.

More foreign firms enlist to invest in India as infra projects fuel growth

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

More large foreign manufacturers of heavy machinery used in the infrastructure sector figure in the list of more than 15,000 companies that have registered to set up units in the country during June, according to data compiled by the ministry of corporate affairs.

Senior officials see this as the outcome of the increasing demand for such machinery as the government is making massive investments in highways, ports, airports and railway projects.

It also reflects the success of the Government's Make-in-India and Aatmanirbhar policy that encourages foreign companies to start operations in the country, an official said.

UK's Auger Torque Europe Ltd, one of the foreign companies which has registered for starting operations in India, manufactures earth drills and attachments and is part of Germany's Kinshofer Group which makes attachments for truck cranes and excavators.

Japan's Tomoe Engineering Co Ltd, which is on the new list, manufac-

tures machinery, equipment and chemicals.

Another Japanese company, Kawada Industries, Inc. is part of the KTI Kawada Group, which is the business of building, maintaining and preserving infrastructure.

Besides, a Russian heavy machinery manufacturer and a UAE-based energy company have also registered to set up operations in India.

Institut fuer Oekologie, Technik and Innovation GmbH, also in the new list of foreign companies keen to set up base in India, provides testing and certification services for different



industries.

These foreign companies are expected to bring in new technology and will complement the efforts of Indian companies that are operating in the infrastruc-

ture sector, a senior official pointed out.

Big-ticket infrastructure projects in the highways, railways and ports sector will continue to drive growth in the Indian economy as the Government has stepped up the outlay for these investments in the interim budget for 2024-25.

Government investments in large infrastructure projects create jobs and incomes that have a multiplier effect on the economy as demand for products such as steel and cement also goes up which leads to more private investments and employment.

With the creation of additional jobs, the demand for consumer goods also increases leading to a further acceleration in the country's economic growth rate.

To ramp up the virtuous cycle of investment and job creation, the budget for 2023-24 had ramped up the capital expenditure outlay on infrastructure projects by 37.4 per cent to a whopping Rs 10 lakh crore from Rs 7.28 lakh crore in 2022-23.

The interim budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has further enhanced by 11.1 per cent the allocation for infrastructure projects to a whopping Rs 11.1 lakh crore to spur growth. The increase that comes on top of a large base of the previous year will result

in massive investments to spur growth. The finance minister pointed out that this will also attract big investments from the private sector which will accelerate the growth momentum.

The interim budget provides for a Rs 2.52 lakh crore capital expenditure for Railways in 2024-25. The finance minister has announced the implementation of three major economic railway corridor programmes namely energy, mineral and cement corridors; port connectivity corridors; and high traffic density corridors.

Startups, Global Capability Centres created 8 cr jobs in India in 5 years: Labour Secy

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

Global Capability Centres (GCCs) and startups have emerged as major players in creating jobs in India.

Together, these created about eight crore new jobs in the last five years, said Sumita Dawra, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Dawra said this at an event held in the national Capital by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Employers' Federation of India (EFI), citing the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS).

She also revealed the reforms such as decriminalisation of labour laws, and increasing female workforce participation, undertaken by the ministry for ease of doing business.

She noted that reforms such as social security



and labour welfare are expected to drive inclusive growth in India.

In addition, "29 labour laws had been codified into four labour laws. A national career service portal is active and data from the Skills Ministry is being integrated", Dawra said.

Further, she added that India "has about 1

crore gig workers and the gig economy is expected to give employment to about 2.4 crore people by 2030."

Meanwhile, the government has also constituted a task force to study the impact of Artificial Intelligence on the future of work, the senior official said, calling for more research.

Luxury housing surged to 41 pc of total sales in H1 2024 in India

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

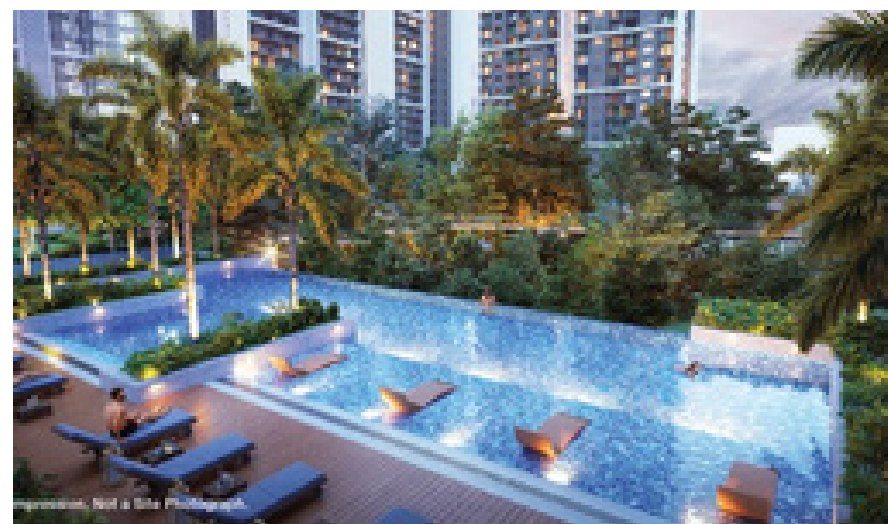
India's real estate market witnessed higher luxury housing sales in H1 2024 due to the robust economy and growing demand for luxury lifestyles.

A new report from property consultant firm Knight Frank titled 'India Real Estate: Residential and Office (January - June 2024),' said that luxury residential sales surged in the first half of 2024.

Housing sales above Rs 1 crore accounted for 41 per cent of total sales in H1 2024.

This figure was 30 per cent in the same period in 2023.

In the first half of 2024, residential sales in the top eight cities of the country, including Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Bengaluru, Pune, and Hyderabad, have seen



an increase of 11 per cent compared to the same period last year.

A total of 1,73,241 homes were sold in H1 2024, the highest sales figure in 11 years.

According to the report, 27 per cent of total residential sales in the first six months of 2024 were

budget homes, while the figure was 32 per cent in the same period of 2023.

Mumbai is the largest residential market in the country and 47,259 houses were sold in H1 2024.

Demand for houses costing more than Rs 1 crore

in the country's financial capital has increased by 117 per cent compared to last year.

During this period, there was an increase of 16 per cent in sales on an annual basis.

While 28,998 units have been sold in Delhi-NCR, 27,404 units have been

sold in Bengaluru.

These three cities account for 59 per cent of total residential sales.

Gulam Zia, Senior Executive Director, Research, Advisory, Infrastructure, and Valuation, Knight Frank India said, "The robust performance in the residential market resulted in the sale of over 1,73,000 units in the first half of 2024, marking a decade-high record. This growth is firmly anchored by the premium category which saw a significant rise moving from 15 per cent in H1 2018 to 34 per cent in H1 2024."

"Looking forward, we understand that the economic conditions will remain stable with the Indian economy continuing to grow, we expect sales momentum to remain robust for the rest of the year," he added.

Atal Innovation Mission empowering innovators in Tier 2 & 3 cities: Director

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

Atal Innovation Mission's (AIM) Community Innovator Fellows (CIFs) programme is empowering innovators in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, said Dr. Chintan Vaishnav, Mission Director at AIM.

He said this while delivering a keynote address at NITI Aayog marking the celebration of the graduation of its second batch of CIFs on Friday.

Dr. Chintan underscored the programme's pivotal role in advancing solutions across healthcare, education, agricul-



ture, and financial services, resonating deeply with the ethos of sustainable development. "We have now established robust institutions that seamlessly integrate business incubation with academia.

This well-designed project aspires to be a model of excellence," Dr. Vaish-

nav said.

He noted that the Community Innovator initiative "captures the aspirations of youth eager to go beyond traditional boundaries in innovation and startups. It embodies both rigour and relevance, truly inspiring in its mission and impact."

AIM, through its Atal Community Innovation Centres (ACIC) programme has envisaged serving the unserved/underserved areas of the country, providing support to every grassroots innovator, and working towards accelerating the pathway to reach SDGs 2030.

"These innovators serve as role models not only for their communities but also for society at large. I'm delighted to witness each business prospering -- it's like shaping raw gold into a precious jewel," said Anurag Pratap Singh, Vice President & CSR Leader at Capgemini India.

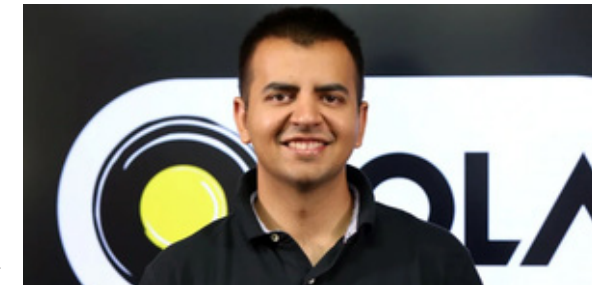
Ola exits Google Maps, moves to in-house Ola Maps

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

India's major ride-hailing company Ola has exited Google Maps and has shifted to its own Ola Maps for cab operations.

Bhavish Aggarwal, co-founder and Chairman of the Ola group said that through this move, the company will save nearly Rs 100 crore per year.

Last month Aggarwal cut all his ties with Microsoft Azure and shifted his company's entire workload to in-house Artificial Intelligence (AI) firm Krutrim.



In a social media post, he asked users to check Ola apps and update if required.

Aggarwal said on X, "After Azure exit last month, we've now fully exited Google Maps. We used to spend 100 cr a year but we've made that

soon. "Many more features coming soon - street view, NERFs, indoor images, 3D maps, drone maps, etc!" Aggarwal said in a social media post.

In October 2021, Ola acquired Pune-based geospatial services provider company GeoSpoc.

Currently, Ola Maps provides services to its flagship ride-hailing app Ola cabs.

At the time of the Krutrim AI launch, Ola announced that it would provide a mapping solution within its Cloud services.

1st T20I: Madande, Chatara and Raza star as Zimbabwe humble new-look India by 13 runs

AGENCIES
HARARE, JULY 6

Tendai Chatara and captain Sikandar Raza took three wickets each as Zimbabwe pulled off a shock 13-run victory over an inexperienced and new-look India in the T20I series opener at the Harare Sports Club on Saturday.

Pushed into batting first, leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi's career-best figures of 4-13 restricted Zimbabwe to 115/9, with a useful 29 not out from Clive Madande and his 25-run stand for the last wicket with Chatara helping the hosts reach a respectable total.

In reply, the Indian batting line-up having three debutants, struggled to apply themselves and perished to poor shot selection to be four down in the Power-play. Despite some glimmers of hope from Avesh Khan and Wash-

ington Sundar, India were bowled out for just 102 in 19.5 overs.

The result also marks India's first defeat in the format in 2024 and makes 115 the lowest defended total by the opposition against them in men's T20Is, with Zimbabwe now taking a 1-0 lead in the five-match series.

Chasing 116, Abhishek Sharma didn't have a memorable debut as he heaved to deep mid-wicket off Brian Bennett to fall for a four-ball duck.

Ruturaj Gaikwad was next to fall -- caught at the crease while pushing a length ball from Blessing Muzarabani and the outside edge was snapped by the first slip. Debutant Riyan Parag tried to clear mid-on against Chatara, but the extra bounce took the splice edge to mid-off and he fell for just two. One brought two for

Chatara as Rinku Singh tried to heave across the line, but top-edge was caught by a short fine-leg and fell for a duck.

The vociferous crowd at the Harare Sports Club further raised its voice when Dhruv Jurel was enticed to drive a slower ball from Luke Jongwe and hit straight to extra cover in the tenth over. The voices from the crowd hit the roof when Shubman Gill tried to play Raza through the leg-side but was castled by the carrom ball from Zimbabwe's captain.

Bishnoi took two fours off Raza, but the all-rounder had the last laugh by trapping the batter lbw. Avesh breathed life into India's chase by getting a boundary off a thick inside edge from Jongwe, followed by swiping Wellington Masakadza for consecutive fours.

But the left-arm spin-



ner bounced back as Avesh holed out straight to long-off on a full toss, followed by Raza finishing his spell by casting Mukesh Kumar through the gate. Washington brought India back in the chase by pulling Jongwe for six and four respectively to bring the equation to 18 runs off 12 balls.

But Muzarabani nailed his length balls to give away two runs in the 19th over and make the equation as 16 runs needed off the final over. Some electric fielding from Muzarabani and Jonathan Campbell meant Zimbabwe saved potential boundaries on consecutive balls. Sundar went for a big swipe off

Chatara, but Muzarabani took a tumbling catch at backward square leg to complete a massive win for Zimbabwe, leaving the players and fans in the stadium absolutely ecstatic.

Earlier, Bishnoi sliced through Zimbabwe's batting line-up with his deceptive googlies in the middle overs to pick a four-wicket haul. Washington was hard to hit too in picking 2-11, while Mukesh Kumar and Avesh had a scalp apiece.

Mukesh got India the first breakthrough as Innocent Kaia didn't account for the swing on a fuller ball and saw his leg stump being uprooted for a golden duck in the second over. Bennett got going with two fours off Mukesh, followed by him and Wesley Madhevere taking two boundaries each off an erring Khaleel Ahmed in the fifth over

going for 17 runs.

Bennett, dropped on 18 by Avesh off Khaleel, was dismissed for 23 when he looked to drive a Bishnoi googly, but the ball struck off-stump and bail fell down in the last over of power-play. The leg-spinner struck again in his second over when Madhevere attempted to sweep but missed the quicker googly and was castled for 21. Raza swept Abhishek for four, before greeting Avesh with the full face of the bat to elegantly loft straight over the bowler's head for six. But after that, Zimbabwe's innings began to fall like nine pins. In an attempt to up the scoring rate, Raza went for a pull off Avesh but holed out to long-on.

A huge mix-up resulted in Dion Myers and Campbell running to the striker's end, and the fielder at point threw the ball to the

non-striker's end to have the latter run out for a golden duck. Washington then had Myers giving him a return catch on his bowling and beat Masakadza on the outside edge to dismiss him for a golden duck.

In his final over, Bishnoi trapped Jongwe lbw and castled Muzarabani to leave Zimbabwe in danger of not batting their full quota of overs. But Madande hit four boundaries in a late cameo of 29 not out off 23 balls, including three in the final over off Avesh, to take Zimbabwe to 115, which was enough to seal a famous win for the hosts.

Brief scores: Zimbabwe 115/9 in 20 overs (Clive Madande 29 not out; Ravi Bishnoi 4-13, Washington Sundar 2-11) beat India 102 in 19.5 overs (Shubman Gill 31; Tendai Chatara 3-16, Sikandar Raza 3-25) by 13 runs

Would've been best if I stayed till the end, says Gill after India's 13-run loss to Zimbabwe

AGENCIES
HARARE, JULY 6

After suffering a stunning 13-run defeat to Zimbabwe in the T20I series opener, a disappointed India captain Shubman Gill said it would have been in the best interest of the visitors' if he had stayed till the end at the Harare Sports Club. Last week, under Rohit Sharma's captaincy, India won the T20 World Cup, triggering a long party in the country. But the happy wave of the triumph came to a halt as Zimbabwe handed India their first defeat in T20Is this year.

Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi had taken career-best figures of 4-13 as India restricted Zimbabwe to 115/9. But Zimbabwe bowlers, led by three-fers

from Tendai Chatara and captain Sikandar Raza, bowled out India for 102 in 19.5 overs, leading to jubilant scenes amongst their passionate fans at the stadium.

"We bowled pretty well; we let ourselves down in the field. We were not up to standard and everyone looked a bit rusty. We spoke about taking time and enjoying our batting, but it didn't pan out that way. Halfway through we had lost five wickets, and it would've been best for us if I stayed there till the end."

"Very disappointed with the way I got out and the rest of the match panned out. There was a bit of hope for us but when you're chasing 115 and your no.10 batter is out there, you know



something is wrong," said Gill, who made 31, after the match ended.

Sikandar Raza, the Zimbabwe captain who took Player of the Match, said he felt elated over getting a famous win over India.

"Feel really happy about the win. Need to take one game at a time.

The job is not done, series is not over. World champions play like world champions so we need to be ready for the next game."

"This isn't a wicket where you get bowled out for 115. Credit to the bowlers on both sides. Clearly an indication we need to up our skills. I said I don't care about the result as long as we could be true to the crowd and changing room."

"We had our plans, we stuck to it and we backed our guys. Our catching and ground fielding was amazing but we did make some errors, which shows there's room for improvement. We knew the fans would lift us and give us energy, credit to them, it helped us."

A useful 29 not out

from Clive Madande and his 25-run stand for the last wicket with Chatara helped Zimbabwe reach a respectable total. Madande even hit three boundaries in the final over off Avesh Khan as 15 runs came off it.

"Just wanted to play throughout the innings, tried to get as many as we could. Tried to protect my partner, ended up getting 115 which was okay on this wicket. Told him (Chatara) simple things, I tried to let him play just 2 balls in an over. We told the boys to give it our all and to give our 100% no matter what."

Zimbabwe now have a 1-0 lead in the five-match T20I series and will play the second match against India at the same venue on Sunday.

Delhi State Kabaddi Association announces the launch of Delhi Kabaddi League

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JULY 6

The Delhi State Kabaddi Association has announced the launch of the inaugural Delhi Kabaddi League to captivate fans across the national capital. The announcement was made by the Honorable President of the Delhi State Kabaddi Association, Ramesh Bidhuri on Saturday.

The Delhi Kabaddi League will feature eight franchise-model teams named after different regions of the Capital. A formal bidding process will be conducted to establish these franchises. Players from Delhi will be categorised into different groups, promoting local talent and providing a platform for athletes to showcase their skills. Speaking about the inaugural Delhi Kabaddi League, Ramesh Bidhuri



said, "Kabaddi is one of the oldest sports in India, and we are excited to launch the Delhi Kabaddi League, which will bring this beloved game to new heights in our capital city."

Joining Bidhuri at the announcement were former India kabaddi player Manjeet Chhillar, Ravindra Bhati, founder and CEO of 100 Sports Management Pvt. Ltd., and Rahul Sharma, director of 100 Sports Management Pvt. Ltd.

Manjeet Chhillar was also announced as the brand ambassador of the Delhi Kabaddi Special guest

Niranjan Singh, MS Tyagi, Amar Singh Solanki, and Ramveer Singh were also present.

"I am honoured to be chosen as the brand ambassador of the Delhi Kabaddi League. I will do my utmost to promote the game of Kabaddi and contribute to its growth and success," said Manjeet Chhillar.

The league promises high-stakes competition with substantial prizes for the top teams. The winners will receive 5 lakh, the runners-up will be awarded 3 lakh, and the teams finishing in 3rd and 4th positions will each receive 1 lakh.

MotoGP 2024: Martin celebrates pole as Trackhouse Racing creates history in Germany

AGENCIES
HOHENSTEIN-ERNSTTHAL (GERMANY), JULY 6

Jorge Martin (Prima Pramac Racing) stormed to the pole position for the 2024 German Motorcycle Grand Prix, the next stage of the MotoGP 2024 World Championship, here on Saturday. The rider with the #89 bike was 0.048s quicker than the rest of the field after setting a 1:19.423 in a sensational qualifying at the Sachsenring, near here. Behind Martin was Miguel Oliveira, who added to a fantastic session for Trackhouse Racing with a P2 start for the Portuguese star. Meanwhile,

teammate Raul Fernandez (Trackhouse Racing) pulled off a brilliant time in his first run to qualify in third on the grid to complete a dream result for the American team.

It was a compelling Q1 session with the top two spots undecided until the last flying lap. Raul Fernandez (Trackhouse Racing) topped the timesheets with Marco Bezzecchi (Pertamina Enduro VR46 Racing Team) in P2.

However, Marc Marquez (Gresini Racing MotoGP) missed a spot in Q2, qualifying P13 on the grid after the #93 had late drama with Stefan Bradl (HRC Test Team).

Double delight for Pune teenager Sarthak Chavan

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, JULY 6

Sarthak Chavan, the 17-year-old blossoming talent from Pune, came up with two brilliant rides to win races in both the premier Pro-Stock categories, the 301-400cc Open and the 165cc Open, to hog the limelight in the second round of the MRF MMS-FMCSI Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship 2024 at the Madras International Circuit, at Irungattukottai, about 40 km from here, on Saturday.

Sarthak, who recently took to yoga as part of his fitness regime, was in a league of his own in

winning the Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open race with 6.8 seconds to spare on a drying track following overnight downpour.

Later, he had to fight hard for his success in the Pro-Stock 165cc outing which he clinched with a superb double slip streaming at Turn 8 on the last lap to overtake the two team-mates in front, Jagan Kumar and Chiranth Vishwanath. To round off a highly-successful day, Sarthak also bagged a special award from Indian Oil, the new partners for the championship, for the fastest lap of the day across all categories - one minute, 50.329 seconds - in the Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open

race.

Also to finish on the top step of the podium in the National championship were three riders from Bengaluru, faded from the contest due to issues with his machine to finish a distant seventh, while KY Ahamed and Deepak Ravikumar completed a 1-2-3 sweep for TVS Racing.

The Pro-Stock 165CC Open race saw the lead changing hands throughout the six-lapper. Pole-sitter Chiranth did not have a good start and settled behind Sarthak. Joining the duo was 10-time National champion Jagan Kumar, probably in his last season before retirement. The trio exchanged leads before Sarthak made

the decisive move in the last lap when he overtook both his team-mates for a deserving win.

Idemitsu Honda India Talent Cup: Malappuram's Mohsin Paramban came on top in the NSF 250R race for his first win of the season, leaving two Bengaluru youngsters, Prakash Kamat and AS James to fight for second and third positions.

TVS One-Make Championship: Senthilkumar C from Coimbatore continued his unbeaten run in the Open (Apache RR310) class by notching his third win in a row, albeit after a close fight with Manoj Yesuadian (Chennai) who eventually came in second

despite recording the fastest lap of the race, while another local rider, Jayanth P, finished third.

Pune's Saimah Ajaz Baig scored her maiden win of the season in the Girls (Apache RTR 200) category edging out SP Shuriah (Coimbatore) and Sarah Khan (Mumbai) who had won the previous outing last month (Round-1).

In the Rookie (RTR 200) class, Bengaluru's 20-year-old Harshith V Bogar scored his third consecutive win in as many starts to consolidate his position on the points table. He finished P1, some 20 seconds ahead of Tirupati's CS Kedarnath and Akarsh Jangam from Vijayawada.

India in two finals in Asian Doubles squash

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, JULY 6

Asian Games medallist and India's Abhay Singh will feature in two finals in the Asian Doubles Squash Championships in Johor (Malaysia) on Sunday.

On Saturday, he and Velavan Senthilkumar, the top seeds, stormed into the Men's doubles title-round with a commanding 11-9, 11-2 win over the Japanese pair of Tomotaka Endo and

Naoki Hayashi in 23 minutes in the last-four stage.

Later, Abhay and the experienced Joshna Chinappa, the third seeds, defeated the Hong Kong pair of Cheng Nga Ching and Lai Cheuk Nam Matthew (HK) 11-8, 11-10 in the mixed doubles semi-finals.

"I'm very pleased to be in both finals, winning two golds was the goal before we came here so that's what we are focused on tomorrow," Abhay said.

"The men's match was a comfortable 2-0, while the mixed match was a bit challenging, but still pleased to come through without dropping a game. Being in another finals of an Asian Championship is an honour, looking forward to converting them both," he added.

Abhay and Joshna will meet second seed Tong Tsz Wing and Tang Ming Hong of Hong Kong for the mixed doubles title and Abhay and Velavan will lock horns with

second seed Ong Sai Hung and Syafiq Kamal of Malaysia in the men's doubles final.

"Solid performances by both pairs to reach the finals. Once the Asian Championships were announced the Squash Rackets Federation of India (SRFI) along with our strategic partner HCL held the National Championships from where the pairs were selected," SRFI Secretary-General Cyrus Poncha said.

Jr Women, Men North Zone Hockey: Haryana meet Chandigarh, UP take on Delhi in women's semis

AGENCIES
JHANSI (UTTAR PRADESH), JULY 6

Hockey Punjab and Uttar Pradesh Hockey won their respective women's fixtures while Hockey Punjab triumphed in the men's fixture on Day 6 of the 2nd Hockey India Junior Women and Men North Zone Championship 2024, here on Saturday.

The day's action marked the end of the group phase

of the women's fixtures, Hockey Haryana will take on Hockey Chandigarh in the first semifinal, while the other semifinal will feature Uttar Pradesh Hockey and Delhi Hockey.

In the first women's fixture, Hockey Punjab beat Hockey Himachal 8-0. A comprehensive team effort meant Kamaldeep Kaur (17', 27'), Kiranpreet Kaur (20', 59'), Sukhveer Kaur (28', 36') would all register braces along with

goals from Jashmeen Gill (25'), and Sanna (53') to complete the win for Punjab.

The second women's fixture unfolded into a hard-fought encounter as Uttar Pradesh Hockey defeated Hockey Chandigarh 2-0. Following three goalless quarters, Purnima Yadav (55') gave Uttar Pradesh Hockey the lead in the game's final minutes. Soon after, Captain Vandana Patel (60') dou-

bled the lead.

In the first men's fixture of the day, Hockey Punjab defeated Hockey Jammu & Kashmir 21-0. Lovenoor Singh (19', 25', 25', 49', 50', 52') led the attack for Hockey Punjab yet again, finding the back of the net on six occasions. Charanjeet Singh (2', 5', 35', 39') and Karan Singh (9', 10', 14', 54') were equally potent in front of the goal, bagging four goals apiece.

Director Horticulture takes stock of departmental activities in Kishtwar, Doda districts

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, JULY 6

Director Horticulture Jammu, Chaman Lal Sharma conducted an extensive tour of twin districts of Kishtwar & Doda to have a complete review of achievements of all the schemes viz: Capex as well as Centrally Sponsored Schemes especially Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) besides other developmental activities being carried out in both the districts.

The Director chaired the meeting of the District Officers, Horticulture Development Officers, officials & field staff of district Kishtwar and Doda in their respective districts.

At the outset, Chief Horticulture Officer, Kishtwar, Sajid Mustafa briefed the chair about the achievements made under all the schemes being implement-



ed in the district.

While taking a review of the ongoing schemes, Director Horticulture impressed upon the officers and officials to expedite the works undertaken for the development of the departmental nurseries and organize awareness camps, Kissangoshtis, etc.

To ensure effective implementation of government schemes for the ultimate benefit of the fruit growers. He also had an interaction with the farmers at Panchayat Pochal and listened to their problems patiently.

The Holistic Agriculture Development Plan, in particular, emerged as a focal point of discussion, show-

ing the department's commitment to holistic development and innovation in horticulture.

Further, in district Doda, Chief Horticulture Officer, Raghunath Upadhaya appraised the chair about the status of progress made under different departmental Schemes. The director stressed upon all the officers and officials to put their efforts with zeal and dedication to disseminate the developmental schemes of the department to the last possible farmer of the district for better utilization of funds in time. He also inspected the Olive Oil Extraction Plant and Soil Testing Laboratory set up

at the District Horticulture complex Doda. The Director stressed upon officers/officials of twin districts of Doda and Kishtwar to identify walnut clusters which can be supplemented with High density varieties of walnut to raise economic standards of rural populace.

Later, the Director visited Government Fruit Plant Nursery, Khellani and took stock of the ongoing developmental activities and gave on spot instructions to the nursery staff regarding the production of quantity and quality of grafted planting material in the nursery.

At last, all the officers of both the districts assured the chair to extend full cooperation and vowed to work hard for the betterment of the farming community.

Departmental Cricket Tournament

District Court Mominabad & Exen eleven JKSC enter finals of J&K Sports Council's departmental Cricket Tournament

JNEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, JULY 6

In a thrilling semifinal match, Exen eleven JKSC defeated the Jal Shakti by a narrow margin of 14 runs and entered into the finals of J&K Sports Council's departmental cricket tournament. The match was held at the Cricket Academy ground TRC Srinagar today, and the winner will now face District Court Mominabad in the title clash on Saturday next week.

After winning the toss Exen eleven JKSC elected to bat first, and posted a solid total of 206 runs in the allotted 20 overs, losing four wickets in the process.

Khalid and Rameez played excellent innings, with Khalid scoring a magnificent half-century, smashing 78 runs off just 35 balls. Rameez also scored a half century in 31 deliveries, while Shanawaz smashed a quick fire 40 of



just 10 balls. For Jal Shakti Shahid, Tawseef and Sajad claimed one wicket each.

In response, Jal Shakti put up a tough fight but fell just short of their target, managing to score only 192 runs, losing 9 wickets in the process. Sajad Ganaie was the top scorer with 66 off 29 balls, hitting three fours and six sixes, while Wahid, Mudarisir, John Mohammad contributed 31, 25, 26 runs to

the chase, respectively. Gowhar and Shanawaz took two wickets each for Exen JKSC, while Tawseef, Adil and Rameez claimed one wicket each.

Later Shahnawaz Husain was awarded the man of the match for his superb all-round performance.

The first semi match of the tournament was played between the Finance department and District Court Srinagar

last week at Cricket Academy ground TRC Srinagar. After winning the toss, the Finance department opted to bat and managed to score only 115 runs in allotted 20 overs for the loss of 9 wickets. The team started losing the wickets from the very first over of the game but it was Aqib mufti who played a brilliant knock of 66 runs. Aqib mufti with 66 runs and M.Y Ittoo 16 runs contribution helped the Finance department to post a target of 116 runs to the District Court Srinagar.

Basharat, Umar and Adil of District Court Srinagar bagged 2 wickets each while Umar Khadey bagged 1 wicket.

Chasing the target of 116 runs, District Court Srinagar chased down the target set by the Finance department in just 18 overs and entered into the finals of Sports Council's departmental Cricket Tournament.

The tournament was

World Zoonoses Day observed in Doda

JNEWS SERVICE
DODA, JULY 6

To observe World Zoonoses Day 2024, the District Surveillance Unit IDSP, under the aegis of District Health Society Doda, organized a debate cum awareness program on the transmission, control, and prevention of zoonosis - the vector borne diseases here at the Make Shift Campus of Government Medical College.

Deputy Commissioner Doda, Harvinder Singh was the Chief Guest and inaugurated the program in the presence of Chief Medical Officer Dr Om Kumar; Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Dr Mayen ud Din; EO MC Amit Sharma; Chief Accounts Officer GMC, Mohd Iqbal Ganai; BMO Ghat, Dr Ab Gafoor; BMO Assar, Dr Shabir Dar; Dr Waleed Khawar Balwan, Ranger Wildlife Kishtwar; Bansi Lal Bhandari, Mohd Shafi Attu, Principal ANMT Doda, Anusuya Bhan, Sr Journalist Naseer Khora, and Adv Sanjeev Rana.

The program was attended by Medical Officers from across all health



blocks, paramedical nursing students institutions across the district. District Epidemiologist, Umar Anayat, welcomed the guests and informed participants that World Zoonoses Day, observed on July 6th each year, aims to raise awareness about zoonotic diseases and their impact on human and animal health. He emphasized the importance of educating people about the risks associated with zoonotic diseases and promoting preventive measures. Guest speakers, including Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Dr Mayen ud Din, Executive

Officer Municipal Council, Amit Sharma, and Dr Waleed Khawar from Community Medicine GMC, highlighted the significant public health implications of zoonotic diseases. They explained how these diseases, originating in animals, can be transmitted to humans through various means such as direct contact, consumption of contaminated food or water, or exposure to vectors like mosquitoes and ticks. CMO Dr Om Kumar underscored the importance of this day in promoting a One Health approach, recognizing the interconnectedness

of human, animal, and environmental health. The event also featured a debate competition attended by eight paramedical students from different nursing colleges, who were awarded certificates of participation and mementos. Judges for the competition included Dr Ab Gafoor, Dr Sarwar Khan, and Anusuya Bhan, with Mashhood Latief compiling the result score sheet. World Zoonoses Day honors French scientist Louis Pasteur, who invented the first vaccine, with this year's theme being 'Preventing the Spread of Zoonotic Diseases.'

DC Pulwama launches Sampoonnata Abhiyan in Aspirational Block Ichgoza

JNEWS SERVICE
PULWAMA, JULY 6

In an effort to enhance the key indicators of development in the district, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom today launched the Sampoonnata Abhiyan at the Aspirational Block Ichgoza.

Speaking at the event, the DC emphasized the significance of saturation of the key indicators under the Sampoonnata Abhiyan for the comprehensive development of the district.

He further urged all the officers and officials to work in close coordination over the coming months to achieve and maintain 100% saturation of the program's targets.

Earlier, the DC inspected the stalls set up by various departments, including health, edu-



cation, RDD, ICDS, and others, which showcased the beneficiary schemes they operate for public welfare and engaged in a friendly tug of war activity. The event was marked by enthusiasm as the community came together to support the initiative.

Additionally, Dr. Basharat administered a pledge to the participants, emphasizing the commitment to work towards achieving saturation in all indicators of the Sampoonnata Abhiyan and

leading the block towards becoming a healthy, empowered, and prosperous community. The pledge aimed to transform the block from aspirational to inspirational.

The Sampoonnata Abhiyan heralds a new chapter in the developmental journey of Aspirational Block Ichgoza, setting the stage for comprehensive progress and prosperity in the district. As the campaign gains momentum, the community's active participation and sup-

port will be instrumental in driving positive change and sustainable growth, said DC.

The occasion was enlivened by skits, Nukad Natak, and colorful cultural programs presented by school children. Several speakers also addressed the gathering, discussing various aspects of the Aspirational Block initiative and raising awareness about its goals.

Additionally, four authorizations and soil cards were distributed among selected farmers. The event featured the Abhiyan Jyoti (Torch) and a selfie point to engage the community and promote the campaign.

Among others the event was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner, Pulwama, besides district officers and residents of the area.

Sampoonnata Abhiyan launched in Aspirational Block Singhpora, Pattan

JNEWS SERVICE
BARAMULLA, JULY 6

The Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Pattan, Gulzar Ahmad today inaugurated the Sampoonnata Abhiyan programme in Aspirational Block Singhpora, marking a significant milestone in the region's socio-economic development.

The initiative aims to

achieve 100% saturation in six key social sector indicators, including healthcare, education, nutrition, and more. The campaign will cover Aspirational Block Singhpora and is part of the larger Sampoonnata Abhiyan programme launched by NITI Aayog, spanning 112 Aspirational Districts and 500 Aspirational Blocks nationwide.

The inauguration cer-

emony was attended by Assistant Commissioner Shabir Ahmad Hakak, Misbah Shah (State Nodal Officer, J&K, NITI Aayog), Chief Education Officer and other senior officers.

SDM Pattan emphasized the importance of collective efforts and community engagement in achieving the objectives of Sampoonnata Abhiyan.

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